

08/16/2021

RE: Undergraduate Updates

Dear BME Undergraduates,

Hello students! I hope everyone is enjoying the summer and looking forward to returning IN PERSON in the fall! This will be an exciting semester for students, faculty and staff as we all embark on this adventure together! There will certainly also be many challenges as we adjust to hybrid classes, different classrooms and ever-changing health rules. Rest assured that the BME department is working hard to ensure a smooth transition with regards to our academic offerings and matters related to our department, and will continue to provide timely updates with critical information as we receive it.

On that note, let me introduce myself to our incoming SOPHOMORES. First off, welcome to BME! We look forward to welcoming you both to campus and the department! I am Dr. Kristen Labazzo, the Undergraduate Program Director and a teaching professor. I work closely with the undergraduate program administrator, Ms. Linda Johnson (she and I will be your main points of contact for special permission numbers and other logistics), our department chair, Dr. David Shreiber, and Vice Chair Dr. Charlie Roth. PLEASE familiarize yourself with the BME Handbook as this contains critical information regarding pre-reqs, course offerings, how to receive technical elective credits for research, co-ops and internships, and other special programs such as the Research Scholars Academy and Combined Degree Program.

<https://bme.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/uploads/Handbook.pdf>

As communication has been especially critical this past year, I also email out regular *Undergraduate Updates*. Please be sure to read them, as they will include information addressing registration concerns, elective offerings, internship/co-op openings and other topics that are important at the moment, for example; if there are changes to any policies regarding Covid-19.

Some other important notes:

- A Sophomore Orientation is in the works, so stay tuned for information.
- If interested in our co-op program, an info session will be held in the fall. Our program is geared towards sophomores, so you will receive information once the semester starts.
- You will soon be assigned an advisor who will be your advisor for your duration in BME. This is a member of the BME faculty who will be your first point of contact for questions or concerns. If there is a question that they cannot answer, they will know who can best assist you.

JUNIORS, welcome back! This is a critical year for you as you take most of your core courses. Further, we have the largest class to date, with almost **180 juniors**! We offer all the core classes (except labs) both semesters; in order to keep the core classes to around half the class size (~ 90 students), please ensure you are registered for 3 core classes plus the lab class this fall. If not, you risk not getting into a class you need in the spring if it reaches capacity. As of now, there are still spots available in biomaterials, numerical modeling, and kinetics and thermo.

As a reminder, please be mindful of the requirement to take senior design, which is: you must pass 6/8 junior classes INCLUDING the 2 labs; devices in the fall and measurements in the spring. You CANNOT take senior design, which is a full year course, without meeting this requirement.

SENIORS, you made it!! This is the big year! We are so excited to have you back and to work with you on your senior design projects! Throughout the year, I will also post information about job offerings, career fairs and other professional development opportunities so be on the lookout.

Many of you have asked about Departmental Electives this year. As of now, here are the ones currently planned for the spring of 2022:

409 Introduction to Prosthetics-Guest Lecturer
411 Bioelectrical Systems -Li
431 Optical Imaging-Boustany
434 Tissue Engineering II-Freeman
455 Global Health-Hassan
470 Advanced Biomedical Devices Lab- Drzewiecki
499 New elective in Cell Culture Techniques-Vasquez

Seniors with a 3.0 GPA and permission of the instructor may also take graduate courses for departmental electives. This is at the discretion of the instructor. Details on these courses will be sent in a later newsletter.

FALL 2021 SEMESTER

As mentioned, this fall will be interesting for all of us! We have to get used to being back after a year and a half! There are new class schedules, health rules to follow in classrooms, and classes being delivered remotely, in-person, or both. Instructors for each class will provide details on their expectations and rules for their particular classroom format. As a reminder, classes start BEFORE Labor Day this year, on Wed Sept 1.

President Holloway recently sent out an email regarding plans for a “Rewarding and Safe Fall Semester.” Per his email, the following measures are in place:

- Required weekly testing of unvaccinated individuals
- Continued use of face-coverings indoors, including offices and classrooms
- Continued social distancing protocols in office environments
- Quarantining protocols for students who test positive
- Continued education on the safety and benefits of COVID-19 vaccines
- Free on-site vaccinations in Camden, Newark, and Piscataway

For additional information, please see the [Guide to Returning to Rutgers](#) and the university’s [COVID-19 Vaccine](#) page.

UNDERGRADUATE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Last year, we created a council in order to improve communication with the student body and BME administration, and to efficiently and rapidly address concerns. If you are interested in participating, please send your resume and cover letter to me, kristen.labazzo@rutgers.edu. This year, the council will organize a Sophomore Orientation, host a series of career info sessions, and redo the BME handbook.

MEET YOUR UNDERGRADUATE DIRECTOR

If you wish to speak with me, please do not hesitate to email me and set up an appointment at your convenience! kristen.labazzo@rutgers.edu I will not be available from Aug 21-Aug 29.

Enjoy the last few weeks of summer, and please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns!

Regards,

