

EEB Grads Mentoring Undergrads Program

The Big Idea

The EEB Grads Mentoring Undergrads Program allows EEB undergraduates to meet with graduate students in addition to their regular faculty advisor. Although this program is intended for undergraduates who have already declared EEB as their major, undeclared undergraduates who are may be interested in joining EEB are encouraged to participate.

Having a graduate student mentor can be an extremely valuable experience that may lead to higher success in the sciences. Not only will the undergraduate learn more about how to prepare for a career in science, he/she may also encounter opportunities to be involved with ongoing research or even begin their own research projects.

The Way It Works

Undergraduates who are interested in speaking with a graduate student mentor should choose a graduate student from the list provided whose interests align with the undergraduates. Then the undergraduate should email that graduate student to schedule a meeting. The undergraduate may prepare for the meeting by forming questions concerning research interests, possible volunteer opportunities and how to apply to graduate school. Graduate mentors will share their experiences in science to enhance the undergraduates understanding of the EEB department and the broader scientific community.

It is the responsibility of the undergraduate to remain in contact with the graduate student so long as the undergraduate would appreciate mentoring. The undergraduate is welcome to meet with multiple graduate student mentors, as the undergraduate's interests may change over time.

Why You Should Join

EEB undergraduates who have received graduate student mentoring say this about the program:

“Though my advisor is very helpful when hashing out project ideas and future plans, there are some questions that are more easily answered by someone who has more recently stood in my shoes. I feel a lot more comfortable and less pressured when addressing my questions to a fellow student. In a large school such as UT, it is easy to get lost and confused in the many stipulations and nit-picky detailed requirements. A graduate student who has successfully surpassed these struggles may have a unique perspective and, thus, may serve as a very beneficial source for advice.”

“It has been really beneficial for me to be surrounded by graduate students and get a snapshot into what it is like to be a graduate student. I get to help them produce data in the lab, bounce ideas off of them, watch their projects grow, and really learn from them. These relationships will prepare me to be a successful graduate student myself in the coming years!”

Contact Information

If you would like to be paired with a mentor, please visit eeb.bio.utk.edu/important-information-for-current-undergrads. There is a link to a [Google Form](#) on that page, which will allow you to apply for a graduate mentor. You may also contact eebmentoring@gmail.com, for general questions about the program.