

# PhD Research Assistantship Available in Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Bio-based Materials Education

Virginia Tech Dept. of Sustainable Biomaterials, Blacksburg, Virginia

National statistics indicate that on average *only 42% of students that transfer from a community college into four-year universities complete a bachelor's degree within six years* of starting their post-secondary education. In addition gaps in training of essential skills and declining enrollments in certain bio-based materials science programs have converged to create a clear educational need for new curriculum development and instructional delivery effectiveness that assists transfer students become better prepared for higher level coursework and career opportunities in Bio-based Materials science.

**Funding** for a Graduate Research Assistantship is available from USDA's Higher Education Program to create and test curriculum materials that incorporate innovative techniques for improving transfer student success through student-centered training that pushes beyond the boundaries of traditional instruction methods and classroom environs.

**Research focus** for the doctoral student assistant would include development, assessment, and delivery of two undergraduate level courses. One focused on analytical and technical skills and a second on leadership and communication skills. Additional opportunities include assisting with developing an educators' network, collecting and analyzing data, and creating a project website for dissemination and discussion of results.

**Required Qualifications:** Interest and experience in curriculum development at the baccalaureate level plus a Master's degree in education, curriculum development, materials science, engineering, renewable materials, agriculture, or related disciplines.

**Target start date:** Summer, Fall semester 2023 or before if possible

**For more information:** contact Dr. Audrey Zink-Sharp, Professor, [agzink@vt.edu](mailto:agzink@vt.edu) or visit <https://sbio.vt.edu/>

See an example of past programs related to this project:  
<https://sbio.vt.edu/SummerCamp/InfoSummerCamp.html>  
and <https://doi.org/10.13073/FPJ-D-22-00030>



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