The ACES Undergraduate Research Scholarship Program

CULTIVATING OPPORTUNITY AND ACHIEVEMENT SINCE 1982

College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences
University of Illinois

Introductory Overview

The ACES Undergraduate Research Scholarship Program is designed to develop and foster student interest in research aimed at solving problems in the agricultural, consumer, and environmental sciences. Eligible students enrolled in the College of ACES are invited to apply for financial support of original research projects.

Through the ACES Undergraduate Research Scholarship Program, you can investigate important scientific problems, generate new knowledge, increase your professional competency, and prepare yourself for even greater challenges in your future career. You can conduct your research project under faculty guidance comparable to that which is given to graduate students. This is an excellent opportunity for you to explore the rapidly expanding frontiers of science and technology, meet major new intellectual challenges, and contribute to scientific knowledge.

Eligibility Criteria

You are eligible for the ACES Undergraduate Research Scholarship Program if you meet the following general criteria:

- You are officially enrolled at the University of Illinois with a declared academic major in the College of ACES.
- You are maintaining an overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 or higher.
- You will have sophomore, junior, or senior standing in an ACES undergraduate degree program by the time that the research project will be conducted.
How to Get Started

To get started on a research project, you will need an idea, a helpful professor, and a sound proposal. There are a number of ways to take the first step:

- Talk to your academic advisor, and ask about faculty researchers in your home department.
- Go to your departmental homepage or the ACES website, and look for faculty profiles. Often there is a listing of professors by “research interest.” Write an email message to a professor, and see if you can meet to discuss options.
- Talk with other students in your major. Ask them what kinds of research projects they did and how they got started.

**Note:** When meeting with faculty researchers, always make sure that you have taken the time to look into what they do so that you will be able to efficiently explain your thoughts and ideas. These are busy people!

Internet Resources for Locating Potential Research Advisors

- Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering: [http://abe.illinois.edu/](http://abe.illinois.edu/)
- Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics: [http://ace.illinois.edu/](http://ace.illinois.edu/)
- Program in Agricultural Education: [http://aged.illinois.edu/](http://aged.illinois.edu/)
- Department of Animal Sciences: [http://www.ansci.illinois.edu/](http://www.ansci.illinois.edu/)
- Department of Crop Sciences: [http://cropsci.illinois.edu/](http://cropsci.illinois.edu/)
- Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition: [http://fshn.illinois.edu/](http://fshn.illinois.edu/)
- Department of Human and Community Development: [http://hcd.illinois.edu/](http://hcd.illinois.edu/)
- Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences: [http://nres.illinois.edu/](http://nres.illinois.edu/)
- Division of Nutritional Sciences: [http://nutrsci.illinois.edu/](http://nutrsci.illinois.edu/)
- College of ACES Office of Research: [http://research.aces.illinois.edu/](http://research.aces.illinois.edu/)

The Edward R. Madigan Laboratory (ERML)

Application Process

Project proposals are accepted throughout the year on a rolling basis. There are three priority filing deadlines each year (the tenth day of classes in the fall and spring semesters and the summer session). Submitted research proposals before the priority filing deadline of the academic term during which you will be conducting your research project will help ensure that your merit scholarship is credited to your tuition bill in a timely manner. Here is a list of the priority filing deadlines for the current calendar year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Priority Filing Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2013</td>
<td>Monday, January 28, 2013 @ 5:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2013</td>
<td>Friday, May 24, 2013 @ 5:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>Monday, September 9, 2013 @ 5:00 PM</td>
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You are strongly encouraged to identify and define an appropriate research project well in advance of the appropriate priority filing deadline, preferably during the academic term prior to beginning your research activities. Application forms and additional information are available from this website:

http://academics.aces.illinois.edu/honors/research-scholarship-program

Preparing the Research Proposal

Project proposals should follow the format shown on the application form and are limited to two pages plus a title page and a budget page. A signed note (or printed-out email message) from your research advisor, affirming the originality and appropriateness of your research project, should also be attached to your application. The signatures of your research advisor, your academic advisor, and the head of the department in which your research will be conducted need to appear on the completed application form.

The project budget should itemize all funds necessary to support the proposed research. Allowable expenses include laboratory supplies, other disposable supplies, and off-campus travel necessary to collect data. **Funds may not be used for wages or major equipment.**

Financial Support

**Approved research projects can be funded up to $1000,** based on a project budget submitted with the application. In addition, **students with approved projects are also awarded a $500 merit scholarship** for the academic term during which the project is conducted.

Academic Credit

With your research advisor’s consent, you may receive academic credit (usually one to four credit hours) by registering for a “Research or Thesis” course (usually listed among the 290s or 390s courses in your research advisor’s department). As a general rule, 396 courses are reserved for use by ACES James Scholars; 295 courses should be used by all other ACES Undergraduate Researchers. (In the Department of Animal Sciences, ANSC 398 may be used by both James Scholars and non-James Scholars, as different sections of the course are provided for both types of students.) The final course grade will be assigned by your research advisor after all project requirements have been met.

Presentation of Your Research Findings

You are expected to provide an abstract of your research findings (usually three to five pages in length), submitted at the completion of the project to the Honors Dean, so that committed research funds can be expended.

You are encouraged to present your research findings as a poster display at Explor-ACES in March, the Provost’s Undergraduate Research Symposium in April, or a professional scientific meeting approved in advance by the Honors Dean.

- **ExplorACES:** [http://www.exploraces.org/](http://www.exploraces.org/)
- **Undergraduate Research Symposium:** [http://www.provost.illinois.edu/ugresearch/](http://www.provost.illinois.edu/ugresearch/)
Orville G. Bentley Awards for Excellence in Undergraduate Research

You are encouraged to enter the Orville G. Bentley Awards competition, which takes place during the spring semester to recognize the best poster displays presented at Explor-ACES in March and the Provost's Undergraduate Research Symposium in April. You should prepare your own poster under the guidance of your research advisor and follow the general requirements for research posters in your area of study. The poster should contain a summary of the research project, including the subject of your inquiry, how the research was conducted, what results were produced, interpretations of those results, and a summarizing conclusion. Tables and figures may also be included in the poster display.

As a general rule, three to five Orville G. Bentley Awards are presented annually, with each winner receiving a scholarship prize and a certificate of achievement. The winners of the competition are announced at the annual ACES Student Awards Banquet in mid-to-late April.

Supplemental Funding Opportunities

If you write a technical paper or prepare a research poster that you have been invited to present at a professional scientific meeting, then you may apply for up to $400 to help defray your travel expenses.

Projects that lead to publication of papers in peer-reviewed scientific journals may qualify for up to $300 toward publication expenses. To qualify, the published paper needs to list you as an author or contributor and acknowledge the support of the ACES Undergraduate Research Scholarship Program.

Requests for supplemental funding should be made by letter to the Honors Dean and need to provide documentary evidence that an appropriate research paper or poster has been scheduled for presentation and/or accepted for publication. All requests for travel funds should be submitted before the professional scientific meeting takes place.

Contact Information

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