

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIP
GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES
2010-11

Guidelines

Iowa State University's Undergraduate Research Assistantship (URA) Program encourages outstanding juniors and seniors to pursue graduate study by offering them hands-on experience in a formal research environment. Participation in the URA Program assists students in making career decisions and in attaining information about graduate education and fellowships. Faculty members of Iowa State also benefit from working closely with talented undergraduates. The research roles assigned to the students are expected to develop technical and manipulative skills as well as foster originality, imagination, judgment, and patience -- the traits of an independent scholar.

To qualify for the Undergraduate Research Assistantship Program, students must:

- Be classified as juniors or seniors by the beginning of Fall 2010
- Demonstrate sufficient financial need by filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- Maintain an ISU cumulative grade point average of at least 3.25

First Year URA Students

First year URA students can earn a maximum of \$3200 for the nine-month academic period beginning on August 23, 2010 and ending May 6, 2011. The faculty sponsor pays 50% of the wages, while the College Work-Study program funds the remaining 50%. The pay rate for first year URA students is \$10.00 per hour.

Renewal URA Students

Renewal URA students continuing work with the same faculty member can earn a maximum of \$3600 for the nine month academic period beginning on August 23, 2010 and ending May 6, 2011. The faculty sponsor pays 50% of the wages, while the College Work-Study program funds the remaining 50%. The pay rate for renewal URA students is \$12.00 per hour.

Important dates and documents due:

- Student and Faculty URA applications or Renewal applications for 2010-11 due by March 31, 2010 (financialaid.iastate.edu/forms/forms.php)
- Completed Letter of Intent signed by all parties
- 2010-2011 complete Employment Verification Form on AccessPlus after August 1st

URA Program / Student Employment Center
Office of Student Financial Aid
Room 0210 Beardshear Hall; Ames IA 50011-2020
In person: Room 0410 Beardshear Hall

Procedures

1. Faculty interested in participating in the Undergraduate Research Assistantship (URA) Program should seek departmental approval and complete and return the faculty application form by **March 31, 2010**.
2. Students meeting eligibility requirements will be contacted by the Office of Student Financial Aid to seek their participation in the program.
3. Faculty and qualified students interested in working together are encouraged to contact one another immediately. If a faculty member and student agree to work together prior to the interviewing phase (considered to be "pre-matched"), this can increase the likelihood of securing an Undergraduate Research Assistantship. This agreement should be indicated in the "pre-match" section on **both** applications. Submitting an application does not guarantee a URA.
4. Qualifying students selected for the program who are not pre-matched will be given names of faculty members with interests in the same general research area as the student. Students then schedule interviews to secure a faculty "match."
5. Students and faculty should contact the URA coordinator once interviews are completed. If a work agreement is not reached, additional candidates may be requested for interviews.
6. Each student will complete a Letter of Intent Form with the faculty employer. Departments will complete the Employment Verification Form on Access Plus after August 1st to activate the student's College Work-Study funding for the coming year. Faculty sponsors are to outline duties and make students' responsibilities clear. Specific working hours should be determined before students return to classes in the fall.
7. **URA positions will be finalized when financial need has been verified prior to fall semester 2010. Changes in the student's eligibility for College Work-Study may reduce or eliminate eligibility for the URA program for the academic year.** Students will be notified if a change should occur in their financial aid eligibility.
8. URA commitments may encompass both fall and spring semesters. If this agreement is made for one semester only and an additional semester is desired with a different partnership, contact the URA coordinator as soon as possible. **Due to limited College Work-Study funding, prior arrangements for the Spring 2011 semester are necessary to guarantee an undergraduate research assistantship.**
9. Students are expected to work an average of 10-12 hours per week for 32 weeks while classes are in session. Students may work up to 20 hours per week while classes are in session and up to 40 hours per week during breaks. Students will receive a paycheck bimonthly.
10. In order for student employees to be paid under the College Work-Study program, the department must indicate "WS" in the CS field (next to hourly rate) on the on-line payroll system. **Failure to enter "WS" will result in the department being assessed 100% of the employee's wages.** Student employees' time sheets must be retained by the employing department for five years to satisfy state and federal regulations.