

Dear Fellow Life Sci's:

My name is Bryant and I am the spearhead behind the current *Life Sciences Evaluation Initiative*. It is an esoteric and inaccessible project title, I know; but this evaluation initiative is actually very relevant to us as students. It asks only two questions: how do we recapture the joy of discovery within the Life Sciences program, and at the same time how can we ensure that our graduates are competitive critical thinkers and problem solvers? In other words, this evaluation initiative is driven by *your* needs as students for intellectual stimulation and training. It is to be fuelled fundamentally by *your* curiosity and compelled by *your* ambition. I hope therefore that you the students will partner with me in figuring out how to realize a new and re-imagined iteration of our Life Sciences program.

"In other words, this evaluation initiative is driven by *your* needs as students ..."

Project Overview

While I have my own ideas about how to answer the above questions, it is probably most useful to consult a wide variety of stakeholders on these matters. To that end I am hoping to gather data from three different perspectives:

1. **The students' perspective:** What do you want to learn, and what do you not want to learn? What teaching strategies work, and what teaching strategies do not work?
2. **The admissions perspective:** What makes a competitive medical or graduate student?
3. **The educators' perspective:** What are the educational best practices employed both at Queen's as well as at other Universities?

During this data gathering phase, my chief goal will be "*listening for resonances*"—a strategy first adopted by the Queen's Academic Writing Team. That is to say that I hope, during my many hours of interviewing, to stumble across shared ideas from multiple perspectives about *what* undergraduates in the health sciences should be learning and *how* they should be learning it. I then intend to consolidate those ideas into specific recommendations that can be implemented given current resource constraints, and finally to present those recommendations in the form of a report to the Life Sciences administration by the end of April 2012.

Your Part

In order to do this, however, I will require your assistance; I will require your *resonances*. If you have the time, therefore, I would strongly encourage you to sign up for an interview at the Doodle address shown. Interviews will be half an hour long and will be driven by a standard set of questions which are similar (but not the same as) the ones listed above. Although the questions are standard, they are designed to steer the conversation rather than to limit your responses. You should therefore have ample latitude to express your thoughts about the Life Sciences program; and, if not, there is also a free section at the end of the interview where you are free to voice any opinion that you feel has not been covered thus far in the interview. Finally, if you have any questions about me, the project, or the Life Sciences program, I would invite you to contact me at cshum@jd14.law.harvard.edu. Please do not hesitate to bring anything on your mind to my attention.

Regards,

Bryant Shum (LISC '11)

Contact: cshum@jd14.law.harvard.edu

Doodle: www.doodle.com/mrshum