

CBMSE Summer Studentships 2021
5 x 4 week projects

1. Developing a Centre for Biomedical Sciences Education Student Wellbeing and Mental Health Action Plan

A 4-week project to take place virtually (at least initially) in June 2021

There are clear links between student engagement, motivation, retention, and achievement and student mental health and wellbeing. Many students experience mental health and wellbeing challenges at various stages as they progress through their learning journeys, including at third level education. As the university student body diversifies, there is a requirement to identify and address the holistic needs of specific groups of students e.g. international, mature and students with disabilities. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting student mental health in many ways – the details of which may only become apparent when we emerge from this public health crisis. Young adults are the most likely societal group to report stress, hopelessness, loneliness and suicidal feelings. The long-term effects of these emotions and stressors are unknown. To maximise student success within our degree programmes, we want to evaluate current procedures and develop a strategy for the Centre for Biomedical Sciences Education (CBMSE) to promote student mental health and wellbeing in the post-COVID world.

The student will:

- identify established procedures and practices that could be adopted to support student mental health and wellbeing
- develop a project plan and timeline to guide the implementation and monitoring of these recommendations within CBMSE

Supervisors: Drs Etain Tansey and Maelíosa McCrudden

2. Exploring student communication and the cultivation of a sense of belonging post-COVID-19

A 4-week project to take place virtually (at least initially) in June 2021

Creating a culture of communication is essential to support an exceptional student experience. Key to this is tailoring messages to specific students. As the number of communication tools continue to increase, we wish to ensure that the right messages are being communicated at the right time and in the right way to students, and that the correct balance between too much and too little is found. A culture of communication is essential to strengthening connections with students and building a sense of community. Students with a strong sense of belonging are more likely to persist and graduate. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic meant that traditional face-to-face communications with students were not possible. This has meant that some students have felt isolated and disconnected. We wish to develop a strategy to support students remotely and offer virtual activities that promote a sense of belonging.

The student will:

- identify ways by which the Centre for Biomedical Sciences Education can communicate in a timely and impactful manner with students and in ways that enhance the student experience
- investigate what messages should be communicated to students, when and by what means
- explore the cultivation of a sense of community both in-person and virtually
- design a template for a Centre for Biomedical Sciences Education newsletter to be communicated to students every fortnight/month.
- investigate the most appropriate means by which we ensure students have an opportunity to share their experiences
- investigate the most appropriate means by which faculty can communicate their response to student feedback

Supervisor: Dr Etain Tansey

3. Documenting Employability and Career Development Opportunities for Human Biology and Biomedical Science Students in levels 1-3.

A 4-week project to take place virtually (at least initially) in June 2021

Supporting students with career development is a key priority for the Centre of Biomedical Sciences Education. We work with a dedicated Careers consultant to ensure careers advice and guidance are available to Human Biology and Biomedical Science students throughout their degree. It is important that future graduates are future ready with the necessary skills, knowledge and learning to ensure employment. In addition, in the current jobs market students need to plan their professional development and optimise opportunities as early as year 1. To support this, we wish to document the employability and career development opportunities available to students and create a resource which students can use to guide and plan their employability and career goals throughout their degree.

The student will:

- work with the Careers Service at QUB to co-produce an employability and careers opportunity timeline and roadmap for Human Biology and Biomedical Sciences students from levels 1 to 3.
- document the relevant career opportunities and activities that have been made available to students over the last number of years, such as Career Fairs, Talks by Careers Apex programme, placement programmes etc. and their timing
- create a possible timeline of career related events, talks, skills attainment opportunities etc. for the next academic year

Supervisors: Drs Etain Tansey, Joe Quinn and Ms Diane Masson (Careers Advisor)

4. Anatomy Education and Outreach

5. Anatomy Education and Outreach

Two 4-week project to take place virtually (at least initially) in the Summer of 2021

The pre-requisites for this studentship is that the student must have studied 2nd year Anatomical Sciences. In this studentship, the selected student(s) would work on developing resources for anatomy education and outreach, this can be modified in line with the interests of the student but could include some of the following:

1. Developing Google form-based escape rooms for anatomy revision.
2. Making gamified resources to learn the paths of nerves in the limbs e.g. template based activities
3. Developing an online outreach resource for non-anatomists e.g. for open days
4. Develop an at-home dissection manual for the dissection of a cow/sheep heart
5. 3D reconstruction of your lecturer's head using and MRI and the freeware Blender

Supervisor: Dr Eva Sweeney