

# UNDERGRADUATE SUMMER RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM (USRS)

## Summer Grant Application Guidelines

\*\*\* *Please note:* Priority consideration will be given to applications received on or before the target submission date noted on the website (Monday, March 5, 2012). No applications will be considered after the final deadline. Eligibility is limited to first-time applicants. \*\*\*

### **The Program:**

- ✧ The CURS Undergraduate Summer Research Scholar (Summer Grant) program is focused on developing individual student/faculty mentor relationships and fostering learning through the processes of research and scholarly work.
- ✧ Students will engage in research/scholarship projects for 34 hours/week over 10 weeks during the summer session.
- ✧ Each student participant must work with a faculty mentor who is willing to supervise their project. Projects must be initiated and developed by the student applicant(s) under the supervision guidance of their faculty mentor.
- ✧ Projects may include: 1) an independent idea that the student would like to pursue on his/her own, 2) a joint student-faculty project in which either the student or faculty mentor is the principle investigator, or 3) a project that is part of the faculty mentor's ongoing research. However, in all cases, the project must be one in which the student has significant involvement and is *not* just a paid assistant. While faculty support is encouraged, the proposal itself should be written by the student.

### **The Student Receives:**

- ✧ A \$2,500 fellowship award (in the form of a payroll stipend, based on 34 hours/week over ten weeks).
- ✧ Up to \$500 to offset the costs associated with project supplies.

### **The Faculty Mentor Receives:**

- ✧ A \$400 non-salary allowance for professional development or research support.

### ***I. Overview***

The Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship (CURS) announces the availability of funds to assist undergraduate students in conducting research and scholarly work during the summer session under supervision of a faculty mentor. In addition to a \$2,500 stipend, students will receive up to \$500 for project supplies (typical awards have fallen within the range of \$300-500). Students may receive only one USRS (Summer Grant) award during their tenure at BGSU, but are welcome to apply for other CURS

programs (Travel Grant, Summer Grant) separately. The awards are funded by the Office of the Provost and disbursed through the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship.

## ***II. Eligibility***

This award is available to undergraduate students from all disciplines that are enrolled full-time at the time of application. Matching funds from departments or colleges are not required but such support will be viewed as a strong endorsement of the proposal. In addition,

### ***A. Student Eligibility***

- ✧ At the time of application, students must be full-time undergraduates in good academic standing (cumulative GPA of at least 2.5), with a minimum of Sophomore class standing ( $\geq 30$  credit hours) prior to the start of the project.
- ✧ Must meet eligibility requirements for Student Employment (for details, refer to <http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/career/page19877.html>).
- ✧ Preference will be given to students who will be continuing at BGSU in the fall. However, students who have been actively involved in a research project with their faculty mentor during the past academic year and will be completing their project during the summer will also be considered.
- ✧ Students must commit to full-time (34 hours/week) participation in the program for 10 weeks, and must not accept any full-time employment or internship, or enroll in any courses, during the specified 10-weeks of participation. Students may specify their desired dates of participation provided their expected hours are completed between Spring Commencement and the last day of classes of the final summer session. Exceptions must be reviewed prior to signing any contract agreements.
- ✧ Students may receive only one USRS (Summer Grant) award during their time at BGSU, and the award must be used during the summer in which it is awarded.

### ***B. Faculty Mentor Eligibility***

- ✧ The faculty mentor must be a full-time, tenured faculty member, or in a tenure-track position. To seek an exception to this policy, students must include a rationale for consideration at the time of their request.
- ✧ Any full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty at BGSU. (Requests for an exception must be submitted along with the proposal).
- ✧ Preference will be given to faculty members who have an established record / demonstrated ability to mentor undergraduate students in research or applied/creative activity, and to departments that have a demonstrated commitment to undergraduate research/creative activity.
- ✧ Faculty must commit to providing a high degree of supervision and support for the student and to providing oversight of the project budget and related expenditures.
- ✧ The faculty mentor's department must agree to administer supply funds. Whenever possible, the department should coordinate purchases and order materials to maximize university discount programs and to avoid sales tax as appropriate. All funds must be expended by the end of the semester during which funds are awarded.

- ✧ The department must also provide sufficient oversight of the collaboration between the student and faculty mentor to assure the educational value of the student experience.

### ***III. Roles and Responsibilities***

#### ***A. Student Responsibilities***

- ✧ ***Preparation of the application:*** Students will collaborate with a faculty mentor to develop a research plan and to complete the application and proposal. If the application is approved, the student will consult with their faculty mentor to establish and specify the dates (ten-week period) the student will devote to the project. Students will be asked to complete and return a Contract Acceptance Form, signed by their faculty mentor, which reflects this agreement.
- ✧ ***Regulatory approval:*** Certain projects require special approval and therefore must meet the guidelines of the appropriate regulatory committees involved. The student investigator must demonstrate that he/she has received appropriate training and/or has submitted the appropriate completed form(s) for work involving human subjects, live vertebrate animals, radioactive materials, and/or recombinant DNA prior to the anticipated start of the project.
- ✧ ***Meeting attendance:*** In addition to meeting regularly with their faculty mentor, students are expected to attend two meetings with a CURS staff member: an Orientation meeting (prior to the start of their project) and an individual advising meeting at the mid-point of their project. (Students will receive additional instructions with their notification letter if selected to participate).
- ✧ ***Reporting requirements:*** Students who receive an USRS award are required at the end of the project to complete a brief (2-3 page) reflection paper and report describing the major objective(s) and key result(s) of their project, and a short presentation (6-10 Power-Point slides) outlining their project and their results. Papers/Presentations will be archived on the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship website. In addition, students who receive funding through this program are expected to present their findings at the Fall Research & Creative Activity Conference sponsored by the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research (OSPR) that is typically held in November. Failure to submit completed reports/presentations in a timely fashion will jeopardize future awards involving the faculty mentor and their department.

#### ***B. Faculty Mentor Responsibilities***

- ✧ ***Endorsement of the project:*** The faculty mentor must certify that the proposed project sufficiently represents valid research/scholarly work, and that the project will contribute to the educational development the undergraduate applicant(s). The faculty member should decline sponsorship of any proposal that falls outside the criteria specified by the Awards in Support of Undergraduate Research/Scholarship Program guidelines.

Further, the faculty mentor must insure that the:

1. Student applicant submits a well-written proposal that can be understood by an educated person who is not a specialist in the field;

2. Application conforms to the format specified in these guidelines;
  3. Required information and appropriate protocol forms concerning special circumstances are supplied.
- ✧ **Preparation of application** – Faculty mentors are encouraged to collaborate with individual students in developing a research plan, and advise students in completing the USRS/Summer Grant application. Please keep in mind that while advising/editing support is strongly encouraged, the application and proposal itself must be written by the student. If the application is approved, the faculty mentor will consult with the student to establish the 10-week period the student will devote to the project. The faculty mentor is expected to be generally available to the student during the specified ten-week period, and is responsible for assuring a meaningful and appropriate student experience.
  - ✧ **Regulatory approval** - Certain projects require special approval and therefore must meet the guidelines of the appropriate regulatory committees involved. The faculty mentor certify that the student investigator has received appropriate training and/or has submitted the appropriate completed form(s) for work involving human subjects, live vertebrate animals, radioactive materials, and/or recombinant DNA prior to the anticipated start of the project.
  - ✧ **Budget oversight** – The faculty mentor must certify the accuracy and appropriateness of the proposed budget and will supervise all expenditures within the awarded allotment (up to \$500 for research related expenses incurred by the student). In addition, the faculty mentor will receive a \$400 allowance to support their scholarship and professional development, and/or support the student project. Spending is subject to accepted University ordering and accounting procedures, and the faculty mentor is responsible for the appropriate management and use of funds. The project and faculty allowances are not considered income for tax purposes and cannot be used as supplemental pay for either the student or faculty mentor.
  - ✧ **Reporting requirements** – Faculty mentors are responsible for ensuring the student complies with expectations for attending scheduled meetings and for completing assignments, particularly the reporting requirements as outlined in this document.
  - ✧ The faculty mentor must complete a mid-semester progress report (evaluation form) provided by the Center and return it by the specified date. This form allows the Center to track students' progress and intervene if necessary.
  - ✧ Finally, the faculty mentor must approve / endorse any student reports, particularly the final report, PowerPoint, and financial disclosure statement, prior to being submitted by the student(s) to assure that these assignments fulfill the faculty member's expectations of the project.

### **C. Department Responsibilities**

- ✧ **Administration of award:** While the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship sets the overall expectations for the USRS program, responsibility for day-to-day administration of the program rests with the department. The department will provide general oversight in monitoring the collaborative effort between

student/mentor to assure the educational value of the experience, and will oversee all expenditures of the student and faculty mentor.

In general, funds will be released to the home department of the faculty mentor who will act as account administrator. Whenever possible, the department should coordinate purchases and order materials to maximize university discount programs and to avoid sales tax as appropriate. Receipts or invoices will be required for reimbursement, and students should speak with the faculty mentor or designee for exact procedures and requirements. All funds must be expended by the end of the semester in which funding is awarded.

Please note that in accordance with university purchasing guidelines, any tangible items purchased with CURS funds (such as computers, cameras, digital recorders, etc.) are considered university property and are expected to be returned to CURS upon completion of the project in order to benefit future undergraduate researchers. Exceptions must be approved by CURS in consultation with the department prior to purchase.

#### ***IV. How to Apply***

The application consists of an application form / endorsement sheet, a proposal describing the research/scholarly project, and a letter of support from the faculty member who will serve as the student's mentor. Details of each are outlined below. Applications for projects that involve human subjects, live vertebrate animals, recombinant DNA, or radioactive materials must also include appropriate regulatory committee forms before funds will be released.

For full consideration, completed applications must be received in the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship in 209E Harshman by the target submission date. Proposals received after the target submission date but before the final deadline will be considered for that semester if funding is still available.

##### ***A. Application Form / Endorsement Sheet***

The endorsement sheet serves to collect routine information about the student applicant(s), faculty mentor, and the proposed project. It also serves to alert the student applicant(s) and faculty mentor to potential regulatory considerations that must be met. Finally, it certifies the commitment of the student(s), faculty mentor, and the mentor's academic department to the proposed project.

##### ***B. Proposal***

Students must submit a written proposal (typically 4-7 pages) that is typed using 12-point, Times New Roman font, and single-spaced with 1-inch margins. The original document and two hard copies of the proposal must be delivered to the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship, located in 209E Harshman.

***TIP:*** Remember, you are asking for money, so make it easy for the reader to understand what you propose to do, why it is important, and how you will successfully complete the project within the requested timeframe and budget.

Keep in mind the proposal will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members representing a range of disciplines. As such, you should avoid the use of too much technical jargon specific to your discipline that others will not understand.

Each proposal must consist of the following sections and sub-sections:

1. Cover Page (1 page maximum). Must include:
  - ✧ Project Title.
  - ✧ Name of Student Applicant(s).
  - ✧ Name of Faculty Mentor.
2. Project Narrative (normally 2-3 pages and preferably not more than 5 pages). Must include:
  - ✧ Introduction statement about the project. (Identify the purpose of the project, and why this project is important in light of existing research or creative work. Provide highlights of any related studies, if appropriate. Be sure to cite any references, as appropriate, in the reference section).
  - ✧ Clearly stated goals/objectives for the project. (What do you intend to accomplish, achieve, or determine by completing this project?)
  - ✧ Proposed plan of action to complete the research/scholarly project. (Briefly, discuss the methods or creative process you will employ, and discuss how you will analyze and interpret your results or present and evaluate your creative activity).
  - ✧ Anticipated results, accomplishments, or outcome(s) that you expect from the project. (Discuss how you will analyze and interpret your results or how you will present and evaluate your scholarly work. Explain how these results will impact your discipline and what follow-up studies you envision).
3. References/Citations (normally 1 page):
  - ✧ Provide full citations (including title) of all reference sources cited in the proposal, using the appropriate style guidelines of your discipline (A.P.A., M.L.A., etc.).
4. Figures and Tables (as many pages as needed):
  - ✧ Figures and tables may be presented here separately, or imbedded in the narrative text. All figures must have a caption and all tables must have a heading to explain the information. Be sure to cite your sources in your References.
5. Budget and Justification (1 page maximum):
  - ✧ In consultation with your faculty mentor, provide an itemized statement of your best estimate of the anticipated costs associated with your project. Supporting documentation is encouraged. You may request up to \$500 from CURS, but typical awards fall within a range of \$300-500.
  - ✧ Your budget should accurately reflect the cost of the proposed research/scholarly work. If your costs are likely to exceed the maximum

award available from CURS, you must clearly indicate how you will secure the remaining funds (e.g., from your department, faculty mentor's grant, etc).

- ✧ You must provide a justification for all of the requested items. Funds may be requested for any reasonable research/scholarly related expenses. However, funds requested for travel must be especially well justified.

### ***C. Letter of Support from Faculty Mentor:***

The faculty mentor must write a brief letter of support for the proposed project. In this letter, the faculty mentor should provide a critical assessment of the:

1. Scholarly impact of the proposed project;
2. Credentials of the student(s) with regard to successful completion of the proposed project (please cite specific examples of preparation and experiences);
3. Impact of the project on the faculty mentor's larger research activities/scholarly work;
4. Appropriateness and accuracy of the budget.

The faculty mentor should confirm his/her willingness to supervise this project, and provide assurance that expectations for participation are understood, especially in regard to ensuring compliance with university regulations and expectations for completing assignments (i.e., that student papers and PowerPoint presentations are accurate and submitted on time). Finally, should the project budget exceed the maximum amount available through this program, the mentor should confirm that the additional necessary funds exist to cover any additional costs.

### ***V. Evaluation and Selection Criteria for Proposals***

Proposals will be evaluated by faculty members representing a range of academic disciplines who have actively involved undergraduates in their own research and scholarly work. The proposals will be judged on the basis of the following four general criteria.

#### **A. Quality of the Proposal**

- ✧ Is the proposal well-written? Is the research problem or scholarly project clearly articulated and being facilitated primarily by the student(s)?

#### **B. Potential Impact of the Study**

- ✧ What are the anticipated benefits that are expected for the participating student(s), the discipline, and the faculty mentor's research/scholarly activities?

#### **C. Potential for Success**

- ✧ Do student applicants have adequate training and experience to successfully complete the project in the stated time frame?

#### **D. Budget**

- ✧ Is the budget appropriate/sufficient to complete the proposed work and if the budget is more than CURS can support, have other sources been identified to cover the remaining expenses?

## ***VI. Notification***

A funding decision will be made within three weeks of the application deadline and the student(s) and faculty mentor be notified by email.

## ***VII. Disbursement of Funds***

Successful applicants will receive additional instructions on how monies are to be disbursed upon receiving their notification letter, and during the required Orientation Meeting, to be scheduled prior to beginning their project. In general, funds will be released to the home department of the faculty mentor who will act as account administrator. Whenever possible, the department should coordinate purchases and order materials to maximize university discount programs and to avoid sales tax as appropriate. Receipts or invoices will be required for reimbursement, and students should speak with the faculty mentor or designee for exact procedures and requirements. All funds must be expended by the end of the semester in which funding is awarded.

Please note that in accordance with university purchasing guidelines, any tangible items purchased with CURS funds (such as computers, cameras, digital recorders, etc.) are considered university property and are expected to be returned to CURS upon completion of the project in order to benefit future undergraduate researchers. Exceptions must be approved by CURS in consultation with the department prior to purchase.

## ***VIII. Project Duration***

It is anticipated that the project will span ten weeks and be completed by the end of the summer for which funding is requested/received. A final report (as outlined below) must be submitted to the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship by the last day of classes for the final summer session in which funding is awarded. Should it prove to be impossible to complete the project by the end of the summer in which funding is awarded, an extension may be requested as outlined below. If an extension is granted, the final report is due by the last day of classes for the following academic semester.

## ***IX. Student Assignments and Reporting Requirements***

- ✧ ***Project Assignments:*** Students who receive an award are required to complete a brief report (2-3 pages maximum) describing the major objective(s) and the results/outcomes of their completed project. The report should be typed and must include the signature of the faculty mentor certifying the information provided. The report is due at the Center for Undergraduate Research on the last day of classes during the semester in which funding is provided. Failure to submit completed reports in a timely fashion will jeopardize future awards involving the faculty mentor and his/her department. In addition, the student(s) may be required to reimburse the University up to the full amount of the award. If a project cannot be reasonably completed by the end of the summer in which funding is awarded, an extension may be given through the following semester provided a written request is submitted to the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship prior to the completion deadline. Students requesting an extension must provide a brief description of progress to date and indicate the reason(s) the project will not be completed on time. The request for

an extension must include the signature of the faculty mentor indicating that the request is reasonable and that he/she agrees to continue overseeing the project through its completion. If an extension is granted, the final report is due no later than the last day of classes for the following academic semester.

- ✧ **Budget Reconciliation:** Students must also submit a financial disclosure statement documenting all expenditures made related to the project. Specific focus should be made to document how the funds allocated from the Center were utilized and what was specifically purchased. Students should note that some purchases become property of the University and must be returned at the end of the project (refer to *Disbursement of Funds* section, above). If any items are in question, the Center will make decisions about handling of property upon reviewing the financial disclosure statement. Failure to properly document or return requested property could result in a referral for disciplinary action.
- ✧ **Presentation Requirements:** In addition to the final report, students who receive funding through this program are required to communicate their results/outcomes to the campus community. This is typically accomplished through required participation in the annual **Fall Research and Creative Activity Conference**, sponsored by the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research, which usually occurs in November. Also, students must submit a short presentation (12 to 15 PowerPoint slides) outlining their project and results/outcomes that will be archived and displayed on the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship website. (Additional details will be supplied when funds are awarded). The PowerPoint is also due at the Center for Undergraduate Research by the last day of class in the semester in which funding is provided

*For questions or assistance, please contact the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship:*

Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship (CURS)  
Bowling Green State University  
209E Harshman  
Bowling Green, OH 43403  
(419) 372-5401; [curs@bgsu.edu](mailto:curs@bgsu.edu)