

Undergraduate Research Mini-Grant Request for Proposals (RFP)

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Fall 2015

Goal

The goal of the UL Undergraduate Research Mini-Grant program is two-fold: to insure that the undergraduate students at the university benefit from the university's growing R&D program, and to improve student outcomes by facilitating undergraduate research, which has been identified as one of several "high impact practices." Accordingly, the University has set aside \$40K to be awarded as 20 undergraduate research mini-grants of \$2K each. The university has established an Undergraduate Research Council, with representatives from each college, which will administer this mini-grant program.

Definition

The definition of undergraduate research is very broad, and it encompasses original creative and scholarly activities in every domain and discipline taught at the university, whenever a faculty or staff member is directly mentoring one or more undergraduate students.

Eligibility

All UL faculty members (both tenure and non-tenure track) and research active staff (such as Research Scientists and Library staff) are eligible to apply and serve as the Principle Investigator (PI) for an Undergraduate Research Mini-Grant project. Interdisciplinary projects are allowed and encouraged.

Application Process

Interested faculty and staff are encouraged to submit the simple one-page application form (available separately) describing the proposed project. In the Project Description section, applicants are encouraged to briefly and concisely describe the nature of the project, the scholarly merit of the project, the impact the project will have on the students involved and upon the discipline itself, and a brief explanation of how the funds will be spent (although a formal budget is not required). The application form must be signed by the Principle Investigator, the PI's Department Head or equivalent, and the PI's Dean or equivalent. These approvals are required so that the PI's administrative chain will be informed of the proposed project, and thus be able to support the project with university resources as needed. If the resources within the administrative unit are not available for the proposed project, administrators are asked *not* to approve the project. For example, if a PI would require release time or special equipment (not funded by the project) or the scheduling of a particular performance venue in order to participate in the proposed project, and if those resources are not available, the administrator should not sign the proposal.

Completed original hard copy applications with all signatures must be received by Dr. Terry Chambers, Chair of the Undergraduate Research Council, care of the Mechanical Engineering Department, Rougeou Hall, room 320, by November 6th at 12:30 PM in order to be considered in this round of funding.

Duration

The mini-grant will commence upon award notification in late November of 2015 and extend until either the end of the Spring 2016 semester or the end of the Summer 2016 semester.

Selection Process

The applications will be reviewed and awarded by the Undergraduate Research Council. First priority in the review process will be given to scholarly merit, impact, and number of students affected. A secondary priority will be to insure that each college has at least one funded project.

Accounting

All PIs will be assigned a G-account number to use for the project. Project funds may be used for any reasonable and ordinary project-related expenses, including equipment, supplies, travel, registration, student stipends, and so on. Project funds may *not* be used for faculty compensation. All normal university travel and purchasing policies apply. Overspending of the account will render the PI ineligible for future RFP's, and the PI's department may be required to reimburse the university for the overage, so PI's are encouraged to keep a close accounting of expenditures. A final accounting of all expenditures is required, as described below.

Deliverables

All PI's who are awarded an Undergraduate Research Mini-Grant are required to submit at the end of the project period a two-page report in the form of a Word document describing the results of the project. A final financial accounting for the project in the form of an Excel spreadsheet is also required. A final report form and a spreadsheet template for reporting purposes will be provided. PI's will also be responsible for requiring their students to create and submit a PowerPoint presentation on their project by the end of the project period. In addition, PI's are highly encouraged to facilitate an actual student presentation, demonstration, performance, or show of the scholarly work at some appropriate venue, such as the Annual Fall Undergraduate Research Invitational hosted each year by the Honors Program. PI's who do not submit the required final report, financial accounting spreadsheet, and PowerPoint presentation within 30 days of the end of the project will not be eligible for consideration in future RFP's.

Questions

Any questions regarding this Request for Proposals may be directed to Dr. Terry Chambers via email at tlchambers@louisiana.edu.