Fall ASP Wraps Up

As the Fall Semester comes to a close, we enjoy observing the work of the most recent group of ASP grant recipients. ASP funds students from all areas of study. Pictured on the right is Nick Foy (‘17) Chemistry major. Nick’s most recent project is titled *Total Synthesis of the Plakortone Family of Natural Products*. His great interest in organic chemistry and past research with Professor Jeffrey Cannon inspired him to pursue more research with help from the URC.

Ella Fornari (‘16) is a Biology and MAC double major. In her project, *The LA River is Alive*, she is seeking to bring awareness to the LA River’s ecosystem and natural history, produce a senior comprehensive project that reflects her studies in both areas, as well as make a captivating political statement through video art that is relevant to Occidental and the larger LA community. She has been shooting the project throughout this semester, and will display it in the Spring as a video art instillation.

ASP deadlines for the Spring Semester are listed on p. 4 of the newsletter, but don’t hesitate to stop by the URC or visit our website for more information.

Summer Research Program (SRP).........................

Application information and assistance at the URC

The 2016 Summer Research Program (SRP) deadline is February 12, 2016 by 4 pm.

The program is ten weeks and will run from May 31 – August 6, 2016. A study grant of $3900 is provided and costs for housing are subsidized based on financial need. Participants are expected to give a full-time exclusive commitment for the entire ten week period as well as participate in mandatory research ethics training seminars. Furthermore, all summer researchers present their results at the Oxy Summer Research Conference taking place on Wednesday, August 3rd.

The application consists of an application cover sheet, signed by applicant and the mentor, a proposal (3-4 pages), a personal statement (1-2 pages), and a budget, if applicable, (1 page). The proposal should describe what work you do, your methods, and other related details. The personal statement indicates your preparation (such as coursework and prior research) to undertake your project, and how the SRP will fit with your educational and career plans. The budget should justify costs if support for supplies, local travel, etc. is requested. You must use 8.5” x 11” paper, single sided, with 1” margins, using Times New Roman or Arial type font no smaller than 11 point and at least 1.5 line spacing. Paperclip your application -- **DO NOT STAPLE YOUR APPLICATION PAPERS.**
Summer Research Program Info

A question often asked, is if one could conduct research with an adjunct professor through the SRP program. The answer to that question is: only tenure-track and continuing non-tenure-track faculty who will be on-campus during the summer are eligible to serve as mentors. Make sure to ask faculty to be your mentor (and recommendation letter writer) well in advance.

For those who are interested in applying, but want additional information or have questions, come to the SRP Q&A session on January 29 after winter break. The location is yet to be determined, but an e-mail will be sent out campus wide closer to the date.

Conducting research with human subjects

Research involving focus groups, surveys or interviews can be incredibly fulfilling. They are often very meaningful projects, and we like to fund them, especially when the subjects are fellow Oxy students — because these projects allow students who may never have thought about conducting research to become a part of this learning process. However, students who are doing projects involving Human Subjects will need to take on a few extra steps before their URC-supported funds can be released. Projects involving human subjects need to receive approval from the Human Subjects Research and Review Committee (HSRRC). This is for the protection of research participants and is required by the college in order for us to comply with Federal Regulations on this topic. In general, a student who is seeking funding are in need of it for their own (not their professor’s!) projects.

If you are told by the URC you need HSRRC approval, please look into that right away. Human Subjects approval can be a lengthy process, especially if you are working with children or other populations that are identified as “protected” by the government. Human Subjects approval requires a separate application and all the information you will need (instructions and templates) can be found at https://oxy.edu/institutional-review-boards/human-subjects. Please ask the URC or the HSRRC if you have any questions, and thanks for your attention to the important matter of subject protection.

For more information about why these Federal Regulations exist, you may want to check out these websites. [Please note that if your project involves animal subjects or Biosafety clearance, then you are able to proceed under a faculty approval, but you must advise the URC that this is the case.]

Important Links

https://oxy.edu/institutional-review-boards/human-subjects
https://www.hhs.gov/ohrmp/humansubjects/index.html

2015-2016 Richter-ASP Recipients

Five Oxy students will travel abroad during December and January to conduct independent research on a variety of topics ranging from public health issues to media circulation. Their projects are being funded through the URC’s Richter-ASP program. The Richter-ASP receives support from Oxy’s International Programs Office.

César Martínez
Havana, Cuba
César (’17) is a junior, majoring in Media Arts and Culture. He will be working with Professor Ari Laskin on a project titled Alternative Media Circulation in Cuba: Alternative Paquetes and the Re-appropriation of El Paquete Semanal. In December César will travel to Havana to “critically analyze the production, circulation, and consumption of alternative media paquetes in Cuba [through means of a documentary]. ‘Paquetes’ can be understood as the digital computer folders full of diverse media and information that constitute Cuba’s informal media market.” In César’s words, “this documentary film project aims to supplement a hybridized archive of academically researched and journalistically investigated texts to draw greater attention to the diverse platforms of the Paquete Semanal.”

William Stupp
New York, USA
William (’16) is a senior, Comparative Studies in Literature and Culture major. Professor Damian Stocking will be mentoring him on a project for his comprehensive study titled State of Democratization of the Presentation of Interwar Experience in American Museums. While in New York City, William will visit the Neue Galerie and the Morgan Library to “compare and contrast the extent to which two different institutions have undergone democratization.” Furthermore, William will be examining how several specific exhibits “compare and contrast with collections with which they share space and the buildings that house them and with each other.” William stated that he chose this specific museum “because of the intercultural nature of their subjects and their histories.”

Will Bergman
Reykjavic, Iceland
Will (’16) is a senior Physics major. This winter he will travel to Iceland to research his project Aurora Borealis and The Science Aesthetic under the mentorship of Professor Chris Craney. For this project, Will will be collaborating with a fellow classmate, Patrick Walsh (’16, MAC major) to study the aurora from a “multidisciplinary standpoint at the intersection between art and science.” The two will work to “capture and analyze photographs of the Aurora Borealis using a spectroscopic technique.” Spectroscopy is a scientific technique used to study sources of light.

Ashley Andreou & Alex Urry
Guatemala City, Guatemala
Ashley (’17) and Alex (’16) will travel to Guatemala City this January for their project titled An Examination of the Effects of Diet on Vitamin A Deficiency and Infant Mortality. Their mentors include Professors Andrew Udit and Shana Goffredi. As stated in their research proposal, “The correlation between diet and vitamin A deficiency within regions of high infant mortality has yet to be characterized. Using Guatemala as a test case, [they] look to examine the connection between regions of high and low rates of infant mortality with the family diets.” They will travel to Chiqimula (72% infant mortality) and Guatemala City, conducting 30 interviews in each location with households with children ages five and under.
URC Deadlines to Note

December
3 First Spring semester ASP application deadline

January
11-22 Notifications of Decision on Abstracts for NCUR 2016 at UNC Asheville on April 7-9, 2016
8 First round of Spring ASP awards announced
25 NCUR 2016 Online Registration Opens
28 Second (final) Spring ASP Deadline & ASP Conference Travel Applications for NCUR 2016 Deadline
29 Summer Research Program (SRP) 2016 Info Session
   11:45 - 1:15pm Location: TBD

February
1 Fall Semester funding final reports due, email to urc@oxy.edu
11 Second (final) Spring semester ASP awards announced
12 2016 Summer Research Program (SRP) application deadline
17 Winter Break Richter-ASP final reports due, email urc@oxy.edu
19 NCUR 2016 Deadline for Early Conference Registration

Contact us!
Email: urc@oxy.edu Phone: (323)259-1414
Location: Library, 2nd Floor, Old Wing, Room 253A
Website: oxy.edu/undergraduate-research-center

*all applications are due @ 4pm on deadline dates