The Keck Undergraduate Research Program at Occidental College is pleased to announce four summer research fellowships to support student research projects in the arts, humanities, and social sciences that make use of archives, museums, and other local arts and cultural institutions.

The program is highly selective, and some preference is given to students who are completing their junior year, and have had no prior summer fellowship support. Students who are selected will participate in the ten-week Summer Research Program offered by the Undergraduate Research Center.

Application forms, project proposal, personal statement, budget, and faculty mentor’s recommendation are due in the URC office by 4:00 p.m. on Thursday February 12, 2015 at 4pm.

About the Keck Undergraduate Research Program at Occidental College

Research is a fundamental part of Occidental College’s intellectual culture. Through the Keck Program, Oxy students conduct original research in L.A.’s museums, archives, and cultural institutions. Working closely with a faculty mentor, the program supports: small research seminars; summer research on a topic of a student’s choice; and nine-month internships at local arts and cultural institutions. The program builds upon Occidental’s strengths as an urban liberal arts college in our vibrant city of Los Angeles and its faculty of teacher/scholars.

Summer Research Objectives

The Summer Research component of the W. M. Keck Foundation Program for Undergraduate Research at Occidental College has three principal goals:

1. To strengthen Occidental’s commitment to research in the arts, humanities, and social sciences by engaging students in hands-on, independent research experiences within the collections of local Los Angeles arts and cultural institutions.

2. To increase our students’ access to and practice of research in the arts, humanities, and social sciences in the archives, museums, and cultural repositories of Los Angeles community partners.

3. To foster close collaboration among students and faculty mentors through directed research experiences.
Support

Keck Program for Undergraduate Research summer fellows will receive a (taxable) stipend of $390 per week for ten weeks of research. Depending on financial need, fellows who choose to live on campus will be charged $50/$90/$120 per week. Generally, the amount awarded for summer research is taxable, but the College is not obligated to withhold taxes or send a 1099, so students should retain a copy of their contract as part of their tax records. Since individual tax liability depends on each individual’s circumstances, Fellows should contact their personal tax advisor with any questions or concerns. In addition, there is $500.00 available to cover research expenses.

Expectations

Keck Undergraduate Research Program expects close collaboration between Summer Research Fellows and their faculty mentors, as well as interaction between Fellows with their peer researchers. To promote discussion among student researchers, regular meetings of Keck Undergraduate Summer Research Fellows will be organized by the faculty coordinators. Cross-disciplinary exchange will also be facilitated by attendance at the URC’s lunchtime plenary gatherings, featuring guest speakers, lab tours, and round table discussion.

Keck Summer Research Fellows are expected to:

- Make a full-time exclusive commitment by for ten weeks, from May 26 through August 1.
- participate in research ethics training
- participate in all URC area meetings and plenary gatherings
- attend regular on-campus meetings with the mentor
- participate in the assessment effort
- submit an abstract of the work for posting to the OxyScholar and Keck Program web pages
- submit a five to ten page final report to the URC, the Keck Program, and the faculty mentor by August 14, 2015 (The final stipend payment will be held until this report is received.)
- present the results of their research at the Oxy Summer Research Conference on July 29, 2015
- if appropriate, present at the fall SCCUR conference in November 2015. Fellows may also consider presenting their work at the NCUR meeting in Spring 2016.

Selection Process

Factors considered during the selection process are:

- The quality of the proposal
- The strength of faculty support
- An effective personal statement
- An academic history consistent with the ability to do the proposed research
Application Process

Students who would like to apply for the Keck Program for Undergraduate Research Summer Fellowship should develop an outline of their project and approach a faculty member with whom they would like to work to discuss the feasibility of collaborating with her or him over the summer. Many faculty members prefer that student research be closely aligned with their own work. After you and your potential faculty mentor have agreed to apply for the Keck Research Summer Fellowship, you can begin filling out an application cover sheet.

Each application must include:

- Cover sheet (available on Keck URP website)
- Proposal (must include discussion of the specific cultural/arts institution that you plan to work in and sources that you will use there)
- Personal Statement
- Proposed Budget (if research expense support is requested)
- Mentor’s letter of recommendation (form available on Keck URP website) specifying their role in mentoring you on this project (you may submit a confidential hard copy in a sealed, signed envelope, or your mentor can submit the recommendation by e-mail to urc@oxy.edu)

All materials submitted as part of the application must use 8.5" x 11" paper, single sided, with 1-inch margins and using Times New Roman or Arial type font no smaller than 11 point and with at least 1.5 line spacing. Paper clip pages together — please do not staple!

Proposals should be approximately three pages. You should describe the work you propose to do, the arts or cultural institution that you plan to work in (or with), the specific sources that you will consult, and the methods you propose to use. Explain why your project is important, and what it contributes to understanding of the subject. Literature citations should be included where appropriate (for tables and figures as well as quotes or paraphrased evidence). The proposal should be written to be understandable to a non-specialist.

A Personal Statement of no more than two pages should indicate your preparation (for example, relevant course work completed) to undertake the project, and how this fellowship fits with your educational and career plans.

In addition, a one-page Budget with justification/explanation of each proposed expense is required if support for supplies, local travel, etc. is requested. Research expense support will be limited to a maximum of $500.00; please bear this in mind as you discuss the feasibility of your project.

Pursuant to federal law and College policy, all research involving human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the College’s Human Subjects Research Review Committee before research begins.

Your Faculty Mentor’s Recommendation (form available on Keck URP website) must include a description of her/his role in mentoring you in your project. Mentors are expected to be available to the Fellow on a continuing basis, to meet regularly with them in person or via Skype, and to provide support and guidance in carrying out the research project and preparing a final report, poster, or other culminating project. You may submit a confidential hard copy of the faculty recommendation in a
signed, sealed envelope with your application, or your mentor may submit the recommendation by e-mail to urc@oxy.edu.

All application materials are due in the URC office by 4pm on Thursday, February 12, 2015.

Students who are selected will be notified before Spring break if possible so that all applicants can make their summer plans accordingly. Questions should be directed to the Prof. Lisa Sousa (lsousa@oxy.edu), Director of the Keck Undergraduate Research Program.

Guidelines for College Subsidized Room and Board Support

Keck Summer Research Fellows are eligible for subsidized on-campus room and board. Room and Board support for those students choosing to live off-campus is not available.

The Undergraduate Research Center (URC) advisory committee has recommended that summer research students living on-campus contribute up to $1200 (depending upon financial need) toward the cost of their summer room and board package. Room and Board is available only from Monday, May 25th through Saturday, August 1st. On-campus housing may be available in weeks prior to and shortly after the program, however there will be no subsidies offered for those weeks and arrangements must be made directly through Residence Life.