Undergraduate Research

Credit

Specific language on this page comes from the MemoLab at Boston College.

Openings and Applying

There are three main ways to do research as an undergraduate:

1. For credit
2. As a senior thesis
3. For pay

Please see the lab website's "Join Us" page for advertised positions, although you're always welcome to reach out if you have a specific idea (see below). Specific positions for pay may be also advertised as announcements on the lab website.

Research for Credit

If you want to work in lab and earn course credit, you can sign up for undergraduate research (discuss CEVE 499 with a program administrator or adviser). We will have to fill out a syllabus contract at the beginning of the semester. Typically you would be in lab for at least 10 hours a week, and you would also be required to attend lab meetings, read a few papers, and complete a few short written assignments. You can enroll in undergraduate research multiple times, subject to the requirements of the University and your degree.

To Apply: send me an email from your Rice University account:

1. Put "CEVE 499: Research for Credit" in the subject line of the email,
2. Attach your CV or resume (short is fine, undergrads don't need a 5 page CV!) as a `.pdf` file
3. Attach a 1-2 page project proposal. The more detailed, the better (see below) as a `.pdf` file
4. Suggest some times when you might be available to talk further in the body of the email.

Senior Thesis Supervision

If you are interested in having me supervise your senior thesis project, I recommend doing research for credit course during your sophomore or junior year. However, this is not a strict requirement (especially in 2021 since I'm new here!!)

To Apply: as above (to do research for credit) but put "Senior Thesis Supervision" in the subject line of the email.

Research for Pay

If you want to work in lab and earn money, there are two different options. The lab can pay you as a research assistant, typically 5-10 hours per week at $12 per hour or as discussed. We have a limited number of hours available each semester, so these positions are competitive. Open positions may be posted on [our lab website](#), but if you have concrete ideas you can propose a project (see below).

We can apply for an undergraduate research fellowship to fund your time in lab. Because these fellowships are intended to support your academic development, undergraduate fellows will be required to participate in lab meetings. This option is also available during the summer.

To Apply: as above (to do research for credit) but put "Research for Pay" in the subject line of the email.

Volunteer Research

Unpaid internships give an unfair advantage to those who can afford to volunteer their time and contribute to unequal representation in the field. We do not take unpaid volunteers as research assistants in our lab, except for academic credit.

How To

Write a Project Proposal

A project proposal is a first draft of a semester research plan that we will craft together. This document will lay out research questions, research goals, research milestones and timelines, the tools you will need to carry out the research, and the mentoring and guidance you will need. As you write the first draft, your main goal is to convince me that you've thought about what research you want to do, that this research serves some intellectual or career goals that you have, that you have *most* of the skills you will need to do it, and that it's something that I would be well suited to supervise. Some things that I'm looking for when reading a project proposal are:

- Is the research feasible? (Do you have the skills needed? Do I have the resources needed?)
- Is the research interesting? Do you have a sense of previous work in this area? Are there social, policy, or technical implications?
- Are you going to be motivated? Does this advance real goals that you have?
- Am I the right mentor for this work? Do I have the skills and resources needed to support you?

- Does this research advance my goals?[1]

FAQ

If you email me with a question, I may ask your permission to post that question and answer (with anonymity) on this section. This can help future prospective students.

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[1]This one is a bit trickier, since you don't necessarily know my goals! However, if your research is tied to projects I'm working on or have worked on in the past, or if it's related to something we've talked about in the past, there's a good chance that it advances my goals. Don't get too stressed about this part.