i2b2 Messaging Overview

All cells in the **i2b2 hive** must communicate using standard *i2b2 XML messages*. This message specifies certain properties that are common to all cells and are essential to the administration tasks associated with sending, receiving and processing messages.

All requests are sent using a *<request>* tag and responses are returned using a *<response>* tag. The same *<message_header>* tag is used for both. The *</request_header>* is used for requests but may be echoed back (optionally) in the response. The response must include a *<response_header>*.

The XSD specification of the i2b2 message permits individual cells to add cell-specific XML in the *<message_body>* tag. This cell-specific XML does not need to extend the i2b2 message schema since the i2b2 schema will allow insertion of tags from any namespace into the *<message_body>* tag.

The following image illustrates the basic top-level elements contained within the request and response messages.