



# Evaluation Data Report

## Gene Tree Reconciliation Working Group

### Meeting One: December 16-18, 2010

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## Evaluation Design

### Evaluation Questions

The evaluation of the working group was both formative and summative in nature, in that the data collected from participants was intended to both gain feedback from participants about the quality of the current working group and also to inform future meetings. The evaluation framework was guided by Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of Evaluation model for training and learning programs (Kirkpatrick, 1994<sup>1</sup>). Several questions constituted the foundation for the evaluation:

1. Were participants satisfied with the working group overall?
2. Did the meeting meet participant expectations?
3. Do participants feel the working group made adequate progress toward its stated goals?
4. Do participants feel they gained knowledge about the main issues related to the research problem?
5. Do participants feel they gained a better understanding of the research across disciplines related to the working group's research problem?
6. What impact do participants feel the working group will have on their future research?
7. Were participants satisfied with the accommodations offered by NIMBioS?
8. What changes in accommodations, group format, and/or content would participants like to see at future meetings?

### Evaluation Procedures

An electronic survey aligned to the evaluation questions was designed by the NIMBioS Evaluation Coordinator with input from the NIMBioS Director and Deputy Director. The final instrument was hosted online via the University of Tennessee's online survey host mrlInterview. Links to the survey were sent to seven working group participants on December 20, 2010 (working group organizers and participants associated with NIMBioS are excluded from evaluations). Reminder emails were sent to non-responding participants on December 22, 2010 and January 5, 2011. By January 12, 2011, six participants had given their feedback, for a response rate of 86%.

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<sup>1</sup> From Kirkpatrick, D.L. (1994). *Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

## Evaluation Data

### Respondent Satisfaction

**Table 1. Respondent satisfaction with content and format of the working group**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the working group was very productive.	33%	67%	-	-	-
The working group met my expectations.	33%	67%	-	-	-
The presenters were very knowledgeable about their topics.	100%	-	-	-	-
The presentations were useful.	83%	17%	-	-	-
The group discussions were useful.	83%	17%	-	-	-
I would recommend participating in NIMBioS working groups to my colleagues	83%	17%	-	-	-

**Table 2. Satisfaction with working group accommodations**

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the working group accommodations:

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Strongly dissatisfied	Not applicable
Travel arranged by NIMBioS	67%	33%	-	-	-	-
Housing arranged by NIMBioS	100%	-	-	-	-	-
Comfort of the facility in which the working group took place	83%	17%	-	-	-	-
Resources of the facility in which the working group took place	83%	17%	-	-	-	-

***Suggestions for NIMBioS to improve the resources and/or accommodations available to working group participants:***

*None provided*

## Working Group Format and Content

**Figure 1. How do you feel about the format of the working group?**



***Suggestions for improving group format:***

*None provided*

**Figure 2. Do you feel the participating in the working group helped you understand the research happening in other disciplines in the group's topic area?**



***Comments about understanding research in other disciplines:***

*Some participants didn't share about their work in progress on the working group topic. They shared about their published research on other topics. The group could have benefited much more from a more open participation, and would have been able to develop more appropriate directions for collaborative research.*

**Table 3. Learning about issues related to the working group’s research problem**

<b>As a result of participating in this working group, I have a better understanding of:</b>	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The research data available on the working group’s topic	33%	67%	-	-	-
The modeling techniques available on the working group’s topic	83%	17%	-	-	-
New methods and modeling techniques that need to be developed	67%	33%	-	-	-
The types of data needed to better inform existing models	33%	50%	17%	-	-

***Most Useful Aspects of the Meeting***

*I think the most useful aspect of the working group is that it provides a nice environment for people from different fields (biology, computer science, statistics) to get together to discuss and solve important real problems in biology.*

*Open discussions.*

*The size was perfect.*

*The most useful aspect was meeting other people who work in this field.*

*New topics and problem formulations*

*The opportunity to see what aspects of the overall topic are being tackled by other researchers, and being able to discuss my own research with people from other backgrounds, to get input from their perspective.*

## Impact on Future Research Plans

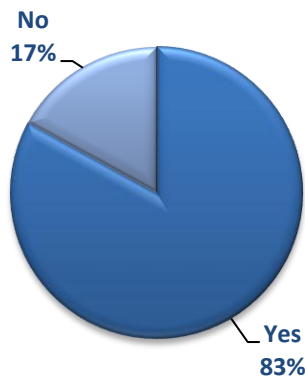
**Figure 3. Do you feel that the exchange of ideas that took place during the working group will influence your future research?**



### ***Comments about influence on future research:***

*Formulation of new problems stated during the meeting.*

**Figure 4. Did you develop unanticipated plans for collaborative research with other working group participants?**



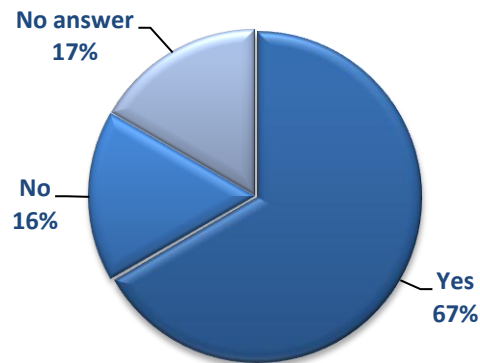
### ***Comments about plans for collaborative research:***

*Due to this meeting, I am now collaborating with two other participants to work on gene tree reconciliation.*

*In terms of solving new problems.*



**Figure 5. Do you feel the expectations for the next working group are clear (in the sense that you are leaving this meeting with a good idea of what your contribution will be at the next meeting)?**



***Comments about understanding what is expected of working group members:***

*However, it appeared that other participants have clear goals for the next meeting.*

**Suggestions for Future Meetings**

*Use less time for 'formal' presentations.*

*Timing: too close to the holidays.*

*It would have been nice to have more people within the group, especially people who work on statistical models.*

**Additional Comments about working group**

*None provided.*

# Appendix

Gene Tree Working Group Evaluation Survey

## Gene Tree working group Survey

Thank you for taking a moment to complete this survey. Your responses will be used to improve the working groups hosted by the National Institute for Mathematical and Biological Synthesis. Information supplied on the survey will be confidential, and results will be reported only in the aggregate.

Please check the appropriate box to indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about this working group: (Very satisfied, Satisfied, Neutral, Dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied)

I feel the working group was very productive.

The working group met my expectations.

The presenters were very knowledgeable about their topics.

The presentations were useful.

The group discussions were useful

I would recommend participating in NIMBioS working groups to my colleagues.

Please check the appropriate box to indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

As a result of participating in this working group, I have a better understanding of:

(Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly disagree)

the research data available on the working group's topic

the modeling techniques available on the working group's topic

the types of data needed to better inform existing models

new methods and modeling techniques that need to be developed

Do you feel the participating in the working group helped you understand the research happening in other disciplines in the group's topic area?

Yes

No

Comments:

Do you feel the expectations for the next working group are clear (in the sense that you are leaving this meeting with a good idea of what your contribution will be at the next meeting)?

Yes

No

Comments:

Do you feel that the exchange of ideas that took place during the working group will initiate or influence your future research?

Yes

No

Please explain:

Did you develop unanticipated plans for collaborative research with other working group participants?

Yes

No

Please explain:

What do you feel was the most useful aspect of the working group?

What would you have changed about the working group?

How do you feel about the format of the working group?

This was a very effective format for achieving our goals

This was not a very effective format for achieving our goals ->

The working group format would have been more effective if:

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the working group accommodations:

(Very satisfied, Satisfied, Neutral, Dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied)

Travel arranged by NIMBioS

Housing arranged by NIMBioS

Comfort of the facility in which the working group took place

Resources of the facility in which the working group took place

Please indicate any changes NIMBioS can make to improve the resources and/or accommodations available to working group participants:

Please provide any additional comments about your overall experience with the working group: