Frequently Asked Questions about TRIP

Q: Who may apply?
All high school students from Philadelphia and the surrounding communities may apply.

Q: How much does the TRIP Initiative cost?
Fox Chase Cancer Center believes it is critical to provide training for any and all motivated students regardless of a student's financial status. Therefore, TRIP Initiative is free for all students!

Q: What coursework is required prior to applying for the programs?
The course is fast-paced and assumes that participants have some foundation in biology and chemistry. Therefore, at least one high school biology or chemistry course is preferred. However, additional instruction is available for students needing extra help.

Q: What will I be doing during the course?
Students will develop their own hypotheses, design and troubleshoot experiments using fruit flies as an experimental model system, collect and analyze data, and then interpret and present their findings at a day-long symposium with students, faculty, family, and alumni. Throughout the course, students will also use multiple forms of media to share their experiences, and work with mentors to explore careers surrounding science and medicine.

Q: Why fruit flies?
The fruit fly is a well-established and powerful model organism which has been used to make major discoveries in many scientific fields including genetics, development, behavior, and disease. Additionally, the short life cycle and ease of use makes the fruit fly an ideal system for students who have limited time to design, perform, and troubleshoot experiments.

Q: What kinds of hypotheses can I test?
Students are encouraged to develop their own hypotheses with relevance to human health and behavior. Faculty will help students refine their questions if necessary so that they fit within the time, budget, and equipment restraints of the course.

Check out some of the research projects from previous students at TRIP's official webpage (http://www.tripinitiative.com/) and on Facebook.com/tripinitiative.

Q: What can I hope to learn?
Students gain hands-on training in basic laboratory techniques and conceptual skills including hypothesis generation, experimental design and data analysis. Additionally, the course is designed to reinforce critical thinking skills, peer-to-peer mentoring techniques,

and multimedia communication skills. The course provides a unique opportunity for students to learn whether scientific research is an appealing career path, to learn many important life skills that will be useful regardless of future career choices, and to become part of a growing and active community of alumni.

Check out the experiences of previous students at http://www.tripinitiative.com/blog.

Q: What's the instructor to student ratio?
Each section contains 7-9 students, at least two instructors, and at least one teaching assistant.

Q: Who teaches the TRIP Initiative?
Although the instructors change from year to year, all have an advanced degree in science and/or education and have spent a minimum of three years in a research lab. Additionally, collaborators include industry professionals, high school teachers, and other professionals from Fox Chase Cancer Center.

Q: Will I be working in a group or on my own?
Yes! Some assignments will be done in small groups, but your independent research project can be done on your own. Faculty and teaching assistants provide mentorship as needed, and you may choose to work with other students if you want to.

Q: Is there homework?
Yes, lots of it! Students will complete self-learning packets to learn information about fly development, reinforce critical thinking, problem solving and communication skills. All assignments are managed through the free online platform, Schoology.

Q: Where are the classes held?
During the spring sessions, classes are held at William Tennent High School (https://www.centennialsd.org/wt; 333 Centennial Road, Warminster, PA 18974).

Q: When does the course meet?
3.75 hour sessions (Session A: 8:30 am-12:15 pm or Session B: 1:15 pm-5 pm) are offered during the spring. Spring sessions meet on Saturdays in January - April.

Q: What is the attendance policy?
Due to the fast-paced, independent nature of the program, students *must* be present and on time to all classes, and must attend the full day of the final symposium.

Q: How do I learn more about the program?
Please contact us with additional questions at: tripinitiative@gmail.com and follow us on social media at @TRIPInitiative.