

**U-RISE at Texas State Program
Memorandum of Understanding
Student Trainee**

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is prepared by the Principal Investigators of the NIH-funded U-RISE at Texas State program and the Departments of Chemistry & Biochemistry and Biology.

A. Purpose.

The purpose of this MOU is to set forth the expectations, standards, responsibilities and requirements for all student trainees who join the U-RISE at Texas State program. Agreement with each of these is signified by initialing each statement and signing and dating the MOU in the indicated spaces.

B. Expectations.

- I recognize that U-RISE is a full academic year commitment. I will complete my undergraduate education at Texas State University and not transfer to another university. Initials_____
- My goal is to pursue a PhD degree, not an MD or any other professional degree. The only exception is the pursuit of a combined medical/dental/pharmacy-PhD degree program at an Institution that offers such a combined program. Initials_____
- I will not hold any other employment or time-consuming commitments that interfere with research or activity attendance. Initials_____

C. Standards.

- I will remain in academic good standing with the program by maintaining a GPA \geq 3.0 during all semesters. If my GPA falls below a 3.0 in any semester, I will be on academic probation and must bring my GPA up to a 3.0 or better in the subsequent semester or be subject to dismissal from the program. If I earn a C grade in any course, I will also be on academic probation for the following semester, and must complete take part in academic coaching, attend tutoring sessions, and provide the program with a plan to improve my academics. Initials_____
- I acknowledge that I will be on program probation for earning a D grade in any course, and any additional D grade in the same or any subsequent semester will make me immediately eligible for termination from the program. Initials_____
- My performance in the program will be reviewed several times per year by my research mentor and the Oversight Committee. If my mentor or the Oversight Committee detects a pattern of behavior in the lab or U-RISE activities that shows lack of engagement, I will be evaluated for termination from the program. Initials_____
- I will maintain high standards of academic and laboratory honesty. Initials_____
- I will attend all required program activities, described below. Initials_____

C. Program Activity Requirements.

- I will complete the initial Responsible Conduct in Research training within my first semester of entry to the program. Initials_____
- I will complete Texas State University compliance requirements as notified to do so by the University, including required laboratory safety, biosafety, animal handling, and other required training. Initials_____
- I will not schedule vacations in the week prior to the semester starting so that I can take part in pre-semester meetings. Initials_____
- I will attend the Pre-RISE, U-RISE, and joint U-RISE/STDBP Meetings and Seminars and speaker lunches, generally held on Fridays. Initials_____
- I will complete and submit a thesis (or CHEM 4382 final report) and present a final oral presentation prior to graduation. A thesis plan/proposal is due at the end of my first semester in the program. Initials_____
- If I apply to PhD programs that require the GRE, I will take the GRE prior to application. Initials_____
- I will participate in any other activities identified as required or mandatory. Initials_____

E. Academic Field and Graduate School Requirements.

- I will not change my major from an approved U-RISE TxSt Major: Biology, Biochemistry, Chemistry, Microbiology, Physics, Psychology, Math, or Computer Science. Changing to an unapproved major will result in me having to resign. Not telling the program about such a change will require me to reimburse the program for all funds received since the change. Initials_____
- During the November-February time period of my final undergraduate year, I will apply for admission to at least five biomedical, research-focused PhD programs. If at any point while I am in the U-RISE program, I decide NOT to pursue a biomedical, research-focused PhD, or to pursue a PhD in a non-covered field, I must notify the program directors immediately and withdraw from the program. Initials_____
- I will not apply to Medical School or other Professional Degree programs, except as a dual degree-seeking applicant to a joint Professional-PhD (e.g., MD-PhD) program. Initials_____

F. Research Activities and Time Commitment

• I agree to work in the laboratory performing research during the Fall 2021 and Spring 2022 semesters according to the following scale, based on enrolled credit hours:

≥ 12 credit hours enrolled	~15 hr/week in lab
9 – 12 credit hours enrolled	~20 hr/week in lab
6 – 9 credit hours enrolled	~25 hr/week in lab
3 – 6 credit hours enrolled	~30 hr/week in lab

I agree to work in the laboratory 40 hours per week in the laboratory performing research during the Summers when I am paid by the U-RISE program. Although some slight allowance may be made for midterms/finals with approval of my research mentor, working consistently fewer hours indicates a lack of interest/engagement and will lead to termination. Initials_____

• I understand that at times I will be required to spend more than the required working hours in the laboratory, for example to satisfy requirements for course-related research activities. However, if I am consistently required to work more than the specified times during the long semesters by my research mentor, I will contact a program director. Initials_____

• I will diligently seek out a research mentor at Texas State. A permanent lab should be chosen by the end of September 2022. Initials_____

SEP:

• I will fully engage with the U-RISE-supported research and learn the foundations and purposes of my experiments and techniques. I will work diligently and responsibly in the lab to earn a strong letter of recommendation. I am expected to eventually have an independent project and drive it forward to completion. I will not plan research experiments that will interfere with required Friday program activities. I will establish a semester schedule of when I will be in the laboratory and provide it to my PI. I am expected to eventually take responsibility for my own project. I will notify my mentor or lab supervisor if I will be absent from the lab (even if I will be at a conference) and I will follow laboratory/mentor policies regarding holiday and between-semester leave. Initials_____

G. Travel and Conference Requirements.

• The program requires and will fund me to attend one conference annually. In my final year at Texas State, this will be ABRCMS. I commit to participating fully in ABRCMS in the fall of my final year at Texas State. Initials_____

• I will arrange with my course instructors well before the conference to make-up any material or exams missed in my courses or labs. This may include taking exams or labs early, before I depart for the conference. The program can provide a letter of excuse for these missed classes and labs. Initials_____

• I will not bring significant others/family/friends with me to program-funded conferences, or combine conference travel with personal travel. Initials_____

I. Program Course Requirements.

• If there are any alternative section or course requirements, I will not take a course during the scheduled, mandatory U-RISE meetings on Fridays. Initials_____

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• I must be enrolled in at least 3 credit hours at Texas State University in each of the long semesters during each academic year. Initials_____

• I will notify Dr. Karen Lewis or Dr. Sean Kerwin as soon as I am in trouble academically (e.g., course grade below a B or major missed assignment(s)), or if I am considering dropping a course. Initials_____

J. Communication Requirements.

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• I will provide current contact information to program staff (phone, cell, functional email) and respond in a timely manner to all correspondence from program staff. Initials_____

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• I will notify the program as soon as possible if an emergency will require me to miss a required program event (including seminar). Initials_____

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• I will notify TxSt U-RISE program staff immediately if I need to take time off for extreme personal reasons, if I am considering leaving my laboratory of record, or if I wish to withdraw from the program. Initials_____

• I will participate in and quickly and accurately complete all required evaluation activities. Initials_____

• I will cooperate with post-graduation evaluation and tracking activities. Initials_____

K. Agreement.

I recognize that my participation in U-RISE at Texas State is a privilege, not a right, and will make every effort to comply with the requirements of the program listed above. If for any reason, I begin to fall short in the program, I must keep the program staff informed and seek their assistance. If I fail to do so, I recognize that my position in this training program may be forfeited and I will be terminated from the program.

Signed:

Name (Printed): _____

(Signature): _____

Date: _____