

Field Trip! Computational Biology on the Road

Modified from an original blog post from <https://annamritz.wordpress.com>

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A few weeks ago I took my students to the Association for Computing Machinery Conference on Bioinformatics, Computational Biology, and Health Informatics (ACM-BCB) in Seattle, WA. It was a fantastic experience for everyone involved, and the organizers did an excellent job running the conference. I asked my students to reflect on the conference, and I figured I should do the same.

This report also highlights some features of the ACM LaTeX template. The original `bio331-sample.tex` file is available on Moodle.

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ACM; conferences; undergraduate research

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When I learned that ACM-BCB 2016 was going to be held in Seattle, I jumped at the chance to take Reed students. ACM-BCB is a computer science conference focused on applications to computational biology and health informatics, and I have published there in the past [1]. My upper-level class, Computational Systems Biology, included a great mix of biology and math/CS majors. Thirteen Reed students attended ACM-BCB (Table 1).

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The timing and location of the conference coincided perfectly with my

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Name	Year	Major	Bio331?
Amy Rose Lazarte	Sophomore	Alt-Bio	X
Yurel Watson	Sophomore	Math-CS	
Elaine Kushkowsky	Junior	ES-Bio	
Eli Spiliotopoulos	Junior	Biology	X
Danny Heinz	Senior	Bio-Psych	
Erik Lopez	Senior	Math-CS	X
Karl Menzel	Senior	Biology	X
Mina Marden	Senior	Math-Stats	X
Nick Franzese	Senior	Math-Bio	X
Rose Driscoll	Senior	Alt-Bio	
Vikram Chan-Herur	Senior	Biology	X
Barney Potter	'16 Graduate	Math-Bio	
Emily Merfeld	'16 Graduate	Bio-Psych	

Table 1: Reed students who attended ACM-BCB.

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With such a large cohort of undergraduates at a scientific conference, my role shifted to encompass one of an educator