Plug-In to the Office of Undergraduate Research

Suggestions for proposing engagement with undergraduate research and leveraging the resources of the Office of Undergraduate Research. This outline might also be useful for planning how to increase the number of undergraduate researchers on your team and improve their and your outcomes.

- Check your department’s profile - [https://uresearch.ou.edu/department-profiles](https://uresearch.ou.edu/department-profiles) - it could be used to demonstrate a department culture supportive of undergraduate research and research/education integration. Has your department not submitted a profile? Contact us to get one set up and then you can reference it!
- Be careful that the project scope is reasonable for undergraduate students to accomplish in the given time frame – Don’t underestimate their capability, but don’t try to convince reviewers that they will accomplish as much as senior graduate students. We can point you to tools to plan your project scope.
- Develop a mentoring plan – O.U.R. has several tools listed below to help you optimize this part. You may not be able to include all the details of the plan in your proposal, but you can speak (write) with more strength, assurance, and specificity if you have a structured plan.
  - O.U.R. offers a mentoring workshop for graduate students and post-docs who mentor undergraduates in research projects. This option can help distribute the workload of mentoring undergraduates across other members of your research group. Contact the office for the schedule.
- Create a plan for recruiting and selecting students – Again O.U.R. has several tools and resources to assist this effort. You have to decide, and should articulate in a proposal or ad, the process and criteria to be used.
- Pay undergraduate students!! – The cost of a college education is a growing burden for students, and most work to support themselves and pay for school. Compared to other research assistants, they are inexpensive for you, so pay them. There is no restriction on a student being paid and earning course credit for research at the same time.
- Assess and evaluate – O.U.R. can help you decide on and implement an assessment & evaluation plan

Office of Undergraduate Research Resources

- We have a site that will host your post to recruit undergraduate students. This site can be used for any undergraduates for research – looking for a couple of students to “volunteer” (we recommend against this practice; students should enroll in XXXX 3440 Mentored Research Experience, even if for 0 credit hours) or work for pay; academic year or summer; short-term or long-term; it can be used just to indicate your willingness to meet with students to discuss them joining your research group. You complete a form and a web-page is created. You may use the link to that page to recruit students via emails or list-serves – you may even choose to use the application system that we have in place. [https://uresearch.ou.edu/current-opportunities](https://uresearch.ou.edu/current-opportunities)
• We have a flexible application system for you to use. The system is currently deactivated since we are not accepting any applications at this time. If you would like to see what it looks like, contact the office to get a PDF.

• The Undergraduate Research Mentoring Agreement (URMA): The URMA is a template to record conversations and decisions regarding student needs and expectations, mentor expectations, research milestones, and expected student outcomes. Additional information about the URMA, including a link to download it, can be found here: https://uresearch.ou.edu/URMA

• O.U.R. runs several workshops for students that can be incorporated into the protegés' personal and professional development plan. Topics include Getting Started in Research, How to Read a Scientific Article, Poster Presentations, Summer Opportunities, Ethical & Responsible Conduct of Research (undergraduate focused), and more. If there is a particular workshop topic you would like O.U.R. to present, we can always talk about it and see if it fits within the scope of the office. A selection of workshop topics and their descriptions can be found here: https://uresearch.ou.edu/workshops

• O.U.R. runs a symposium in spring & summer (maybe adding one for fall) for any students to present posters – OU students or students from other campuses participating in REU programs on campus. More information about our Curiosity to Creativity Symposium series can be found here: https://uresearch.ou.edu/C2C-symposium

• If you are recruiting OU students, we have a website where they can promote their research experiences. This site will give them a particular web address they can include in application materials for free. http://curiosity2creativity.net/

Bibliography of recent reports and papers that might inform your plan (unfortunately, these are mostly for STEM programs as much of this work has been funded by NSF/NIH/NASEM)


• Early Engagement in Course-Based Research Increases Graduation Rates and Completion of Science, Engineering, and Mathematics Degrees; Stacia E. Rodenbusch, Paul R. Hernandez, Sarah L. Simmons, Erin L. Dolan, and Jennifer Knight; CBE—Life Sciences Education 2016 15:2; DOI:10.1187/cbe.16-03-0117

• Mentoring for Inclusion: The Impact of Mentoring on Undergraduate Researchers in the Sciences; Heather Haeger, Carla Fresquez, and Pat Marsteller; CBE—Life Sciences Education 2016 15:3; DOI:10.1187/cbe.16-01-0016

• A Longitudinal Study of How Quality Mentorship and Research Experience Integrate Underrepresented Minorities into STEM Careers; Mica Estrada, Paul R. Hernandez, P. Wesley Schultz, and Jose Herrera; CBE—Life Sciences Education 2018 17:1; DOI:10.1187/cbe.17-04-0066