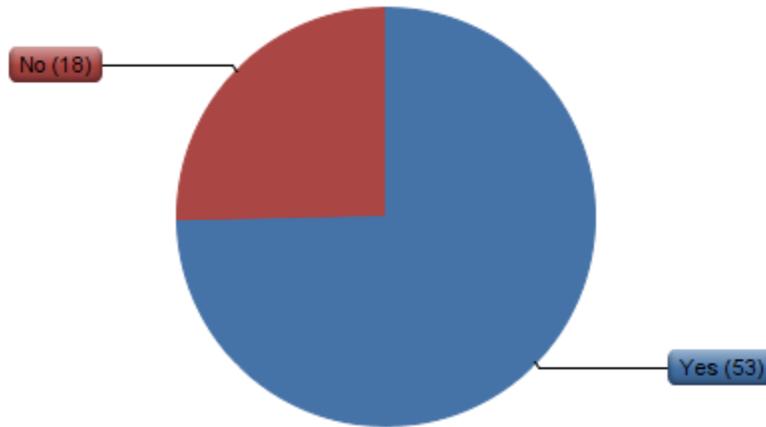
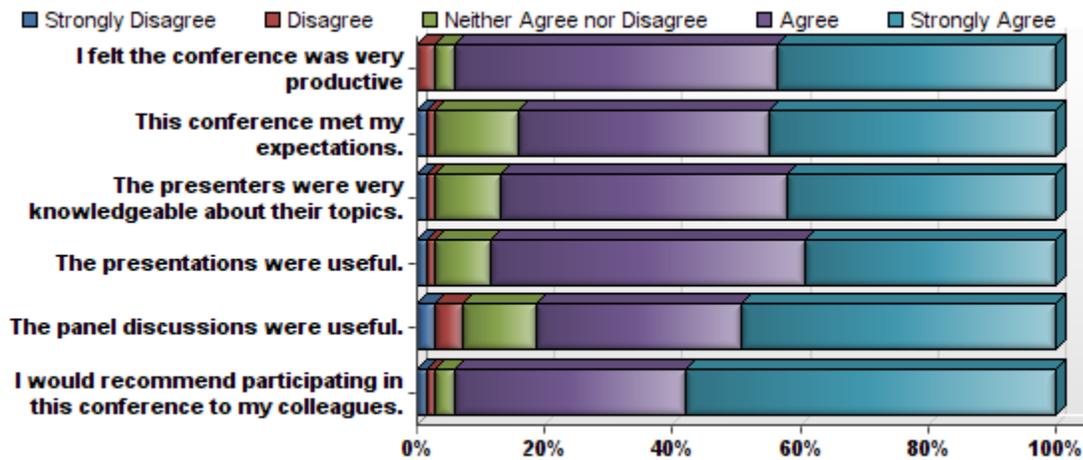


URC 2015 Evaluation Summary

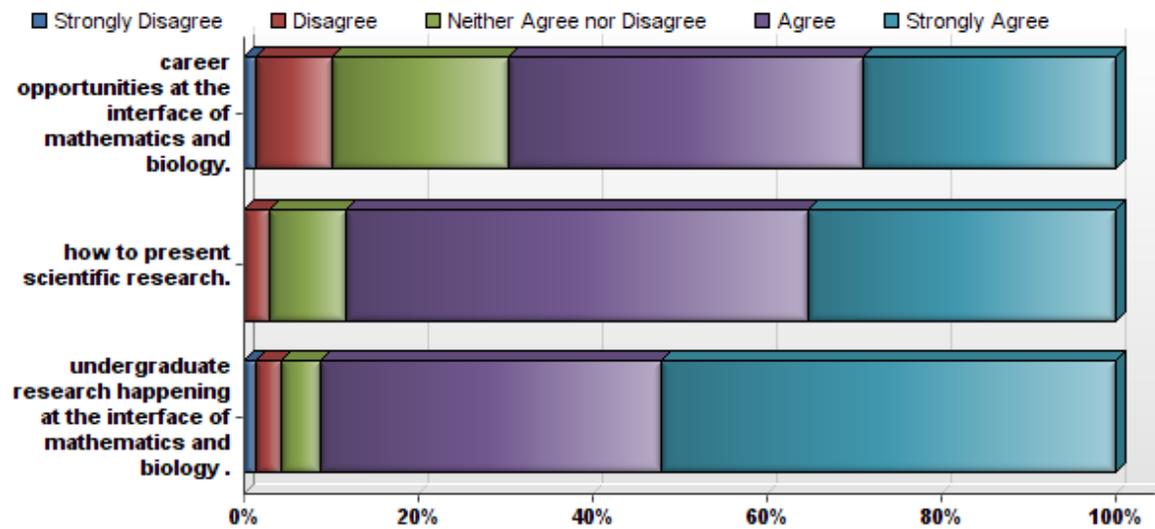
1. Are you an undergraduate student?



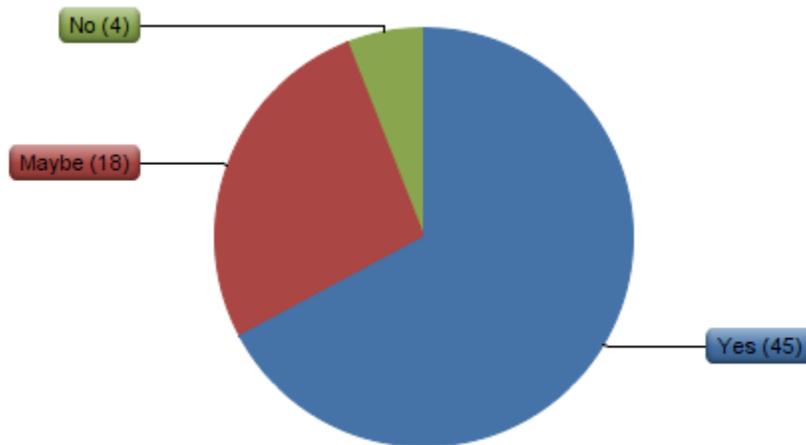
2. Please check the appropriate box to indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about this conference:



3. Please check the appropriate box to indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. As a result of participating in this conference, I am more knowledgeable about:



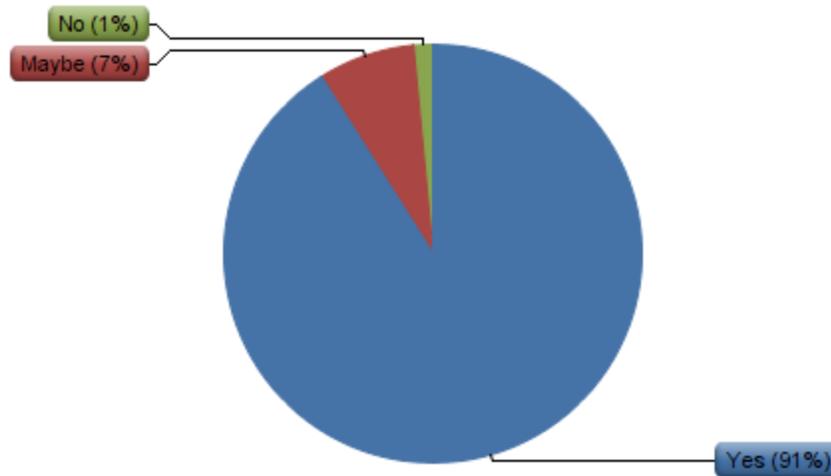
4. Do you feel that participating in the conference helped you make connections with others within the interdisciplinary field of math and biology?



- *The career/graduate panel was very useful because I was still up in the air about what I wanted to do in the future, but they gave me some insights I did not have before.*
- *An opportunity for undergraduates to present their work and learn more about the broader field of mathematical biology.*
- *Being able to see and learn about all the different research topics at the interface of biology and mathematics*
- *The discussion panels. Especially for me researching a social issue it lends itself to more discussion. Though the discussions I received so many great ideas and interesting comments.*
- *The graduate program sessions with all of the tables. It was good to talk to professors about future plans and get their input. It was also good to talk about summer internships.*
- *Career panel Poster sessions*
- *Give undergraduate students the opportunity to present their work, to be exposed to the research of students and faculty from other universities.*
- *Getting to meet other fellow undergraduate students and some professionals and professors.*
- *Networking and the sessions*
- *Attending talks and panel discussion.*
- *Communication and support among other individuals in the field I would like to study.*
- *The Panel was the most useful.*
- *The opportunity to present research; to give a talk or present a poster. This was the most important part, as we undergraduates rarely have the chance to do this.*
- *Meeting and interacting with others in the fields of math and biology.*
- *The panel where students got to directly ask faculty questions*
- *Seeing other presentations was the most useful aspect because I was able to see how my presentations should be like in the future. It calmed my nerves about presenting when I saw my peers present.*
- *I found the research presentations most useful (both from the students and from the invited speakers). Most of the presentations I saw were great, and all of the invited talks were fantastic. I am interested in research within academia and curious regarding the pursuits of my fellow students, and these presentations provided great information regarding both. Additionally, the demonstration of interdisciplinary research was quite interesting.*
- *The networking and the presentations. Not only are individuals given the opportunity to meet other students, but also professors, scientists, and mathematicians. The presentations were informative and also aided as sort of a guide on how to present and convey information to an audience.*
- *Everyone was easily accessible. The keynote presenters were around and open to questions.*
- *The grad school panel was useful because I felt like all of speakers spoke very truthfully.*
- *The presenters had very interesting research topics.*
- *The panel discussions and the mini graduate school fair.*
- *The opportunity to interact and share ideas with professors and students from all over.*
- *The panel of advisors was the most useful experience.*
- *To connect with students - Talking with students about their research (poster sessions) Talking with professors and researchers - Career panel and break times*
- *All of it was very useful.*
- *Platform for undergraduates to present research, and to explore careers and research avenues in math and biology*
- *I feel the poster session peaked my interest in different areas of STEM fields and showed me the diversity of math and biology.*
- *This is a great conference for undergraduates! They don't feel overwhelmed, but they get to present their research and see others' research! My students always enjoy it.*
- *Seeing the different research opportunities in this field*

- *Student oral presentations and poster presentations.*
- *The poster session. I think this was the biggest networking opportunity.*
- *The most useful aspect of the conference was the panel.*
- *The main presentations were extremely interesting and the panel brought up a lot of good questions.*
- *Being able to mingle with the senior members of the conference.*
- *I liked the opportunity for many of the students to present oral presentations*

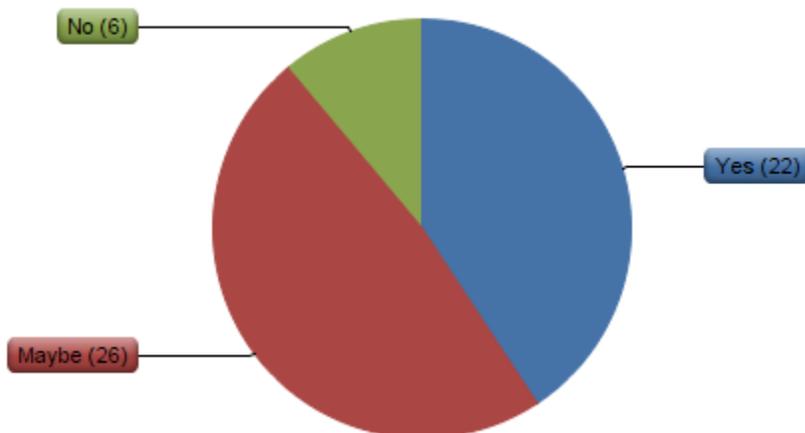
6. Do you feel the conference was successful in achieving its goal of creating a forum through which undergraduates can present research and make new connections at the interface of math and biology?



7. Comments:

- *The connection aspect not as much but definitely for presenting research*
- *The conference allowed for a safe environment for the presenters to learn how to better present research to others.*
- *Present research, yes. Make connections, no.*
- *The conversations I had with other conference participants were very useful to stoking mathematical biology ideas.*
- *Yes! Everything was well organized and easy to follow. I like how go with the flow it was while being extremely professional. You truly got to connect with those people around you.*
- *There were many opportunities to talk to math based people and give them a more biological perspective on their research and vice versa*
- *I got to know some more people working at this interface.*

8. Do you feel that the exchange of ideas that took place during the conference will influence your career plans?



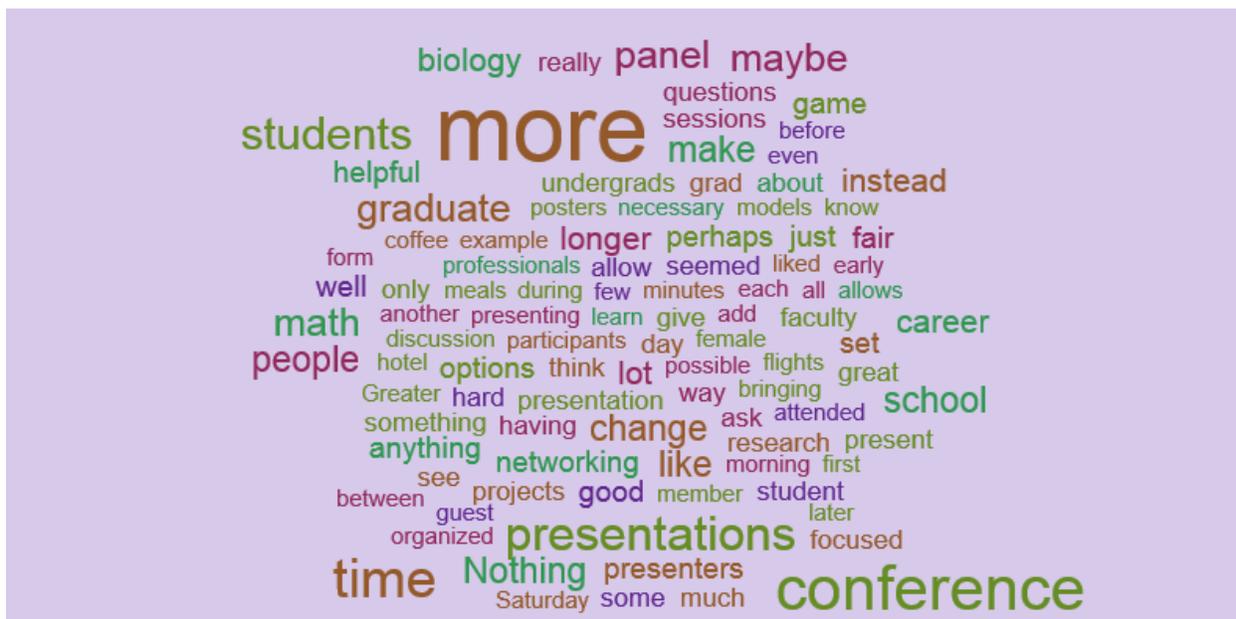
9. Please explain impact on career plans:

- *I am more likely to go to graduate school now and to not worry about making the wrong choice between many career options*
- *Through many posters and oral presentations I heard many good ideas to contribute to the already wonderful projects*
- *The exchange of ideas at least made me consider going into the field of Mathematical Biology in graduate school.*
- *Tenure-track faculty.*
- *The guest speaker, Rachel Lenhart, really helped me to decide to pursue a program in MD,PhD.*
- *The career panel helped me a lot.*
- *I had a pretty strong idea about the direction of my career prior to this conference but am definitely aware of the opportunities in math biology that I had no previous knowledge of.*
- *My research field fell more into this topic, but my goal is more of a social one, not necessarily science. The modeling really helped me realize I like life can be depicted into models to help in fields I would more interested in. The zombie modeling by Robert Smith? Definitely helped me see understand how modeling works.*
- *I have been hesitant to go into a math heavier field, but after the panel discussion I think I would be successful in the field as long as I am eager to work hard to greater my understanding*
- *I was considering an M.D.Ph.D because I'm interested in doing research in medicine. This has strengthened the likelihood of me doing these things. On the mathematics side of things, I'm looking more for a pure application.*
- *I was on the fence about what I wanted to do about graduate school and teaching, but now I know what I want to do.*
- *Not sure. It definitely made me want to do more research and attend more conferences.*
- *I am not going into any research this early in my career, because I plan on working in a forensic crime scene lab. I would like more opportunities for discussion of going from undergrad to a grad program (or directly into the field) and then doing research following many years of experience.*

Since I feel like it would be easier to research topics when you have a broad knowledge of the field prior to the research.

- *One man gave me info on UT's ecology master's program.*
- *From viewing different projects I was able to determine the topic of my next research in mathematical biology.*
- *I am late in my undergraduate career, so I have already made many decisions for my future. I don't have the time to change some aspects of my path. Nevertheless, the conference was extremely valuable to me anyway, even if it did not alter my career plans dramatically.*
- *I am interested in biomedical engineering, and this conference was offered a variety of topics related to the subject.*
- *Since I don't know what career path I plan on taking after graduating, simply being introduced to different people--students and faculty--from different backgrounds might help or have introduced me to potential career paths I was not previously familiar with*
- *I feel as though my scope for graduate programs and potential careers was narrow before this conference.*
- *I found many of the things discussed during the conference quite interesting, primarily from the interdisciplinary side of things. I wish first and foremost to be a physicist; however, the conference did a fantastic job of showcasing the utility of interdisciplinary research. Though I'm not sure how much biological research I will pursue in my professional career, the conference certainly illustrated that fantastic research can happen when a variety of disciplines are brought together.*
- *A lot of individuals were working on similar projects or with similar tools, and they could provide feedback and insight information on possible future directions.*
- *I saw a lot of new topics in mathematical biology that I might like to study.*
- *Going into the conference I wasn't aware of the various career options available to me. After the conference, I am more aware of the different fields I can pursue with my degree.*
- *I am already planning to go to grad. School for statistics.*
- *I felt more informed about academic positions and career tracks after leaving.*
- *Absolutely. I learned of new applications and what my colleagues are engaging in with their students.*
- *I am already planning on going to graduate school in applied mathematics/biomathematics*
- *I am still open to a lot of possibilities, but after participating in the conference, I am sure that I want to use mathematical techniques in my future research. I find it an extremely useful tool that can help any project.*

10. What would you change about the conference?

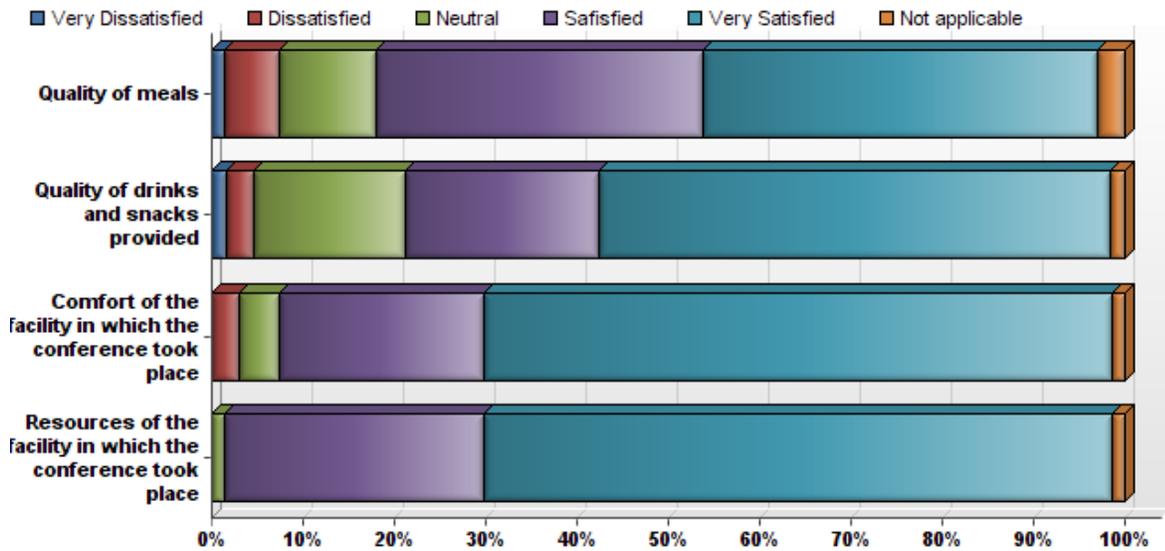


- *Nothing, I think it was great.*
- *I was happy with the way it was run and organized*
- *I am not sure, maybe include more of a biological aspect instead of just math during the grad fair*
- *I wish the conference would have started on Saturday morning and ended Saturday night instead of going into Sunday.*
- *I enjoyed everything about the conference.*
- *Graduate panels are not very helpful and usually give contradictory information. I suggest cutting this out completely.*
- *-Have a graduate school panel separate from the career panel, with the graduate school panel first. -The posters and grad school fair were much spaced out/too much time allotted. This gave students time to check out of their hotel, but there were a lot of students just "checked out" mentally and couldn't refocus on the conference. Keeping a tighter schedule or spacing out the more self-paced events would both be fixes.*
- *Nothing aside from removing the apathetic participants who attended.*
- *Take out career and grad school panels or make them one panel. They seemed like a waste of time and I didn't learn anything really new. Maybe set it up similar to a career fair or a one-on-one networking opportunity instead of everyone having to listen to the answers to a few people's specific questions that only pertain to them.*
- *The graduate panel was geared toward math students and not biology students, all the graduate schools were about math.*
- *I would like to see more professionals in the workforce there to explain how their math and biology education has helped them succeed.*
- *The presentations were very good but some seemed very similar (i.e. various SEIR models). I would like to see more diversity in the research.*
- *For the people who got funding for flights, it was hard to coordinate exactly what time we wanted. It was helpful you picked out the flights, but maybe if we chose them and you reimbursed us instead that would be more helpful.*

- *The hotel*
- *Choose presentations that aren't so much advisor led*
- *nothing, it was very well organized*
- *I really would not change that much. It would be nice for there to be a time period for people to look at posters, so they may ask questions to the presenters at a later time.*
- *Have more people involved*
- *I don't know if this is possible, but besides the guest speaker, could there be two options for each talk. Also, not sure how feasible but more options for vegetarians and vegans.*
- *This survey. Are some of the questions appropriate for faculty members taking students to this conference and even (perhaps) for students at the conference. As a faculty member, is really necessary to ask me if the conference is useful for me to learn "how to present scientific research" or if it is the "presentations or panel discussion" were useful? Is it good to ask a faculty member if the "presenters were very knowledgeable about their topics"? The majority of presenters are undergrads. Some are knowledgeable on their work, but it varies significantly because they are undergrads. What's important is the experiences the undergraduates gain by attending the conference.*
- *Better coffee*
- *Make it longer. No, seriously, I would put more time before lunch and the following talks.*
- *Make it a lot less math focused and more biology focused. It was mainly just a math conference.*
- *Panel was great, but note that as sometimes before, the female participants skew to the early career end. Hard to balance, I know, but senior female panelists would be good role models...*
- *Bringing in more graduate programs related to biology, bringing in and balancing the math and biology professional guest speakers, and maybe do more networking the second day as well, or something different? (The forensic side of me would be saying "The Body Farm!!", but I do understand it is only accessible to specified individuals).*
- *Start the conference earlier on the first day and have it go shorter the second day*
- *Smaller concurrent sessions? Perhaps three instead of two sessions?*
- *I would change the time slots for each presenter to present their projects to a shorter amount of time. (i.e. from 15 minutes of presenting to 10-12 minutes of presenting)*
- *I would space out the timing and allow for more breaks between presentations. Also, don't turn the lights off during speeches if it can be avoided. I was finding it hard to stay focused so early in the morning. Also, stronger coffee would be very helpful.*
- *I would have liked to see more professionals present. For example, the medical school student's presentation was my favorite. Though I appreciated all the talks from undergrads, I would have benefited from seeing more folks who are established in the field.*
- *Greater variety of vegetarian options.*
- *If I had to change something, I think that I might prefer the panel discussions to be more individual than a large discussion.*
- *If I were to change anything regarding the conference, I might add an option for longer student presentations, perhaps just a few slots for students that indicate they might want to give a longer presentation and submit exceptional research projects. There were a couple great presentations that I attended that seemed like they might have been able to cover their projects in greater depth if they had extra time. In general I found the student presentations good, and it may be that time simply does not allow for longer presentations. I might also add a bit more social media presence to the conference! Something like a group on Facebook or LinkedIn might help attendees organize themselves (and, for those who flew, carpool to reduce transportation costs). I thought the networking component of the conference was effective; this is not necessary but it might make it even more so.*

- *The conference was a little busy. There wasn't a lot of time in between presentations, especially considering possible transitions to another room for another presentation.*
- *Not having any career building workshops. For example having a workshop on how to write a statement of purpose or interview skills.*
- *The rules to the ice breaker game; make them clearer.*
- *Nothing, it was very well done.*
- *I would make the networking sessions more personal. The set game allows you to meet a lot of people, but not in a very meaningful way. Perhaps give students assigned seats at tables for meals, so that they are forced to have longer conversations together.*
- *I liked the idea of the set game, but they were too transient. Maybe encourage people to form sets and sit down to meals together? (maybe an offshoot of the set game, since in its current form only allows for groups of 3 people)*
- *It works well!*
- *Possibly a larger and more diverse graduate school fair.*
- *I would have a more breakfast options.*
- *I would have more than 2 student presentations at once. The Sunday conference could begin later than 8:30 am, and there is a lot more flexibility with the grouping, like if there were an odd number of presenters.*
- *I think it was fine the way it was*
- *Maybe if there should be a tour of UTK labs and more hands on activities that allow students to network*

11. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the conference accommodations:



12. Please indicate any changes NIMBioS can make to improve the resources and/or accommodations available to conference participants:

- *I did not find the food appealing, but that said, I think it is far more important to spend financial resources on anything BUT the food! I appreciate how much of the travel/support was underwritten at this conference.*
- *N/A all was of a high quality*
- *I liked all of the accommodations.*
- *-The hotel was booked concurrently with a football booster club. The thumping music literally stopped at 12:40 am. And I heard from the front desk that the organizer was apprised of this potential conflict... -The snacks ran out! I was networking, networking, hopped in line... empty. That's an easy fix. And I *do* think 3:30pm snacks were a great idea.*
- *Terrible vegetarian/vegan options. I hate mushrooms, so I had mashed potatoes, bread, and broccoli for dinner. The lunch food was cold when it came out, which was pretty gross. Continental breakfast was nothing but bread. Snacks offered nothing for vegans. Coffee was pretty gross.*
- *Everything was great! The coffee was not the best but other than that, excellent quality of food and drinks.*
- *Make sure screens are high enough for people in the audience to see the presentation.*
- *Maybe some variability in the types of food served to the attendants.*
- *More protein sources available at breakfast. Mostly everything at breakfast was a carb. More options for vegetarians and vegans*
- *More options for breakfast?*
- *Better coffee*
- *Not your fault, but the Four Seasons hosted some sort of a high-school football celebration. Parents drinking at all hours of the day in the lobby? Drunken karaoke until midnight under my window? Not great...*
- *Have more vegetarian options.*
- *Maybe taking up different floors, to allow for more exploration of the campus, that may aide in students trying to decide whether the college is "the right match" for them.*
- *Not a lot of allergy friendly options*
- *More eating silverware :)*
- *None. Everything was convenient and delicious*
- *I was a student who received funding to attend the conference (for which I am SO grateful for!). However, there was a big mess that ensued when I arrived to Knoxville... I had no hotel reserved for me. The hotel was luckily able to resolve this for me and put me in a room, but I had to change rooms three times over the course of my stay. I came for three days, yet only was booked for one. This was likely due to a miscommunication or mistake between myself and NIMBioS staff. Though everything went smoothly, I recommend that more care be given in the future in terms of accommodation. Similarly, in future conferences I recommend allowing students to arrange their own airfare. Then, upon presentation of a receipt, NIMBioS can reimburse appropriately. My ticket was arranged a week before the conference. This meant (1) higher cost of airfare and (2) short notice of my plans. If I were able to take care of my flight by myself, I would have been able to figure out a travel situation that suited me better. It also would have been cheaper, which is a big deal for an undergraduate student (we don't typically have impressive incomes). Again, I am extremely thankful for the support--I simply think there could be adjustments to make everything smoother in future events.*
- *Greater variety of vegetarian options.*

- Provide some direction for those with cards indicating special dietary needs Provide yogurt at the breakfast
- I thought the resources were fantastic! In general the accommodations were wonderful - from the hotel (I was funded by the conference) to the conference facility.
- Can you please set out the packets of honey at the beginning of the conference? The only time they appeared was the second day of the conference at breakfast.
- They were nice.
- Housing and meals were great! Can't complain about the facility either.
- None. All was great. The conference is a well-polished machine.
- The hotel did not have rooms for my partner and me when we arrived in Knoxville and we had to stay in the hospitality suite.

13. Please provide any additional comments about your overall experience with the conference



- I came several times already and I am looking forward to come again with a new cohort of students next year
- Very memorable weekend! I would recommend to many people to join.
- It was a very fun conference and I hope to be able to attend again next year.
- THANK YOU for funding students to come participate. I cannot overemphasize how wonderful it is to not worry students over money.
- This was one of the best put together conferences I have been to. Very well organized. Suzanne and Kelly did a fantastic job of everything.
- Great conference!
- Great conference. This experience was only possible due to NIMBioS generous funding to our group!
- This was a wonderful conference. I feel I gathered a lot of useful information regarding graduate programs, careers, and research opportunities.

- *I really learned this weekend. I never had done research, so the whole experience was new. I got to understand the field better and see what was actually happening in the modeling world. This conference is helpful for anyone trying to choose a career path. It also shows how you different disciplines can mesh well together.*
- *I was extremely displeased with the hotel accommodations. There was one bed for three people and I had gotten maybe 4 hours of sleep per night due to belligerently drunken guests staying in adjacent rooms.*
- *It was enjoyable and productive. I would definitely come again!*
- *I liked the conference and I feel that it enriched my research experience.*
- *I really enjoyed to conference. I met new people, and I caught up with old friends.*
- *I was quite disappointed with the conference. I was expecting it to be much better than it was. It was pretty much completely math based and the main speaker spoke far too quickly to understand him. I also feel that the zombie talk was a waste of time when there are real issues in the world that need people to go into research for. Instead the zombie talk influenced the majority to research that instead of the pressing issues the world faces.*
- *The food was amazing, I would personally like to thank the staff on hand for putting it out, picking up plates, decor, and other catering responsibilities. The previous changes seem to be suffice enough, I did enjoy going to explore the college, only wished I could've seen more of it.*
- *I LOVE IT!!! I hope I can attend again next year.*
- *I really enjoyed this conference and hope to participate in the following years. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of this research conference.*
- *It was nice.*
- *I had a wonderful time. I felt professional and privileged to attend this conference.*
- *I thought NIMBioS was a fantastic experience overall. The research was interesting, the attendees were friendly, and the food was great! Jokes aside, this conference was wonderful, and given the opportunity I think I might return sometime in the future. It is certainly a conference I would recommend to peers working in applicable fields - and truth be told, some of my physics colleagues were a bit jealous!*
- *The overall conference was very good. I enjoyed it and the individuals. The SETS game should always be a part of the NIMBioS conference, it really is an excellent way to network.*
- *I really loved the conference. It surpassed all of my expectations. All of the presentations were interesting, the travel was booked well, and I really like that vegetarian options were offered. All in I thought it was a great conference and I would attend it again.*
- *Perhaps have a more interesting variety of featured speakers. The speakers that attended were good, but it would have been better if Robert Smith? Had only given one talk, and someone who didn't model infectious diseases gave the next one.*
- *I sometimes have trouble keeping up with people I meet after events. Maybe there could be a social media group for the event? (Facebook, LinkedIn?)*
- *I loved attending. This is my second time participating and I loved it as much as I did the first time. I was especially excited that my students were able to see how the undergraduate research they are doing is comparable to their peers. I think my students were also able to enjoy the featured speakers and the topics they presented. My students are re-energized about math biology after attending this conference.*
- *I enjoyed the overall conference and plan to attend again.*
- *It would have been nice to have signs outside or inside the building to know where to go.*