

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY  
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH  
OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM  
Faculty Handbook





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2012-2013 Inaugural UROP Class

## INTRODUCTION

The *Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program* (UROP) offers the opportunity for students to partner with our excellent faculty as research assistants. Students in UROP work closely with faculty and peers, receive mentorship and training in the UROP Colloquium class, and present their contributions in the Spring Research Symposium. UROP aims to enhance the academic culture of our student body while offering support to our hard-working faculty.

This new initiative from the Office of Undergraduate Research and the Division of Undergraduate Studies seeks to benefit faculty, students, and all who participate. By offering faculty members highly-motivated first- and second-year students as assistants, faculty not only receive assistance with their research for an entire academic year, but also have the opportunity to cultivate a relationship with their UROP assistants that can grow into longer-term research assistantships. Students who participate in UROP find an academic community on campus, gain practical research experience, and become invested in the university's mission of excellence in research. Our goal is for this cooperation between our faculty and our undergraduates to be one more means for Florida State University to consistently strive for excellence in both research and education.

By taking advantage of UROP, you have placed the research project for which you desire assistance on a list to be shared with UROP students and potentially chosen for a student's UROP research assistantship. This brief handbook will guide you through interviewing and selecting an assistant, working with that assistant, and continuing to develop a productive research relationship with your UROP student over the course of the academic year.

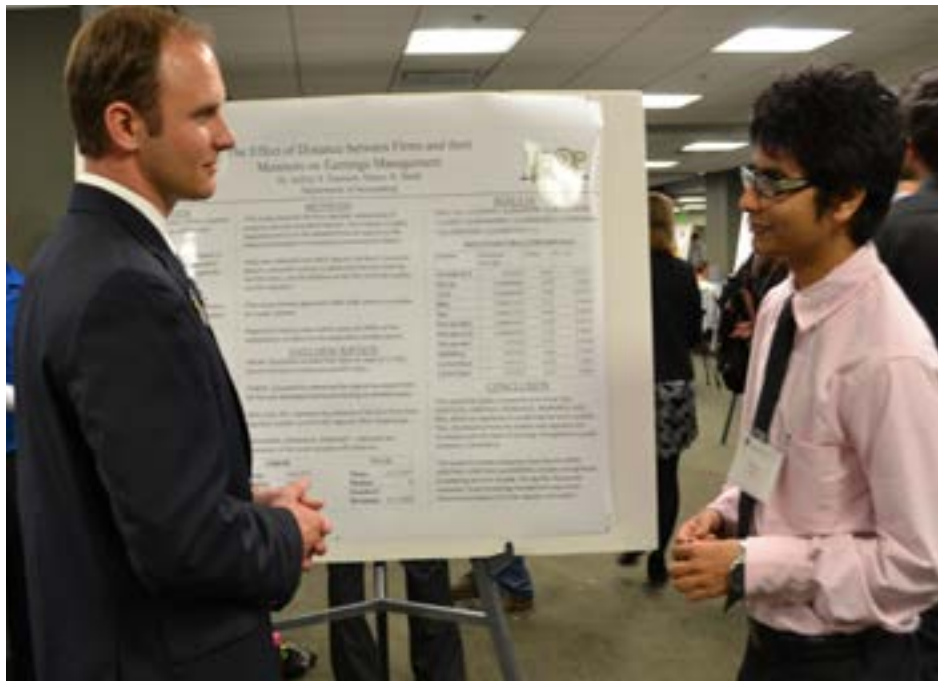
For questions and more information, please feel free to view the UROP website at <http://our.fsu.edu/urop.html>

More specific contact information can be found at the end of this handbook in the "Support" section.

## RESEARCH SPONSOR: YOUR ROLE

As UROP Research Sponsors, faculty members and postdoctoral fellows will have the opportunity to take on student research assistants for a year-long period; thus, you are the backbone of UROP. This begins with interviewing students in September to select the best matches for your desired research positions. Faculty will select their UROP assistants by October 1st, and from then on meet regularly with them until the end of the Spring 2014 semester. This gives students two whole semesters to grow into the research projects and their roles, and allows students to become increasingly more familiar and autonomous in their roles as research assistants, so that the assistantship becomes progressively more beneficial to both the Research Sponsor and the UROP assistant.

As a UROP Research Sponsor, you will interview and select your research assistant(s), introduce them to the project and their responsibilities, guide them through the tasks required, and give continuous feedback on their performance. Most basic research

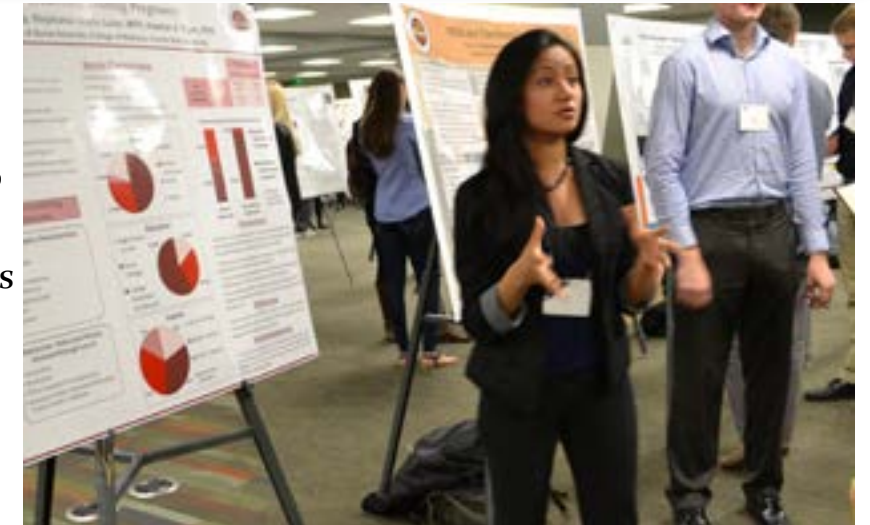


tasks and practices will be covered in the UROP Colloquium, and additional skill-building workshops will be hosted by FSU Libraries, so while the amount and degree of instruction required will vary by project and student, it should generally be less than that traditionally associated with an undergraduate research assistantship. If you would like to know more about what skills and topics are taught in the Colloquium and the workshops, feel free to contact your assistant's UROP Leader.

## RESEARCH SPONSOR: YOUR ROLE

### **Selecting a student(s)**

UROP students' first exposure to the program will be through the UROP Colloquium (see below), where their UROP Leaders will review the listings of projects for which faculty members have requested assistants. UROP Leaders will mentor students in selecting several



appropriate projects and contacting those faculty Research Sponsors for interviews. Faculty members will then be able to meet with UROP students, conduct interviews, and select the best matches for their particular projects. Research Sponsors may also accept more assistants than originally requested if multiple students are interested in and well-suited for the project.

Just as Research Sponsors are advised to interview multiple students for each position, UROP students will be encouraged to meet with several professors to determine which assistantship is the best match for them. That said, faculty members are encouraged to suggest a confirmation deadline when offering positions to the student(s) they've selected, preferably at least several days before the October 1 deadline. Once a student and faculty member have agreed upon an assistantship, students will be required to have their Assistantship Contract signed by their Research Sponsor. The contract will outline the subject of the assistantship, the number of hours per week the student is expected to work, and other such basic information, and the student is responsible for attaining their Research Sponsor's signature and turning in the contract to their UROP Leader by the October 1 deadline. The contract is included in this handbook and is also available on our website at <http://our.fsu.edu/urop.html>.

## RESEARCH SPONSOR: YOUR ROLE

### ***Orienting students***

Once Research Sponsors have selected their UROP assistants, they will be responsible for establishing students' roles on the project and delineating their expectations. Sponsors should meet regularly with their assistants (we recommend once weekly but this will vary by circumstance), and sponsors should also consider introducing their UROP assistants to graduate assistants or others working on the same project. Research Sponsors should develop a schedule, direct students to background readings and resources, discuss the disciplinary approach to the project, and discuss the purpose and goals of the project and the student's contribution to it.

### ***Working with students***

Once students have been familiarized with their faculty Research Sponsor and the project, they will work to contribute to the project in keeping with the Research Sponsor's expectations and their established schedule. To facilitate this process, Research Sponsors should include UROP assistants in research team meetings, supervise students' work on the project, and meet with them regularly to provide direction and feedback. Occasionally, skills or knowledge required for the assistantship will also be covered in the UROP Colloquium, so feel free to contact your assistant's UROP Leader to inquire whether some things will be or can be covered in the Colloquium or one of the associated skill-building workshops.

Sometimes small expenses can be incurred when working with research assistants, which is why the Office of Undergraduate Research offers a small materials grant to UROP Research Assistants. These grants (up to \$500) are to cover the expense needed to support UROP student research activity (e.g., low-cost equipment and materials, such as lab supplies, photocopying, telephone calls, etc.) Since funding is limited, these will be reviewed on a first come, first serve basis until funding is exhausted. Please find the expense form at the end of this handbook or on our website at <http://our.fsu.edu/urop.html>.

At the end of the first semester, UROP Research Sponsors will be asked to fill out a brief evaluation form for their assistants. This helps tell students, UROP Leaders and the Office of Undergraduate Research how well UROP assistants are progressing, what areas may need more attention in the Colloquium or skill-building workshops, and whether it is appropriate to keep a student paired with the same Research Sponsor in the following semester. We hope that these evaluations will function as tools to insure that both UROP assistants and the program itself continue to grow in what they offer faculty Research Sponsors.

## DEVELOPING A GOOD UROP PROJECT

The main focus of UROP is to engage students in research early in their academic careers and introduce them to a field or discipline. We expect students to assist you with an ongoing or new project that is part of your research, not a student directed/initiated project. We have no expectation that the student will be doing "original research of their own design" as a first UROP experience. A good UROP project achieves the following:

1. Provides the student with a good introduction to the purpose of the project, including background literature to read, an orientation to the project, an introduction to the research team, and an understanding of how the student's work fits into the larger project.
2. Enables students to be engaged over time in a variety of tasks with growing responsibility and difficulty as they develop skills and knowledge.
3. Facilitates opportunities for the student to meet with the entire research group or other team members to learn about the broader scope and goals of the project (if such a group exists).
4. Includes regularly scheduled times to meet with you or another supervisor to discuss progress, tasks, next steps, etc. and receive feedback.
5. Introduces students to a field or discipline and the research methods used.

## WHO ARE THE STUDENTS?

**UROP students** are among the brightest and most motivated incoming freshmen and returning sophomores at Florida State University. For our first year of this new program, 2012-2013, we received well over five hundred applications and accepted 94, roughly two thirds of which were second-year students. Students admitted this year have an average GPA of 3.87 and represent nearly every academic discipline on campus, with many from the Honors and CARE programs and an impressive variety of extracurricular activities, leadership roles, and particular skills and interests among them.

UROP students are chosen for their potential, and UROP strives to help them fulfill that potential through its three-part program. The first part is the UROP Colloquium, in which these high-achieving and driven students participate in a seminar-style course introducing them to research in their discipline and helping them build the skills to efficiently pursue such research. The second part, the assistantship, pairs these students with faculty members like you who have chosen to support our students and give back to the academic community by taking advantage of the program and receiving research assistance. The third part is the presentation at the Undergraduate Research Symposium in the Spring semester, in which students apply what they have learned and share their contributions to faculty research projects in a conference style poster presentation.

At the end of the year, what you should have is a highly competent young assistant with whom you have formed a productive research relationship beneficial to both Research Sponsor and UROP student. We expect that students will want to continue working with their UROP Research Sponsors through further funded research assistantships, Federal Work-Study, DIS credit, or various other formal or informal means after the end of their UROP year. The Office of Undergraduate Research will strongly encourage students to and will help direct them toward appropriate means of doing so, leading to more positive experiences for the student and an assistant who is increasingly familiar with and capable of contributing to the professor's research.

## THE COLLOQUIUM

The **UROP Colloquium** is the first of three parts of the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program. It is a one credit-hour training seminar that gives students a basic introduction to research in their disciplinary area, answering such questions as what research is, what its place in the research university is, and how it is practiced. The Colloquium is led by an Upper Division student who is highly experienced in research at the undergraduate level, and is not intended to be a research methods course but rather offers support by talking about research at the broadest level. All UROP Colloquia will include such topics as conducting literature reviews, compiling bibliographies, and ethical research, but most topics will vary between disciplinary clusters. Feel free to contact your assistant's UROP Leader to view the syllabus and activities for his or her Colloquium.

Beyond simply introducing students to research in their discipline, the UROP Colloquium also serves as a support structure for the entire UROP experience. UROP Leaders, through the Colloquium, will facilitate students' choosing a project and Research Sponsor, support students throughout their assistantships, and help prepare them for their final presentations of their UROP research at the Spring Undergraduate Research Symposium.

The Colloquium meets on a biweekly basis for Fall and Spring semesters. It will also include faculty and graduate student guest speakers, and a series of skill-building workshops hosted by FSU Libraries. Throughout participation in UROP and the Colloquium, UROP students will learn to:

- Define research and identify its role in the world
- Identify basic research designs and methods
- Read and review peer-reviewed articles
- Identify ethical concerns regarding research integrity and responsibility
- Write a research abstract
- Present their research in an academic/research setting
- Engage with a faculty member in a research setting.

## THE PRESENTATION

All UROP students will present their work in the Spring Undergraduate Research Symposium, where they will showcase their contributions to their Research Sponsors' projects. The UROP Colloquium will help prepare students for this presentation phase, first by taking them to the Fall Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Awards (URCAA) Symposium in October, where they will see what presentation of research looks like at the undergraduate level. In the Spring, students will prepare posters about the projects they worked on with their Research Sponsors and showcase their contributions to it.

The UROP Colloquium will stress the importance of sharing research findings with the academic community and will demonstrate the importance of conference-style presentation as one means of doing so, making the presentation at the Undergraduate Research Symposium an important capstone to the UROP experience. Faculty Research Sponsors should inquire what students will be talking about in their presentations, and if there is an issue with sharing any part of the research, they can contact the Office of Undergraduate Research to work out an acceptable alternative for this part of the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program.



## IMPACT ON THE UNIVERSITY

A large body of scholarship suggests that programs like UROP have a strong impact on undergraduate education, retention, GPA, and graduation rates. The University of Michigan has conducted their own studies on the effects of their UROP program (on which our program draws as a model), the results of which can be seen at <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/urop/about/evaluation>.

UROP is designed to benefit all who participate: faculty by offering research assistance with the potential for a long-term assistant, and students by involving them in one of the university's main missions. According to the peer-reviewed studies listed in the bibliography below, UROP can also be expected to positively impact retention of minority students, faculty job satisfaction, satisfaction with student experience, and the overall quality of our undergraduate education. We in the Office of Undergraduate Research and the Division of Undergraduate Studies expect UROP to directly contribute to

1. **Retention**, as outlined in the Michigan study,
2. **Recruitment**, by offering a student experience unique in the state of Florida,
3. **Reputation**, through presentations at conferences and peer perception of the program, and
4. **Rankings**, by investing in our undergraduate education and academic culture.

Research Sponsors are welcome and highly encouraged to offer any feedback or advice they may have concerning the program or its execution. Such feedback should be sent to Dr. Joe O'Shea, Director of Undergraduate Research ([joshea@fsu.edu](mailto:joshea@fsu.edu))

Please see some of these studies for analyses on the benefits of programs like UROP:

- Gregerman, S.R. "Improving the Academic Success of Diverse Students Through Undergraduate Research": <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/urop/about/evaluation>
- Hathaway, R. S., Nagda, B.A., Gregerman, S.R., "The Relationship of Undergraduate Research Participation to Graduate and Professional Educational Pursuit, An Empirical Study." *Journal of College Student Development* 43.5 (2002): 614-31.
- Jonides, J. et al. "Evaluation of Minority Retention Programs: The Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program at the University of Michigan." 100th Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington, DC. 14-18 Aug 1992.
- Russell, Susan H., Mary P. Hancock, and James McCullough. "Benefits of Undergraduate Research Experiences." *Science* 316.5824 (2007): 548-549.
- Nagda, Biren A. et al. "Undergraduate Student-Faculty Research Partnerships Affect Student Retention." *The Review of Higher Education* 22.1 (1998): 55-72.
- Gonzalez, Cristina, et al. "Undergraduate Research, Graduate Mentoring, and the University's Mission." *Science* 293.1624 (2001): 1624-6.

## SPONSOR FAQs

### **What is the role of a first or second year undergraduate student in a research project?**

UROP provides students with an opportunity to undertake inquiry-based learning. Undergraduate students are available to assist faculty in conducting their ongoing research and creative projects or in starting a new project. Sample student research assistant tasks include: Conduct library research, transcribe interviews, assist in book and/or course development (e.g., indexing a manuscript before publication), conduct laboratory/survey research, participate in community-based research, assist with performance art, and/or apply computer technology skills to a project, among other tasks.

### **What are some advantages of working with an undergraduate student on my project?**

Faculty are busy and can often use extra help on their research. Through UROP, faculty have an opportunity to introduce a diverse group of students to their academic discipline and in so doing open academic and career possibilities for students. Students will gain an in-depth understanding of the many roles faculty undertake. UROP students bring enthusiasm and a fresh viewpoint to the project.

### **What are reasonable expectations of an undergraduate researcher?**

With training, undergraduate student researchers can make significant contributions to the research project. Initially, the first or second year student will need close supervision, but over time, the student will be able to increase his/her level of participation and become a more independent worker.

### **How many hours per week are students available to work on the research project?**

Students will be expected to work 5 to 10 hours per week, or up to 15 in the case of some Federal Work-Study students.

## SPONSOR FAQs

### **How much time is involved in mentoring a student?**

The amount of time involved will vary depending on the nature of the project. At a minimum, during the first month of hire, you or a research team member will need to work closely with the student to provide an orientation to and training for the project. Students should be given background information, an explanation about the project's methods and procedures, and be told about the role they will play. Faculty are encouraged to meet one on one with students to review their progress and, when appropriate and possible, to include student assistants in the research team meetings.

### **How do I hire a student to work with me?**

Students will look through a list of available faculty research projects and select the projects they want to apply for. They are responsible for contacting the faculty sponsor to set up an interview. From these student inquiries, faculty select students to interview and then determine which student(s) they want to hire. The student(s) will ask you to sign a contract and then the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) will take care of the necessary paperwork. The faculty sponsor is responsible for setting a time and date for the student to begin to work.

### **What if I need to be away from the University while I am mentoring a student?**

Faculty are often involved in activities which require short trips away from campus. Students can continue to work on their project during the faculty sponsor's absence. We recommend that you inform your student about your upcoming absence and provide the student with another staff member who can be consulted, if necessary, in your absence. If you know in advance of accepting a student that you will be gone on a number of trips or an extended leave in which you will be relatively unavailable to the student, you may want to postpone participation in UROP until the next academic year.

### **How is UROP funded?**

UROP is funded by the Office of Undergraduate Research, the FSU Student Foundation, and Federal Work-Study funds.

### **Does my research project need to be funded to participate in UROP?**

No. The Office of Undergraduate Research supports all UROP students through their experience, and they are compensated through Federal Work Study and academic credit.

## SPONSOR FAQs

### **What is the role of the UROP Leader?**

Each UROP student is assigned to a UROP Leader who helps them navigate through the program and serves as a program liaison to you. These UROP Leaders are current juniors and seniors with extensive experience in research in their disciplinary areas. UROP Leaders meet individually with each of their students while also facilitating bi-weekly colloquium. UROP Leaders will support their students while also acting as liaisons between students and Research Sponsors when needed.

### **What is covered by the UROP Colloquium?**

The UROP Colloquium is one of the three main parts of students' participation in UROP. The Colloquium will be instructed by UROP Leaders, serving as a support system for students in preparing for, selecting, participating in, and finally presenting faculty research projects. It will cover such topics as the definition of research and its role in the world; literature review and critical analysis of peer-reviewed articles; ethical concerns regarding research integrity and responsibility; and exposure to techniques, methods, and concepts that will aid the student in presenting research and participating in the academic/research culture.

### **What if I experience a problem with my student?**

In some cases, the student-faculty relationship or work performance experiences problems. Given the rigorous application and interview process, we expect these cases to be very few, but UROP does have measures in place should such issues arise. Student UROP Leaders will serve as liaisons between faculty and UROP students, and can be contacted regarding such issues. Also feel free to contact the Office of Undergraduate Research at (850) 645-8118 or e-mail Director Dr. Joe O'Shea at [joshea@fsu.edu](mailto:joshea@fsu.edu) if you experience performance or communication issues with your student.

### **How will students be evaluated?**

UROP Leaders will assign students an S/U grade for their work in the colloquium, and Research Sponsors will fill out an evaluation form at the end of the assistantship. Additionally, students may elect to participate in DIS credit hours in the Spring semester, for which their Research Sponsor will assign a grade.

## SPONSOR FAQs

### **Does UROP offer any training assistance?**

UROP offers a variety of skill building workshops for students in Fall and Spring term, many of which are hosted or supported by FSU Libraries. Additionally, part of the objective of the UROP colloquium is to introduce students to the practice and basic concepts of research.

### **By participating in UROP, can I receive supplementary funding for my research project?**

Yes. Faculty may apply for supplementary research funding of up to \$500. Funds are typically used for purchasing equipment or supplies students will be using to conduct research and/or student transportation to and from an off campus research site. Use the Supplementary Research Funding Application to request these funds.

### **What is the possibility of keeping a student after they complete their UROP year?**

UROP students will be enthusiastically encouraged to continue working with their Research Sponsors after their UROP assistantship. Students may continue acting as research assistants as volunteers or for DIS credit, Work-Study funding, funding made available by faculty members or their departments.

### **Should I assign different tasks to Work Study students than students participating in UROP for academic credit?**

No, we have the same expectations and goals for all UROP students regardless of how they are compensated for their work.

### **Does UROP offer any opportunities for presentation of research?**

Yes. All students participating in UROP will participate in the Spring Research Symposium by presenting a poster on the Research Sponsor's project and their contributions to it.



## SUPPORT

Occasionally, Research Sponsors may need to contact the Office of Undergraduate Research for help with UROP, whether it is to clarify something, to request a skill-building workshop, or something else.

Additionally, in some cases, the student-faculty relationship or work performance experiences problems. Given the rigorous application and interview process, we expect these cases to be very few, but UROP does have measures in place should such issues arise. Student UROP Leaders will serve as liaisons between faculty and UROP students, and can be contacted regarding such issues.

The students' UROP Leaders should normally be the first point of contact for basic inquiries about what is covered in the Colloquium or other general UROP questions or questions about UROP assistants. On the next page this year's UROP Leaders and their contact information are listed. Also feel free to contact the Office of Undergraduate Research for any problems, questions, or feedback with UROP.

Office of Undergraduate Research:  
 University Center A 3600  
 282 Champions Way  
 Tallahassee, FL 32306-2380  
 Tel: (850) 645-8118 | Fax: (850) 644-2101

Generic queries for the Office of Undergraduate Research can be sent to [our@fsu.edu](mailto:our@fsu.edu).

## SUPPORT

### UROP Leaders for 2013-2014



Name	Role	Contact
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