The **Office of Undergraduate Research** helps undergraduates connect with research opportunities across campus

- Information sessions
- Advising appointments
- Informational website
- EUREKA!
- Research Week
Please Introduce Yourself!

• Your name
• Your year
• Your major
• Where are you in the research process?
  - just thinking about it
  - browsing possibilities
  - talking to a professor
  - currently researching
  - done research before
SURGe

A student organization that:
• facilitates and promotes undergraduate research
• helps students network with faculty and other student researchers
• hosts lab tours, faculty research talks, volunteer opportunities, workshops, poster sessions, plant sales, socials and more!
• meets weekly, Fridays 4-5 in PAI 2.48
SURGe welcomes students from all majors!

No dues. Just research. www.utsurge.org
Who can get involved in research?
Who does research?

All professors in all disciplines at UT engage in research or creative activity.

55% of UT undergrads go above and beyond their coursework to do research outside the classroom.
Why get involved in research as an undergraduate?
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Research experience leads to student success
Additional Benefits: Course Credit

- Research grade goes on your transcript!
- Many departments offer research credit
- Sometimes counts toward degree plan
Additional Benefits: Course Credit

The OUR offers **UGS 310 & 320L**: Undergraduate Research Experience

- One semester, 3-hour elective course
- About 10-12 hours per week
- Similar to “independent study”
- You and your faculty supervisor agree on expectations and meetings
- Submit contract for approval by OUR (available on website: “course credit”)
- We register you after approval
Additional Benefits

**Present your work**
- Research Week (April)
- Departmental presentations
- Conferences

**Publish your work**
- *Undergraduate Research Journal* at UT is prestigious
- Possible co-authorship or acknowledgement on publication
Additional Benefits

Scholarships and grants often available to support research

A few research assistantships may be paid (but most aren’t)
Models for Research Opportunities

- Assist a professor
- Conduct supervised independent research
Models for Research Opportunities

- Assist a professor
- Conduct supervised independent research
- During the school year
  - Pursue a summer Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU)
- Study abroad
  - Find an internship
  - Connect to a community organization

The University of Texas at Austin
Undergraduate Research
School of Undergraduate Studies
Models for Research Opportunities

- Archives
- Lab
- Classroom
- Abroad
When Can I Start Researching?

As a freshman, sophomore, junior or senior!

Depends on…
• Your readiness
• Independent project vs. research assistantship
• Conventions of the field
• Degree plans and class schedules
• Faculty expectations

Talk with your advisor, faculty, OUR to determine what’s best
Professors’ expectations

Demonstrate genuine interest and curiosity

Demonstrate self-motivation and show initiative

Be responsible

Some professors may ask you to commit for a particular length of time or number of hours/week

Some professors may ask you to complete a prerequisite
Examples of Research Assistant Activities

Generate data or conduct experiments
Compile, enter, and analyze data
Create an annotated bibliography or review of literature
Administer surveys or interview participants
Find primary documents
Laboratory upkeep
Transcribe interviews
Examples of Student Research Projects

Sara went to Ian Fleming’s estates and archives in England and Jamaica to study the creator of James Bond.

Charlie looked at primary historical documents to learn about the War on Hunger in the 1960s-70s.

Rudy researched how the asphalt on Texas roads might be used as a solar energy collector.

Elizabeth studied how brain damage affects speech and language disorders.

Amanda discovered a fossil collection that can help her reconstruct Nevada’s climate 30 million years ago.
How do I get started?

It’s an individualized process!

• Reaching out to professors who interest you
• Lots of flexibility, but sometimes requires persistence
Finding Your Research Experience

Step 1: Identify your interests

By field or discipline
  Government, Biochemistry

By topic
  cancer, climate change, WWII

By method
  laboratory research, interviews, computer modeling, fieldwork, archival work, sample collection
Finding Your Research Experience

Step 2: Find potential faculty mentors

- Network with current/former professors, Tas
- Network with student groups (SURGe, etc.)
- Browse department websites for faculty profiles and research news
- Attend research-related events
- Browse EUREKA!

http://www.utexas.edu/research/eureka/
Finding Your Research Experience

Step 3: Prepare for first contact
Finding Your Research Experience

Step 4: Contact a professor

Email to set up an appointment

Keep it brief and professional

Use a formal title

Personalize a template

Use the subject line to make a connection

Use an appropriate email address

Follow up if necessary

To: Professor

Subject: Undergraduate Research Inquiry

Dear Dr. ____________,

My name is ____________, and I am a ______ year ________ major interested in conducting research related to ________. I have read some of your recently published articles on ________ and found them very interesting and relevant to my goal of ____________. I would like to speak with you about your research and the possibility of assisting you with your projects.

Is there a convenient time for me to stop by? I am available from ____________ to ____________ during the week.

Thank you,
Finding Your Research Experience

Step 4: Contact a professor

Email to set up an appointment
Keep it brief and professional
Use a formal title
Personalize a template
Use the subject line to make a connection
Use an appropriate email address
Follow up if necessary

Dear Dr. Jones,

My name is Rob Reichle, and I am a junior psychology major interested in conducting research related to the neuroscience of language. I read your 2001 article on the Declarative/Procedural model of memory and language, and I was interested in the idea that lexical items and facts might be stored in the same way in the brain. This idea is the sort of topic I hope to explore further in an honors project on second language learners. I would like to meet with you to talk about this research, and the possibility of working with you on such a project.

Is there a convenient time for me to stop by? I am available every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday after 2, and from 10-12 on Tuesday and Thursday.

Thank you,
Rob Reichle
Finding Your Research Experience

Step 5: Meet a faculty member

- Prepare to discuss your interests, goals, and long-term plans
- Prepare to ask questions about research
- Prepare to discuss your time commitment and your expectations and needs, especially for independent research
- Ask about approval/training for human subjects
- Ask for suggestions if you’re not a good match
Finding Your Research Experience

Step 6: Commit!

• Stick to your time commitment
• Attend all meetings with professor/team
• Communicate with your professor and any other team members
What Comes Next?

• Identify your priorities
• Make your list of top 3-4 faculty members to contact
• Draft your email
• Meet with faculty
• Ask the OUR for help at any stage in the process
Questions?

uresearch@austin.utexas.edu
FAC 33
512-471-7152