Task #2—Understanding the “Big Picture”

You have met with your mentor and selected a pdb file for research and model design. Task #2 is designed to help you prepare to write an abstract about your research topic. You can visit the SMART Team website for previous SMART Team abstracts to see example abstracts. http://cbm.msoe.edu/stupro/smart/previous/index.html

Briefly answer these questions and send your responses in an email to Shannon.

1. Why do we care about your protein? What is the “big picture” that we can connect this protein to? Why might the average person care about this protein? Is there a disease connection? Could this protein be used in a potential therapy? Why does your researcher do the work that he/she does? Imagine trying to talk to a non-biology family member about this – provide him/her with the “so what?” of your protein.

2. What is the significance of your molecule? You can answer this question by describing what function the molecule has in the cell and to the overall health of the organism. What does this molecule do normally within the cell? Is there a ligand that your molecule interacts with?

3. How is your specific protein connected to the larger picture that you described in question #1?

4. What is the basic research question of your science mentor(s)? How does this research question connect to the protein that you will be modeling?

Remember that when writing your abstract, you want to start off with the “big picture” and then move into the specifics of your protein. This task is designed to help you develop your abstract (Task 4).

Send Shannon an email with your responses to the questions.

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