

Preliminary Product Design Specifications Miniature Fluorescent Microscope

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BME 301

Client: Professor Matthew Merrins

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Problem Statement: The client, Professor Matthew Merrins, teaches human biochemistry lab at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The course focuses on the enzyme lactate dehydrogenase, which produces lactate from pyruvate. Currently, his lab utilizes Laconic, a Förster Resonance Energy Transfer (FRET)-based biosensor. This biosensor detects the presence of Lactate in healthy, living cells, but the fluorescence must be monitored over a period using a high cost microscope. This microscope excites the lactate biosensor using a system of LEDs and a filter. The fluorescence emission between the two different wavelengths is recorded. Since the current microscope in his lab is extremely expensive, the goal is to build a low-cost microscope specifically targeted to his research.

Function: The final product will be a single prototype device that will allow his students to measure FRET with this device. This device will be similar to his lab's microscope as it will contain an excitation source, two different filters for FRET, and a camera that will capture the images of the specimen in the solution chamber.

Client Requirements:

- Product must be under \$2,000
- Compact and easy to use
- Any software used must be free
- Easy to obtain FRET results
- Should be an inverted design

Physical and Operational Characteristics:

- A. *Performance Requirements:* The designs must be able to accurately measure FRET response at 470 and 535 nm. These readings do not have to be simultaneous but must be close in time. An excitation source of 430 nm should induce this response, which will be recorded by a detector (camera) and uploaded to a freeware image analysis program (ImageJ/similar) on a compatible computer for analysis. The lactate level can then be extracted based on the ratio of 470 and 535 intensities.
- B. *Safety:* The design should minimize contact between the excitation source and user. This is due to the fact that the excitation source is near the UV light spectrum which is damaging to human skin tissue.

- C. *Accuracy and Reliability*: This product should be accurate enough to determine the acceptor-donor ratio.
- D. *Life in Service*: Product itself would last for years and system components should be easily replaced if broken or damaged.
- E. *Shelf Life*: Shelf life would be 50 years. Optical filters and CMOS cameras do not degrade quickly if not in constant use.
- F. *Operating Environment*: The design must operate at room temperature.
- G. *Ergonomics*: Product should be simple for students to use. The image collection and accept/donor ratio calculation should be as simple as possible.
- H. *Size*: Able to be used as a station on a lab desk (30 cm by 30 cm base), size similar to competing/conventional microscopes. All nonessential components for analysis should be discarded. Height of microscope < 45 cm.
- I. *Power Source*: Device will be powered by a power outlet from the wall, thus eliminating the need for battery replacement.
- J. *Weight*: 1lb to 10lbs
- K. *Materials*: The device will have an internal circuit and will likely utilize LEDs, plastics, wires, optical filters, CMOS camera, and motor.
- L. *Aesthetics, Appearance, and Finish*: Simple aesthetics, appears intuitive to use, and simple finish

Production Characteristics:

- A. *Quantity*: One prototype with ability to be repeatedly fabricated over time. 6 to 8 would be implemented over an 8 semester period.
- B. *Target Product Cost*: Max cost is \$2,000.

Miscellaneous:

- A. *Standards and Specifications*: Should comply with current FRET analysis protocol and/or be adapted into a simple protocol for teaching lab analysis.
- B. *Patient-Related Concerns*: Cost is the highest determinant in design. The functionality should be sufficient for teaching purposes on a budget of 1/60 of current device (\$120,000 to \$2,000). Resolution is not a key concern, only that the difference in emission intensities can be accurately extracted from experimentation. The data collection is the largest concern, and data analysis should be used by an easily accessible freeware service.
- C. *Competition*:
 - a. Dino-Lite:
 - i. This product is small fluorescence microscope where each type of microscope has a specific wavelength and filter designed for specific fluorophores. They are not ideal for FRET since fret requires the use of two fluorophores.
 - b. Lumascope 620:

- i. This product is for professional use. It can be used for a variety of fluorescence microscopy techniques. It is expensive due to its broad capabilities
- c. Nighsea:
 - i. This product converts a Stereo microscope into a simple fluorescence microscope. Using an attachable filter and an external light source the microscope can detect light from fluorophores. The lens are designed for specific fluorophores and is not ideal for FRET.

D. *Customer*: Human biochemistry lab (BMC 504) instructor and students.