

Professional Skills Training Grant Project Overview

The proposed project will develop, test, and widely disseminate live, online, and CD-ROM short courses that can assist minority graduate and postdoctoral students in biomedicine in the development of key professional skills in the areas of scientific writing and speaking. However, advisors and mentors can also benefit from these tools since they will address important cultural issues and provide resources and strategies for integrating cultural aspects with professional skills training. Each short course will be developed via seven steps:

1. Work with Advisory Board to develop topics, outlines, materials, and speaker/mentor list for live, 2-day short courses;
2. Conduct live short courses, evaluate, and revise materials & resources;
3. Prepare and begin dissemination of live short course materials for easy replication by departments and other professional societies;
4. Develop interactive Webcourse based on materials and resources from live short courses;
5. Beta-test Webcourse and revise.
6. Adapt Webcourse for CD-ROM format.
7. Implement an ongoing schedule of web and live short course offerings for coming years.

After the two Webcourses (“Writing and Reviewing for Journals”, and “Poster and Oral Presentation Skills”) have been developed, evaluated, and revised, a CD that includes both interactive courses will be developed and disseminated. **The procedures and materials developed through this project are designed to serve as model templates for the continuing development of new live, online, and CD interactive professional development courses for minority graduate and postdoctoral students.** Table 3 describes the projected numbers of student participants during the three-year project, not including the many students who will benefit from ongoing access to these resources after the project period has ended. This process was successfully used in developing the interactive CD and Webcourse, “Planning an Effective Program Evaluation.”¹ A copy of this CD is enclosed. The webcourse for minority graduate and postdoctoral students will be more interactive than the “Evaluation” webcourse and CD due to access to more advanced programming for this project. Staff from Project WISE (Web-based Inquiry Science Environment)² at the University of California-Berkeley, have offered to assist in adapting some of the WISE interactive tools for incorporation into the APS Webcourse programming (see letter from Jim Slotta).

Table 3
Expected Number of Participating Students, by Role

Course	Two-day live courses (2 courses per year)	Online Beta Testers	Webcourse users ³	CD-ROM users
ting/Reviewing	120	25	300	3,000 CD's available in Year 3
Presentation Skills	120	25	150	
Total	240	50	450	

¹ This Webcourse can be accessed at <http://www.the-aps.org/education/promote/promote.html>

² <http://wise.berkeley.edu/>

³ Estimated participation over course of the 3-year project, assuming 150 students will access each course each year after its development. These numbers do not include the 150-200 students per year who will take the webcourses in subsequent years.