



Procedures and guidelines for co-lab experiences

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Background:

All fellows are required to participate in a one-semester long co-lab. Other trainees may, but are not required to, participate in a co-lab.

Goals:

Build knowledge of relationships between FEW sectors

Build interdisciplinary knowledge including:

- Capacity to conduct interdisciplinary research
- Cross-disciplinary literacy
- Cross-disciplinary communication skills
- Ability to collaborate, integrate, and synthesize across disciplines

Provide opportunities for:

- Joint publications
- Proposal development
- Applied projects
- Co-mentorship

Individual co-labs can generate more specific goals if desired

Themes:

Co-labs can be organized around research questions, proposals, and/or products, or specific topics or themes. Co-labs need to focus on interactions between two or more areas of the nexus (food, energy, and water).

Requirements:

All fellows will participate in at least one semester-long co-lab experience. Typically, trainees will participate in a co-lab after their first semester at UM. Co-labs will be led by two or more STEM faculty from different disciplines, with at least one leader being a UM BRIDGES faculty. Co-labs will focus on cross-sector interactions (two or more of food, energy, and water). Co-labs will typically involve collaborations across the physical sciences, biological sciences, and/or social sciences. Co-labs drawing solely on closely allied disciplines, such as population ecology and ecosystem ecology, will be discouraged. Faculty proposing a co-lab should justify how the lab will be interdisciplinary and cover issues at the nexus. Total number of faculty and students will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Students can join co-labs not led by their faculty advisors, but only when the topic/disciplines are related to their program of study and only with the approval of their advisor and the co-lab faculty. All faculty who have trainees funded by fellowships need to participate in/organize a co-lab for at least one semester. Faculty can organize international or virtual co-labs with key partners off-campus. The minimum contact hours for a semester-long co-lab is 10 hours.

Activities:

Co-lab activities will vary depending on the focus and needs of the specific co-lab group. Co-labs may include readings and discussion; workshop presentations, proposals, and manuscripts; cross-disciplinary data analysis; manuscript and proposal development; science communication; and applied projects.

Logistics:

On August 1st, all fall co-labs will be announced to current trainees. On December 1st, all spring co-labs will be announced to current trainees. Short descriptions of past and current co-labs will be posted on the UM BRIDGES website. Students can take labs for credit if they wish to do so (lab credit will typically be 1.0 credit only and offered through the faculty advisor's home department).