

Provost's Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity (UReCA) First Generation Fellowship Guidelines

Criteria for Granting Distinguished Undergraduate Research Awards

The First Generation UReCA Fellowship offers financial support of \$1,000 per semester for students that qualify as a First-Generation College student*. Applications are welcome to carry out research or creative activities from across all academic disciplines. We strongly encourage applications from students with no previous experience, as well as collaborative inter- or multi-disciplinary projects. s \$1,000 is only for the faculty to use on the student for their supplies, travel, etc.

Although previous research or creative activity with a faculty mentor may be beneficial, prior research or creative activity is not necessary for applying. A well-thought project, attainable outcomes, and a willing faculty mentor that can support the student is **essential** to being competitive for the Summer Fellowship, but prior experience is not required.

It is important that students and faculty mentors contemplating submission of projects become familiar with the procedures and requirements described below. Questions should be directed to the UReCA Office (ureca@ou.edu).

****Defined in 1980 in the TRIO section of the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. Sec. 1070a-11(h)(3)) as "an individual... whose parents did not complete a baccalaureate degree", or, in the case of a single parent household, referring to the supporting parent with which the student resided.***

The First Generation Fellowship Process

Step 1a: Identify a willing faculty mentor/advisor. The faculty mentor can be in any unit, but their research and creative activity must be aligned with the project submitted to be able to support the student in achieving the outcomes of the project.

Step 1b: Outline an appropriate project with guidance from the identified faculty mentor. The project should be significant and challenging, yet doable within the allotted timeframe. The student must take ownership of the project and demonstrate a significant level of independence.

If the student has previously worked with the faculty mentor in the project area, then the project should be an extension of this area that can be defined as independent project that is completed during the summer fellowship period.

Step 2: Draft proposal. The proposal is to be no more than 2 pages (excluding references), 12-point font, single spaced with 1-inch margins, and please include page numbers. Submit as a PDF (cover letter first on the PDF, both parts together) in the First Generation Application. A formal project proposal must describe the research or creative project being considered.

Research project proposals (2 pages max) will include:

- A title
- A personal statement that includes why you are interested in the proposed project.
- Project questions or objectives
- A timeline with goals
- Expected outcomes

Step 3: If IRB or IACUC review or exemption is required prior to conducting the work, this should be noted as well. You do not have to complete IRB or IACUC before submission, but must complete before conducting research or creative activities (again, if needed).

Institutional Review Board (IRB): <https://irb.ou.edu/howto/q1.html>

Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee (IACUC): <https://www.ou.edu/acup>

Step 4: Submit the First Gen Fellowship Application (link is at www.ou.edu/ureca) by the due date listed on the website. Please start the name of any files as “YourLastName_URCA_” at the beginning

Step 5: Arrange for your Mentor to submit a Letter of Support for your proposal. In the letter, the mentor must outline the agreed-upon way you will conduct your research and how much involvement they will have in the summer. This will be scored, so the letter from your mentor is crucial.

Criteria for Evaluation:

The proposal will be scored in the following categories: proposal quality, methodology/timeline, and support from faculty. Each are elaborated as follows:

- a. **Proposal Quality:** Does the student articulate the full plan, and is the background literature sound in justification? Does the student explain the project for a wider audience to understand? Does the passion of the student’s idea show in their writing?
- b. **Methodology/Timeline:** Can the student accomplish what they set out to do given their written-out timeline? Are the methods sound and understandable for the project?
- c. **Letters of Support:** Will the faculty support them throughout the process? Is this aligned or close to the area of the mentor? Does the mentor show a commitment to the student? Does the second faculty see potential in the student to complete the fellowship

Letter of Recommendation from Mentor to be submitted via email to ureca@ou.edu. Please have your mentor email it before the submission deadline. The subject line of the email should be “First Gen Rec Letter ‘Student First Name’ ‘Student Last Name’”.