Graduate Training Grant Application Cover Letter

The graduate educational experience requires that students receive the training in cutting edge research methods needed to become leaders in scientific research. While Michigan Tech students receive excellent training in many subjects, not all cutting-edge ecological research methods are taught here. For that reason, the opportunity to travel for training opportunities can be a major enhancement of graduate education. For the above reasons, ESC has initiated a formalized program of research training mini-grants to enable graduate students to travel for educational enhancement via participation in formal short courses or informal lab exchanges for training at other institutions. Our vision for the types of formal training opportunities is programs like Jim Ehleringer’s isotope course (Isocamp; http://www.ehleringer.net/bio7473.html). This program’s primary purpose is to fund skill-based training where a specific skill set is needed to carry out the student’s research program. Courses that do not clearly provide such training will receive a lower priority for funding.

Criteria for evaluation of applications include all of the following:

- relevance and importance to the research program of the student
- availability of alternatives here on campus
- quality of the training opportunity
- application for program scholarship, if available
- provision of match from other sources (advisor, graduate school, school or department, self, etc.)
- degree program (priority to PhDs)

The number and size of grants will depend on availability of funds and prioritization of this program relative to other ESC programs. We hope to provide up to $10,000 annually. Typical tuition in this type of program ranges from $2500 (Two week Isocamp, including room and partial board). Therefore, grants in the range of $1000–$2500 should cover 50% or more of the total cost of participating in most courses (a match is required – see application form).

In some cases workshops are free but travel funding is needed, e.g. the JGI microbial metagenomics workshops (http://www.jgi.doe.gov/meetings/mgm/index.html). In this case students can apply for regular travel grants, which have been expanded to cover training workshops in addition to meetings. Travel grants can also be used to defray costs of travel to paid short courses.
Graduate Student Training Grants Application Form

The Ecosystem Science Center (ESC) is pleased to announce the availability of Graduate Student Training Grants. The goal of these grants is to assist with the costs of a short course or lab training visit to learn new skills not available here at Michigan Tech. Funding is limited and awards will be made competitively based on merit.

**Application deadlines:** 5 weeks before the first day of classes for Fall, Spring and Summer semesters.

Grants are limited to $2500 in requested ESC funds. Other funding sources for the training (e.g. advisor’s research grants or incentive funds, scholarships, grad school or department funds, personal funds) must be identified. A match from other sources is required (25% to 50%). Level of matching will be considered by the review panel. Scholarships from the program being attended and travel expenses paid personally by the student can count toward this match. Students are required to apply for scholarships if eligible. A graduate student is eligible to receive one training grant per academic year.

If you were awarded an ESC training grant previously, you must fill out a Training Report before you can be granted any monies for this year. See web for form.

Application Form (when complete, please place in Jill Fisher’s mailbox in the mailroom):

1. Name: Print: ___________________________ Signed: ___________________________
3. Name of course: ___________________________________________________________________
4. Location of course: ___________________________________________________________________
5. Status of course application: application submitted (Y/N) application accepted (Y/N) scholarship applied for (Y/N) scholarship received (Y/N) (Amount ______________)
6. Estimate of course costs:
   - Travel to course ______________ Applied for ESC travel grant for this course? (Y/N)
   - Accommodation ______________
   - Tuition ______________
   - Other (specify) ______________
   - Total ______________
7. Other sources of funding: (Y/N) Amount ______________ Source ______________
8. Previous ESC training grants? (Y/N)
   - Amount __________ Date Received __________ Course Attended ____________________________
9. Amount requested from Ecosystem Science Center this year ____________________________
10. Please attach your justification for attending the short course. Supply a brief course description and specify what skills you hope to gain, why this is critical to your research, why you need to leave Michigan Tech to get this training, and why you chose this course. Also include a link to the official course website or append course information. If this is a lab exchange please attach a letter of invitation from the scientist whose lab you plan to visit. Limit one page.