

Fiscal Year 2015-16
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANT PROGRAM

Purpose:

The Undergraduate Research Assistant Program was created to support DePaul faculty in their pursuit of research, scholarship, and creative activities. This program has a dual purpose:

- 1) To provide valuable learning opportunities and financial assistance to undergraduates by creating opportunities for students to assist and collaborate with faculty members who conduct research projects and are engaged in creative and scholarly activities.
- 2) To offer support to faculty engaged in the above activities consistent with the university's belief and commitment to the pursuit of knowledge.

The undergraduate research assistant program affords students a unique opportunity to become actively involved in the planning and implementation of research and scholarship, and in the dissemination of knowledge internal and external to the university community. This contributes to the students' overall academic experience, and more effectively prepares those students who intend to pursue graduate level or professional studies, as well as careers in which they are required to develop and manage similar projects. The undergraduate assistants will provide faculty members at DePaul with support needed for their research endeavors. The student assistants can be assigned to ongoing research projects, or assigned to a group of faculty who are directing a research project.

This program effectively carries out components of the University's Strategic Goals for VISION 2018: Enhance Academic Quality and Support Educational Innovation to assist with meeting the following objectives:

- **Objective 1a. Focus the entire university community on student learning and success by strengthening the student academic experience.**
- **Objective 1b. Build and retain an outstanding, diverse faculty, empowering faculty to realize their potential as teacher-scholars by recognizing and supporting the role of research, scholarship and creative activity.**

Eligibility:

All full-time (or equivalent in the individual schools and colleges) undergraduate students who have attained at least sophomore status (48 hours) are eligible to apply. Selection will be based on merit of the applicant and qualifications needed by faculty members. Full-time faculty are eligible to apply for assistants. Undergraduate assistants can be assigned to either individual faculty members, or two or more faculty who are collaborating on a project or activity.

Job Description:

This program is intended to provide students a substantive work experience; that is, student assistants should not be used as general clerical help. Assistants can help in areas such as, but not limited to, library research, data collection and analysis, preparation of manuscripts, etc. Students will work a total of **75 hours**. *The assistant may be eligible for internship credit, contingent on the approval of the department from which the student is seeking such credit, and, if so, the experience should also be considered to meet the Experiential Learning requirement. (The Assistant position earns 4.0 credit hours per quarter.) If faculty and departments wish to*

grant credit for students accepted into this program, they will need to enroll students in a course/independent study accepted by the Liberal Studies program as meeting the Experiential Learning requirement or design a course and take it through the established approval process.

Funding:

In 2015-16, student assistants will be paid \$10.00 per hour. Colleges will grant applicants units entailing 75 hours of work for \$750.00.

Procedures

Deadlines:

The deadline for assistant positions for the first round of applications for student assistants who will work in the Summer or Autumn Quarters/semesters, is **July 1st**. The deadline for assistant positions for the second round of applications for student assistants who will work in the Winter or Spring Quarters/Spring semester, is **November 30th**. Colleges will establish their own deadlines so that approved and ranked proposals may be in the office of the AVP for Academic Affairs by the established deadlines.

Application:

Generally, a faculty member and a pre-selected student will apply together. However, there may be cases in which a faculty member desires a specific skill set that is likely to be found in another department of the university. In such cases the faculty member may contact the department for student recommendations, and then interview and subsequently apply with the selected student.

A Faculty member may apply for an Undergraduate Research Assistant for 1, 2, or 3 quarters with one application. There is no limit to the number of consecutive quarters in which Faculty may use an Assistant, but application must be made for each quarter. The Assistant will work 75 hours per quarter. Colleges will need to decide whether or not they will support more than one unit per faculty member based on the level of demand. Preference should be given to enabling the largest number of faculty to have some level of assistance

Application forms follow. **Copies of approved applications along with the total number of applicants should be sent by the dean or designated associate dean after approval by the selection committee to Peggy Schultz (mkelly74@depaul.edu), Academic Affairs.**

Criteria for Approval of Faculty Requests for Assistants:

Criteria include:

1. The value of the research project itself.
2. The project's potential to provide real involvement and learning for the Student Research Assistant.
3. Equitable distribution of available Assistantships.
4. Special consideration of first-time faculty applications, and applications by non-tenured faculty.
5. A faculty member may only apply for one assistant per quarter.

Colleges will act in accordance with those guidelines or petition for revisions. Each College will establish a process for review and approval of applications for research assistants by a faculty committee.

Funding:

Block grants will be provided to each college to be used for Undergraduate Research Assistants. These grants will be non-transferable and unused funds will return to Academic Affairs at the end of each fiscal year. All units will receive funding to guarantee participation in the program, with additional funding for larger colleges, based on the number of faculty members. Periodic review of usage rates in each college will allow for reallocation of funds for best use.

Evaluation:

Each quarter, the faculty member is to evaluate the performance and progress made by the student through work on the project. The Student is to evaluate the experience as a learning process. This is especially important in evaluating repeat applications for assistants by faculty members. Evaluations are returned to the dept/school. **Electronic copies of all evaluations should be sent to Peggy Schultz (mkelly74@depaul.edu), Academic Affairs.** (Evaluation forms follow).