Symposium – 20 Bachelor of Biochemistry in Brazil Chair: Bayardo B. Torres, IQ-USP

SP.20.4. 40 years of teaching biochemistry in the United States

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Abstract

Forty years of teaching Biochemistry – successes, setbacks and stories – will be described and the future of Biochemistry teaching will be predicted. Faculty in my Biochemistry Department in the United States teach Biochemistry courses at all University levels – to professional students, graduate students, science undergraduates and even undergraduate arts majors (biochemistry for poets). Students frequently think (unfairly, I'd say) that Biochemistry is their most difficult course. In my experience, medical students are the most competitive, pharmacy students are the most interested, dental students are mostly focused on teeth & oral decay, grad students and science undergraduates have the largest range of interest and attention span, and undergraduate poets often ask the best questions. Laboratory-based courses have been dropped in recent years because of too much expense and time commitment, but rotations by first-year graduate students through faculty research laboratories remain very popular and successful. The best undergraduates also work in faculty labs for University credit. On-line Biochemistry lecture courses are now common and provide both challenges and opportunities for Biochemistry Departments.

Keywords: Teaching Biochemistry; Education.