The Office of Dietary Supplements (ODS) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is offering a one-week educational opportunity to provide fundamental knowledge of dietary supplements to teachers and their doctoral or post-doctoral students/fellows with a serious interest in this subject. This 5-day intensive practicum will provide a thorough overview and grounding about issues, concepts, unknowns, and controversies about dietary supplements and supplement ingredients. It will also emphasize the importance of scientific investigations to evaluate the efficacy, safety, and value of these products for health promotion and disease prevention and treatment as well as how to carry out this type of research.

Topics to be addressed include:
* supplement use in the United States and reasons for use;
* the regulatory framework governing supplements;
* differences in bringing foods, drugs, and supplements to market;
* supplement quality;
* assessing the health effects of foods and supplements; and
* developing policies and advice about supplement use based on science.

Participants will also spend a day in Washington, DC, to meet with various stakeholders—Congressional representatives, the dietary supplement industry, consumer advocacy groups, and media—who study, advocate, regulate, or educate about dietary supplements. Participants will also learn about several databases that inform users about research on supplement ingredients, identify the contribution of supplements to total nutrient intakes, and provide data on nutrients and bioactive components in foods.

**Eligibility**
This practicum is open to faculty and doctoral-level students in all health-related disciplines such as nutrition, food science, pharmacology and pharmacognosy, exercise/kinetics, medicine, dentistry, nursing, and complementary and alternative medicine (CAM). It is our hope that faculty will take the knowledge provided back to their institutions to provide more education on supplement issues, and that students and investigators attending the practicum might consider undertaking research on dietary supplements.

**Dates/Times/Location/Costs**
The practicum will be held June 14 through June 18, 2010 (Monday through Friday) at the Natcher Building on the main NIH campus in Bethesda, Maryland. Sessions from Monday through Thursday will be held from approximately 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. Friday’s session will run from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm.
There is no cost to attend the practicum - travel awards are available for students (see below).
**Application Process**
To apply to the practicum, please mail, email, or fax the following information by March 31 to practicum coordinator Régine Laroche at the address below:
* Your name and full contact information (home address; email address; phone contacts).
* A curriculum vitae or resumé.
* A one-page letter outlining why this practicum might be important to you in your career development and/or teaching activities.
* A one-page letter of support from the relevant professor (if a student) or department chair or dean (if a faculty member).
* Students who wish to request a travel award (see the section below) should note this in their application letter and provide a justification.

Applicants will be notified by April 10 whether they will be registered to attend the practicum or be placed on a waiting list.

**Travel Awards**
Travel awards will be available to students only (no faculty) to help defray the costs of travel, accommodations, and meals. In most cases, the amount of the award will be $1,500. Make your best case for why you should receive a travel award.

Selection criteria:
* Your research experience demonstrates interest and/or relevance in the area dietary supplements.
* Those who anticipate the greatest travel costs (e.g., you live far from the Washington DC area or are served by an airport that does not offer relatively inexpensive flights to this area) will be given special consideration.

**Contacting Us**
Please contact us if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Régine Laroche, Practicum Coordinator
Office of Dietary Supplements
National Institutes of Health
6100 Executive Blvd., MSC 7517
Suite 3B01
Bethesda, MD 20892-7517
(For courier service, such as FedEx, UPS, and Airborne, use "Rockville, MD 20852" as the last line in the address instead of Bethesda)

Phone: 301-435-2920
Fax: 301-480-1845
Email: larocher@od.nih.gov
Web: http://odspracticum.od.nih.gov