

# Duke



## BASS CONNECTIONS

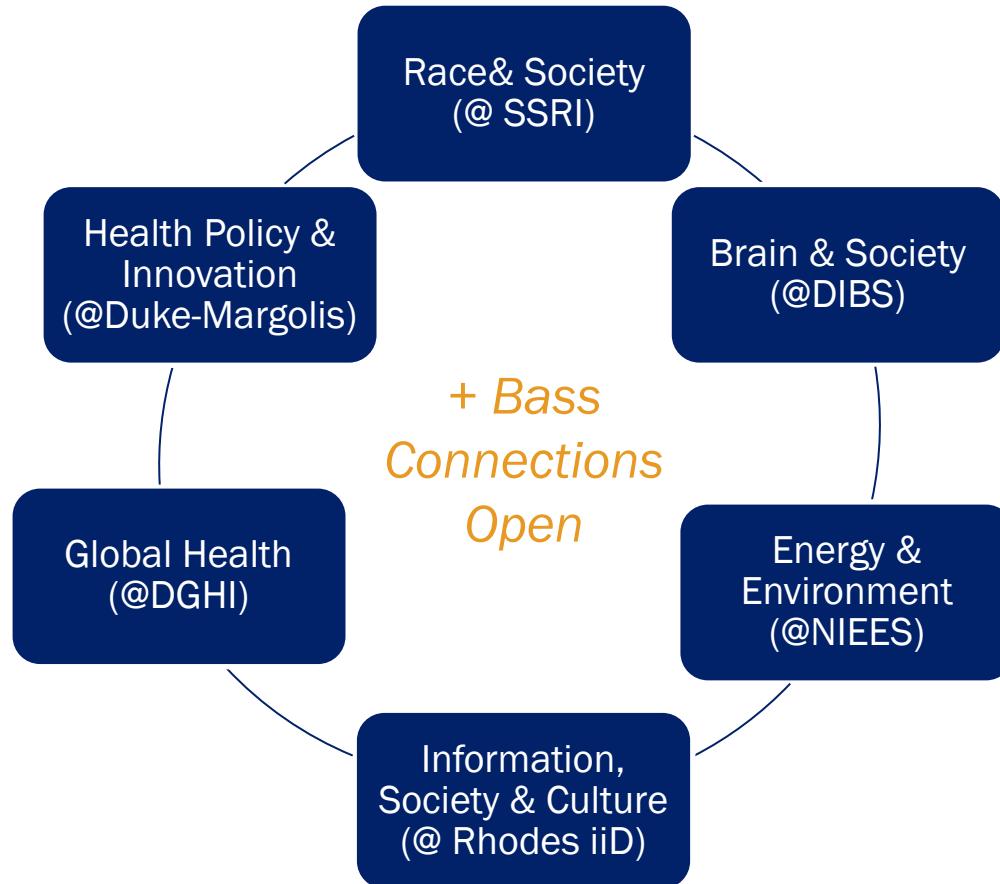


# The Bass Connections Model

## THREE CORE CONNECTIONS



# 6 Interdisciplinary Themes



# Theme Leaders & Administrators

## Brain & Society

**Nicole Schramm-Sapyta** (Duke Institute for Brain Sciences)  
**Kelly Harrison** (Bass Connections)

## Energy & Environment

**Tom Cinq-Mars** (NIEES)  
**Bryan Koen** (NIEES)  
**Colleen Nieto** (NIEES)  
**Katie Cloud** (NIEES)

## Information, Society & Culture

**Phil Stern** (History)  
**Liana Coste-Gaton** (Bass Connections)

## Global Health

**Charlie Nunn** (Evolutionary Anthropology)  
**Lysa MacKeen** (Duke Global Health Institute)

## Race & Society

**Kiesha Bentley-Edwards** (Medicine; Cook Center on Social Equity)  
**Kelly Harrison** (Bass Connections)

## Health Policy & Innovation

**Beth Gifford** (Sanford School of Public Policy)  
**Tiffany Chan** (Margolis Center for Health Policy)  
*Sam Repka (Margolis Center for Health Policy)*

## Central Program Office

**Ed Balleisen** (Senior VP for Interdisc. Programs)  
**Meghan O'Neil** (Director)  
**Kelly Harrison** (Sr. Program Coordinator)  
\*Bass Connections Open managed centrally

## Project Teams

- 72 teams in 2025-26: 650 undergraduates; 200 graduate students; 250 faculty leaders; majority of teams w/ external partners
- 79 teams *in* 2026-2027

## Courses

- ~ 75 affiliated courses incorporating collaborative, project work
- Collaborative Project Courses Faculty Fellows Program (cohort planned for 2026)

## Summer Research Experiences

- Summer “Plus” Programs
- Summer Neuroscience Program
- Global Health Student Research Training Program

## Linked Experiences & Capstone Work

- Student research awards
- DukeEngage, Dukelmmerse
- Master’s projects

# General Operating Principles for Teams

- **Length:** 9 to 12 months (with possibility of continuing)
- **Course credit:** Tutorial or research independent study
  - Exceptions: advanced graduate students; no-credit options
  - Workload = 12 hours per week
  - Grading practices and rubrics
- **Team meetings:**
  - At least once a week
  - **Set time in advance!** (try to avoid spanning multiple class periods)
  - Space

# Elements of Team Success



## 1. Team structure and layered mentorship models

- Intact team vs. sub-team models
- Project managers
- Differentiated roles for graduate students (sub-team leads, technical leads)

## 2. Foundation setting

- Start on IRB early
- Resources to help students get up-to-speed
- Assignment to jump start the year
- Team building

## 3. Clear expectations for participation and engagement

- Project goals and expectations template with grading rubric
- Team ground rules

# Elements of Team Success



## 4. Shared, clearly defined goals, roles and timelines

- [Team charter](#) and project plan
- Expect student initiative/ownership but provide scaffolding
- Team and individual goals

## 5. Regularly scheduled and well-organized meetings

- Use time to tackle group issues; not just reporting out/lecture
- Assign shared ownership of meetings; roles
- Action items and follow-up

## 6. Team leader engagement and partnership

- Team leaders attend meetings
- Team leaders communicate shared messages to students

# Elements of Team Success



## 7. Outputs and Outcomes:

- Your team defines success; failure (of outcomes) is an option
- Outputs and outcomes can be creative and wide-ranging

## 8. Opportunities for reflection and presentation

- Blogs, journals, portfolios
- Formal and informal presentations

### Output Examples

- New service delivery models
- Publications, policy/white papers
- Conferences/events
- Prototypes
- Algorithms
- Data collection/analysis
- Exhibits
- Websites
- Grant submissions
- Oral histories

# Basic Expectations

- Successful recruitment of at least 5 students (inc. undergrads)
- Faculty leaders should be regularly engaged; Project managers should complement not replace faculty engagement
- Notify us of travel involving students 4 to 6 weeks in advance
- Notify us of roster changes
- Communicate with us about issues and successes
- Follow standard academic policies
- Stay within budget
- Recognize the program in publications, conferences, etc. (“Bass Connections” – not BASS)
- Participate in the Bass Connections showcase & end of year survey and outcome reporting

# Student Recruitment

- Student applications: Jan. 13 to Feb. 9
- Bass Connections Fair: Jan. 22 (please RSVP!!)
- Application review/interviews: Feb. 10 to March 6
- First round offers: by March 6
- Students respond to offers/offers to waitlisted candidates: March 7-30
- All student selection completed: by March 31

## DKU Students

Can apply if: 1) they will be at Duke for one semester, or 2) there is a DKU co-leader.

Not eligible for credit if participating from DKU with no DKU co-leader.

# Student Inquiries: Questions to prepare for

- What types of skills/backgrounds are you seeking for the team?
- What roles do you envision for students? How will students contribute?
- When and how will the team meet?
- Does your project include summer research? **If yes:** Is it mandatory?
- Does the project include travel? **If yes:** Will all students have the opportunity to travel? When will travel take place?
- Do you have paid roles for graduate students (e.g., project manager/TAs)?
- Do I have to participate the whole year? What if I'm studying abroad?
- Will I receive credit? What is the time commitment?

# Setting Expectations Early

- Set a meeting time before forming the team or before student registration
- Consider using interviews to provide students a “realistic job preview”
- Consider a spring kick-off meeting or summer touchpoints
- Set clear expectations for attendance at meetings and participation on the team
- Don’t oversell

## Finance

- Funding period: July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027
- Themes will provide a designated fund code
- Transactions processed by faculty's home departments
- Students generally set up on department payrolls
  - May not pay *and* offer credit for same work
  - Advise discussing offers to PhD students w/student's DGS/DGSA
- May not charge unbudgeted faculty/staff time w/out approval
- Unspent funds will be returned at end of year; extensions available for continuing work *with students*
- Be mindful of asking students to incur expenses

# Resources

- [Team Resource Center](#)
- [Grading and Crediting Guidance](#)
- [Student & Team Leader Policies & Expectations](#)
- [Project Manager Trainings & Resources](#)
- Grant support: [Office of Campus Research Development](#) or [SOM Office of Research Development](#)
- Duke Libraries:
  - Workshops
  - Research specialists
  - Data consulting; Data visualization & digital project support
- Social Science Research Institute:
  - [ModU](#) (videos on social science research methods)
  - Data security and management