BINF sights.

Contents

Issue 03
2021-T1-W6

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Lookback

Peer Mentoring.

In Week 6, our mentors and mentees went ice skating! Whilst some began with more wobbly feet on the ice than others, participants had the chance to catch up and bond through the falls. Whether it was practicing tricks or gliding across the ice, it was great to see attendees having some fun during flexi-week.

Bioinformatics Debugged.

Our first ever industry-related event, our Bioinformatics Debugged career panel was held in Week 4. Thanks to everyone who attended, you all helped make the night a success. We hope you found the advice as useful as we did!

For those who couldn't make it, we've uploaded a recording of the career panel on our YouTube channel so you don't have to miss out on the Q+A responses given by the panellists.

Once again we'd like to extend our gratitude to the industry representatives who very kindly volunteered their time as speakers at the panel. If you'd like to find out more about our panellists, check out their LinkedIn pages. As for BINFSOC, we've got some future networking events that are still in the design stage, so stay tuned.

Recording:
> unswbinfsoc.com/careerpanel/recording

Ajinkya Joshi.

Jack Zhao.

Sara Ballouz.

Sarah Kummerfeld.

Opportunity

ENGG3060

Maker Games: Activation Hub Biomechanics of Physical Rehabilitation

Activation Hub gives engineering students nearing the end of their studies the chance to work with real clients on real problems, all while fitting into their degree program. For third and fourth year Bioinformatics Engineering students, this fits in nicely as a discipline elective!

The redesigned course focuses on intimately involving the end-user for whom you are designing the product in the entire design process, as they ultimately are the experts in the things that they need. You will be working in diverse teams to prototype and develop assistive technologies that make an impact on the lives of clients with a disability.

It is all part of a larger initiative to engage students in exciting, real-world, project-based opportunities as well as to connect students from various technical disciplines.

Keen to see how you can use your disciplinary skills to make a difference? Enrol now. No prior knowledge is required.

If you have any questions, please reach out to

> challeng@unsw.edu.au

Open Position @ UNSW

PhD student in single cell computational biology

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SUPERVISOR

--

Dr. Fabio Zanini
Data Driven Biomedicine lab @ UNSW Sydney

> fabilab.org

ABOUT THE PROJECT

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While Physics has a standard model that explains most phenomena in the universe in terms of interactions between elementary particles, such a model is still missing in biology. To fill this gap, we are looking for a talented PhD student to create a standard model of cell biology.

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PLANNED START: third/last quarter of 2021

MORE INFO > unswbinfsoc.com/phd-position

interview with our co-founders

WE SPOKE TO BINFSOC'S TWO CO-FOUNDERS, GABRIELLE YOUNES (PRESIDENT) AND ERICA JIN (VICE PRESIDENT) ABOUT STARTING THE SOCIETY, OBSTACLES, AND WHAT LIES IN THE FUTURE.

Interviewer *Anthony Nguyen* ***Editor*** *Cam McMenamie*

Focus.

Gabby Younes
President

Erica Jin
Vice President

Focus: The Birth of BINFSOC

WITH AN ARRAY OF EXCITING EVENTS that have taken place so far this term, BINFSOC is off to a strong start. We decided to take a look back on how it all started and how one small idea grew to become what it is today. We spoke to the president and vice president of the society, Gabby and Erica, to find out.

What led to the idea of BINFSOC and how did it start?

Universities are such a large space built to bring together bright minds from all around the world and from an array of different disciplines. That's one of the best things about uni! However, in the expanse of students, it's easy to get lost in the crowd and it can get tricky to seek the specific student support that you need in your degree. That's especially the case for those of us curious about bioinformatics, looking to connect with similar students.

For Erica, the idea of starting up a Bioinformatics-specific society would mean the chance to *build up a strong support network for other bioinformatics students like herself.*

"I remember during my first year, when I did science courses, I would meet everyone in the science faculty, and then when I did COMP courses, I would meet people in comp sci or engineering or data science. When I did commerce courses, I would meet business students", says Erica.

"I really wanted to meet people who were studying bioinformatics or have done it, to either rant to, or ask 'What even is bioinformatics?"".

It's great to have that student support and connectivity to navigate your way through uni.

Gabby, herself, was in a similar boat.

"I found myself constantly going through a cycle of questioning where my degree could take me. Despite undergoing mentoring programs and talking with graduates to learn from their experience, I never felt that there was the proper student support and information that was specific to Bioinformatics. Being a part of multiple student societies, I saw the value and connectivity that their members had, and so my

modern solution to my modern problem was to start BINFSOC."

In Term 2 of 2020, at the peak of the pandemic, initial ideas floated around. Having spoken to Dr. Bruno Gaeta, Senior Lecturer and Program Director for Bioinformatics at UNSW, Gabby learnt that a BINFSOC had existed back in 2006. She connected with a couple of the original members and sought advice from them.

"I brought the idea to Erica to see if she was willing to start this crazy journey with me", Gabby says.

"It has been nothing but crazy ever since."

What was the most challenging obstacle in getting BINFSOC started?

Nothing comes easy. Getting off the ground for BINFSOC involved reaching out to as many students interested in, or doing, bioinformatics, as well as getting the financial and administrative support needed. Gabby tells us that the BINF2010 group chat was, at the time, the best way to reach as many people interested in joining the executive team as possible.

"We needed driven individuals who shared our vision and passion to create a Bioinformatics community, and be willing to put in the effort to help build the society to be the best that it can be", says Gabby. "Thankfully, we received amazing responses and hence our current executive team was born."

What are some things you hope to see BINFSOC achieve in the coming year?

We asked this question and one answer that came up multiple times was the hope for BINFSOC members to be able to foster a supportive community, have their questions answered, and their university experiences enriched!

To wrap up, we gave Gabby and Erica to write down anything they would like to say to their BINFSOC co-founder. Here's what they had to say.

E: Thank you for asking me to start a society with you! I've always wanted to be part of a Bioinformatics society and would've never thought to start one! Thanks for always being so hardworking and organised and having banter with me. Working with you makes me work harder as there was so much to learn and know as we overlooked all portfolios. It really put me in a position to quickly develop leadership skills, organisational skills and taking up responsibility and especially leadership, was not something i thought i would do and i'm glad i did, so thank you! Despite very explicitly pointing out my incompetence in knowing my way around, using technology, and the fact i'm not a morning person!

G: What a legend. Thanks for keeping me sane through this process and being the best support to BINFSOC. You keep the team laughing, regardless if it's at an event or a 2am emergency meeting.

We look forward to 2nd December 2020 at 6:51pm, which will be BINFSOC's first birthday. We hope you can all celebrate it with us!

T1 Flexibility Week

Study tips from the BINFSOC team

WITH FLEXI WEEK UPON US and midterms coming up soon, the BINFSOC team wishes everyone the best with their exam study. Although BINF-specific courses are yet to run in 2021, the intro subjects for biology, comp-sci and chemistry can be quite challenging for first year students.

Some of our subcom members at BINFSOC have shared a few study ideas -- but different methods work for different people, so don't force any one technique. Try a few out and see what works for you.

Study Groups.

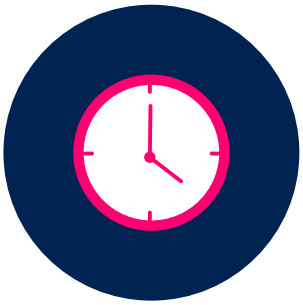
So my suggestion for the first years is to create study groups. I've found study groups really helpful for me and I find that I am able to solve problems a lot faster. Also, I can prepare for an exam efficiently and better than if I were to study by myself.

-- Ayra Islam. Human Resources.

Preparation.

If you know your test will be open book, prepare your detailed notes in advance (I like to use OneNote tables; slides on one side and notes of the slides on the other) so that you can scroll or flip through them quickly during the exam. Make use of the 'Important' tags on OneNote as well as colour-coding highlighting. Make the important points and sentences pop out, but keep a good amount of detailed background information in case you need to refer to it during the exam. Don't forget to fact check your notes before rather than during the exam!

-- Anthony Nguyen. Digital Branding.



Pomodoro Technique.

A great study technique I use is the pomodoro technique. You basically study for 25 minutes straight, then have a 5 minute break to do anything you want. You do that 4 times, then you have a long break -- maybe 45mins. Rinse and repeat.

-- James Bradley. Events.

Flexibility.

I find it helpful having a general schedule (not a strict timetable) to be followed for each day so that I complete what's required by the end of the week. Setting a constrained timetable makes you miss tasks and altogether give up and procrastinate in some cases.

-- Aravind Venkateswaran. Human Resources.

AMINO ACID OF THE WEEK

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[CYSTEINE]

CHEMICAL STRUCTURE

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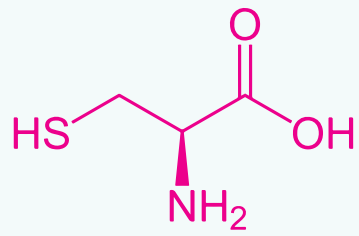

CYSTEINE

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> DNA CODONS TGT TGC

SULFUR CONTAINING.

POLAR: YES
ROLE: FUNDAMENTAL METABOLITE

USES

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CAN CONVERT TO GLUCOSE IN HUMAN BODY.
PLAYS ROLE IN IMMUNE SYSTEM COMMUNICATION.
USED TO TREAT PARACETAMOL OVERDOSE.
CAN PREVENT ASIAN FLUSH AND HANGOVERS (NAC)
[N-ACETYLATED FORM]

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