The STEP Undergraduate Research Experience

Undergraduate research can be conducted in any field of study, and is not limited to students in STEM fields. For example, independent scholarship in the humanities or the creative arts is included in the umbrella of undergraduate research, and the same opportunities for presentation, publication, and writing a thesis are available to all OSU students involved in ‘research’. All students who engage in undergraduate research through STEP are encouraged to write a thesis and apply to graduate with research distinction. Students interested in writing a research thesis should discuss this with the faculty research advisor and their academic or major advisor.

Research can be a long term process, and the STEP undergraduate research experience may take more than the minimum one semester or summer to complete. However, by the end of one term, the STEP student researcher is expected to have made some progress (an understanding of necessary techniques, exploratory or preliminary results or measures, initial development of survey instruments, etc.). You may find this is a project you want to continue and develop it into a thesis.

Undergraduate Research Guidelines

This research experience:
- Must be an experience that you identify and coordinate independently with an OSU Faculty Member. The faculty research advisor is a different role from the STEP Faculty Member and must be a different person.
- Should stand alone and be independent of research assignments found in regular academic courses (i.e., a course assignment); however, enrollment and course credit through an independent research course (i.e. 4998) is allowed
- Represent a substantial time commitment—a minimum of at least one semester or full-time summer research
- STEP students who choose the research option are encouraged to share research findings in a public forum by the end of the summer after junior year. Options include but are not limited to:
  - A presentation at a campus poster forum or another appropriate venue
  - Submission for publication in the Journal of Undergraduate Research at The Ohio State University or another appropriate publication

Next Steps

- Talk to your STEP Faculty Member about how Undergraduate Research fits with your academic, career and life goals
- Find an OSU faculty member to serve as your faculty research advisor
- Answer the questions on the following page on the planned research experience. The student and faculty research advisor (and co-advisor, if applicable) must sign off on the project description and agreement before it is turned into the student’s STEP faculty advisor. The completed and signed form is due by April 1, 2014 to the student’s STEP faculty advisor.
- Further information, resources and assistance regarding Undergraduate Research can be found at the Undergraduate Research Office Website - http://www.undergraduateresearch.osu.edu/ or by e-mailing uro@osu.edu.
For STEP-specific inquiries about Undergraduate Research, contact Vicki Pitstick (Pitstick.10@osu.edu).

A Completed Undergraduate Research Proposal will include:

- STEP Proposal
- Project Description and Agreement (signed by the undergraduate student, faculty research advisor, and research co-advisor, if applicable)
- Budget

Fellowship Disbursement
The approved fellowship will post to your university statement of account approximately 45 days prior to the start of your research experience and be applied toward the balance due. If your balance is less than the amount of your STEP fellowship and any other loans, grants, and/or scholarships you may receive for that term, you will be able to receive the excess balance (or “refund”). In order to access your refund, you will need to set up a direct deposit into your personal bank account. You do not have to establish a bank account locally to use direct deposit; refunds may be electronically transferred to any bank in the United States. To set up direct deposit, go to buckeyelink.osu.edu. Once enrolled, the direct deposit service will continue every semester.

Please note: Prior to disbursement of the fellowship, STEP administration will verify faculty certification of completion for all STEP program requirements.

Independent Research Opportunities Abroad
You may be considering exploring a research opportunity abroad. Per university policy, Ohio State students engaged in international research activities must meet the following requirements:

- No current Department of State travel warning may exist for the chosen international location. This information can be found at [http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html).
- Enrollment in the university’s supplemental international insurance: [http://oia.osu.edu/preparing-todepart/health-insurance.html](http://oia.osu.edu/preparing-todepart/health-insurance.html)
- Complete an online Health & Safety Pre-Departure Orientation

*If your research project is to be conducted in conjunction with a study abroad program, all proposals involving international education opportunities outside of Ohio State-approved study abroad programming are subject to final approval by the Office of International Affairs. Contact OIA with questions about this requirement.*
STEP Undergraduate Research Option
Guidelines for Project Description and Agreement

Each student will meet with their research advisor to develop a project description and project completion agreement. The questions below are designed to guide the discussion with your advisor in order to give you the information to be able to fill out the proper documentation for STEP.

Project Description:
1) What is the title, goal(s), research question or general topic for this project?

2) What methodology or process will you use?

3) What are the anticipated results or outcomes for this project?

Project Completion Agreement between Student and Faculty Research Advisor:
1) When will the student carry out this project? (Please provide dates or terms)

2) How many hours per week will the student work on the project? (If unsure, please describe monthly/semesterly time commitment expectations)

3) Who will directly supervise the student on this project, if not the faculty advisor?
4) What are the expectations for the student researcher? Will he/she have to attend lab meetings, submit progress reports, or meet on a regular basis with the faculty research advisor/direct supervisor?

5) What product or outcome is expected at the end of the term of this project (phase of the research project)? What will the student present to the faculty research advisor and when?

6) Identify possible venues to present or publish this research.

7) Is this going to be a research thesis project? If not, does the student have interest in writing a research thesis?

Student Name (please print):
Signature: Date:

Faculty Research Advisor Name (please print):
Signature: Date:

Co-Advisor Name—if applicable (please print):
Signature: Date: