Teaching Requirement

We expect our students to develop proficiency in teaching neurobiology to undergraduate and/or graduate students. A minimum of two teaching quarter credits (total of 6 course credits) are required for graduation (Teaching Practicum, NEURO 515). At the end of year 1 and until this requirement is completed, each student selects his or her preferences for teaching internships for the following academic year. The faculty conduct a “match” to optimize these preferences in light of the opportunities available and demand. Students have the option to postpone teaching one year if there are compelling reasons. Current opportunities can be found listed below in “Annual Match.” Students must fulfill their teaching requirement through the match.

Teaching Internships (NEURO 515) and Mentoring

The Graduate Program in Neurosciences will ensure that its students are provided with teaching experience in the basic concepts in neuroscience and related disciplines at the university level. Students enrolled in NEURO 515 – Neuro Teaching Practicum participate in teaching internships. Most of the teaching internship assignments are for the undergraduate Neurobiology Program (NBIO) and are assigned through the annual match process (see below). Some students may also be able to assist in related courses within the Medical School, Arts & Sciences, and other areas as approved by the Program Committee.

Although students in NEURO 515 will assist in a variety of courses, all courses will share the following mentoring principles to ensure that each student in the practicum receives instruction in neurobiology (and closely related field) teaching that the graduate program has designed.

1. All courses used in the practicum will have at least some component of the material in the field of neurobiology and/or neuroanatomy. The majority of students will serve in courses which are composed exclusively of neurobiology material.

2. In each course, the instructor will assign to the practicum student the text on science teaching prepared by the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Undergraduate Education (1977) (available online as: www.nap.edu/readingroom/books/str/) and will meet at least weekly with the students to discuss how the teaching of the course relates to the principles outlined in that text. In all courses, practicum students will discuss testing and other evaluative procedures with instructors before course students are given the assignments, will predict the utility of the assignment, and then will discuss during grading of the assignment whether their predictions were correct, and whether an alternate assignment would have served students better.

3. In all courses, practicum students will receive written evaluation from the instructors, and a post-course discussion relating what they have learned in the practicum to their future plans to design and teach their own courses in the field.

4. All instructors in practicum courses will be required to submit a detailed mentoring plan and to outline to the Program Committee how that plan is consistent with the above principles. A course that does not have a current mentoring plan that conforms to the above principles will not be available to practicum students.

5. The Program Committee will assess the practicum yearly either by meeting with practicum students or by soliciting written feedback from practicum students as to the utility of the experience in relation to their career goals in teaching neurobiology.

Teaching Internship Match (TIM)

Starting Autumn Quarter 2005, the Neuro Program implemented a new process for fulfilling the teaching requirement. All students must still have two quarters of teaching experience (or an approved equivalent) but the teaching experience must be approved by the directors in advance, and priority will be given to NBIO courses.

To facilitate this, the directors established a match system for teaching practicum assignments. All students who need to complete their teaching requirements must submit their requests each Spring Quarter in order to receive full consideration for their preferences.
Reference Materials Available to Teaching Interns: (in N&B Program Office)

