

Summer Research Program 2020: Information for Faculty

Encouraging Students to Participate

This is the time of the year when students should start thinking about participating in the Oxy Summer Research Program (SRP). The Undergraduate Research Center's surveys of SRP participants show that invitations from faculty members are among the important ways that students, especially those from underrepresented groups, are brought into the program. If you are interested in serving as a mentor next summer, an easy first step is to make mention of it in your classes or in conversations with promising students. That little bit of encouragement may be all it takes to get a student talking to you about the possibilities. Please also encourage your students to contact the URC if they have questions not answered by the information found on our website and to watch the Digest [Root] for announcements.

Research Projects

Faculty are free to set up requirements for potential research projects however they want. You may tell students that you will only consider projects on a specific topic, or in a general area, or using specific methodologies. If asked, you can choose to mentor a student on a topic outside your research area but you should also feel free to steer the student toward a more appropriate mentor. The URC serves to facilitate the program, maintain certain standards, and assure conformance with donor expectations; we do not wish to manage the research projects themselves.

How the SRP works

The on-campus summer research program is a full-time, ten week, independent research program where Oxy students work collaboratively with a faculty mentor on a project of mutual interest. The application process is supervised by the Undergraduate Research Committee (Prof. Andrew Shtulman, 2020 Chair); its members will read all proposals and decide which projects to fund. Our resources are limited and the program is a competitive one. For the last several years we have been able to fund about 60% of applicants. The committee looks at student-mentor pairs, so your own commitment matters!

Proposals are due by 4:00 pm on February 10, 2020. Guidelines for the proposals can be found on the [URC's SRP webpage](#).

Students must be undergraduates – we are sorry, URC funds cannot support recent graduates. Only tenure-track or continuing adjunct faculty who will be on-campus during the summer are eligible to serve as mentors. A close and continuing relationship with the mentor is key to the success of a student's research. The program does not expect that the mentor be available at all times, but we do expect at least weekly meetings between student and mentor and that both the student and mentor will attend the weekly luncheons on Wednesdays. Students whose projects involve work with a community-based organization are welcome to apply but must arrange their schedules around the Wednesday lunches and Area Coordinator meetings. Proposals that depend upon remote mentorship (by a faculty mentor who is away from campus for an extended period) are not likely to be supported.

The program begins on May 26, 2020 and ends on August 1, 2020, with the annual conference scheduled for July 29, 2020. (Housing ends on August 1, students may leave on July 30-31 with permission of their mentor). Students who cannot participate for the full ten weeks will not be selected for funding. We expect a full time commitment to the program by the student. This means that other on-campus jobs are generally not approved with the exception of RA positions (which must also be approved by the mentor) or short-term assignments such as for Reunion weekend.

Participating students receive a stipend of \$450 per week during the program. In order to encourage the development of a research community, researchers are strongly urged to live on campus. To support that, on campus housing is subsidized by the URC. The amount of the subsidy depends on a student's financial aid status. There is no support for off-campus housing. We provide a weekly Wednesday luncheon with a seminar given by faculty researchers at Oxy and invited guest speakers. Attendance at this event is expected for all researchers and their mentors. Optional training workshops and fun activities are also offered to researchers. The final Wednesday, July 29th is devoted to an all-day research conference and students are expected to present their results as a talk or a poster.

The Undergraduate Research Committee has requested that all mentors complete the letter of recommendation form available at <http://www.oxy.edu/undergraduate-research-center/get-support/letter-recommendation>. This form includes space for additional text, or you may attach a letter if you prefer (most people attach a letter). Please provide us with all requested information on the form, including your rank of the student (if you are working with more than one), along with your thoughts on the student's readiness to do the proposed work, likely impact on her/his educational development, and degree of your commitment to serving as her/his mentor. If there are special circumstances that you feel the committee should know about, please be sure to include those in your letter. Recommendations must be submitted by February 10th by the end of the day. SRP applications without the letter of recommendation are considered incomplete and will not be forwarded to the committee for review. Please keep in mind that the committee will want to spread mentoring opportunities out amongst the campus – it is unlikely that any one mentor will have more than two SRP students receive funding through the URC

The SRP for students funded by your grant, department or endowment

Departments and faculty with individual funding from grants or other sources are welcome to select students to work with them through the SRP and the URC will fold those students into the larger program and handle all appropriate paperwork. Projects of this kind lasting less than 10-weeks are acceptable, as long as the dates fall within the date range of our program. Faculty/Departments must notify the URC about these students no later than March 16, 2020. For students selected prior to March 16, the URC will take care of all paperwork and provide subsidized on-campus housing, if the students want to live on campus. ** These students will be expected to attend the weekly seminars, submit a report and abstract to URC, participate in URC assessment efforts, and present their work at the July 29th research conference if they are still on campus. **To be eligible for these benefits, you must have your summer research opportunity listed on the URC website – or at least need to have emailed the URC with your opportunity by Feb. 3rd.** You can email a short description of your project to urc@oxy.edu and we will do the rest! (**Please be advised, however, that we may need to limit our support to no more than 2 students per mentor and, if your grant allows you to pay for student housing, you must do so without expecting our subsidy.)

For mentors

Mentors will receive a stipend in the form of [taxable] income, and Faculty who give luncheon or training talks (or serve as Area Coordinators) will receive additional funds. If you think you would be willing to take on any of these extra tasks, please let us know!