

November 2020

Notes from Beneath the Blue Awning

Happy November, UWF!

As part of a systemic process to improve and expand support for the UWF research mission, UWF RAE has recently started a contract with **Hanover Research Grants** to provide additional support for, and training in, proposal preparation and submission. In addition to supporting a limited number of specific funding proposals, Hanover Research will provide training related to preparing a strong proposal. This seems like a good time to review RAE's own suggestions for how to prepare a strong funding proposal:



- **Start early.** Give yourself three to six months to prepare and revise the proposal.
- Make time to **read the request for proposals (RFP)** or notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) early and identify the key requirements for the specific funding program. Revisit the RFP/NOFO often through the remaining steps.
- Develop a **one-page concept paper** that summarizes your project and how it addresses the key requirements from the RFP/NOFO.
- **Contact a sponsor program officer**, using the concept paper as a guide for your discussion; invite RAE grant specialists to attend.
- **Identify collaborators early.** Collaborators and evaluators are an important part of the process of writing a proposal; involve them in your plan to address the RFP/NOFO.
- Complete your proposal draft in time for it to be reviewed by collaborators and external reviewers; **your draft should be ready at least 3-4 weeks before the proposal deadline** if you want to be able to send it out for, and actually use, comments.

- **Get all documents to RAE at least two days before the submission deadline.** RAE grant specialists are experts at making sure that your proposal and budget documents are (a) complete and (b) properly prepared for review, but they cannot perform these reviews if the first time they see the documents is hours before submission.

As always, please contact RAE with any questions you may have or to let us know about your plans to submit a response to any RFP/NOFO. (*Did I mention starting early?*)

The talented folks from Hanover Research will have more details in training sessions over the next year, so please watch this space (and the RAE website) for more information.

Warm regards,

Matt Schwartz
Professor and AVP of Research Administration

Pandemic doesn't stop summer undergraduate research program

By JEFFREY CASSADY

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Undergraduate researchers at the University of West Florida hit the labs, the studios, and the field over the summer, despite the challenges presented by the coronavirus pandemic.

Though total participation was down modestly from last year, 90 students participated in the **Summer Undergraduate Research Program**, an annual program run by the **Office of Undergraduate Research** and the **Hal Marcus College of Science and Engineering**, said **Dr. Allison Schwartz**, director of OUR.

“We are very happy and proud of our student researchers,” Schwartz said. “The pandemic has presented us with new challenges, but the students adapted and accomplished tremendous things over the summer.”

SURP launched in 2015 as a way to promote summer research activities among students in the Hal Marcus College of Science and Engineering. Since then, SURP has expanded to the entire University. Now, students in any degree program can participate.

Researchers and their advisors shifted schedules around and changed plans to stay safe and to maintain compliance with University pandemic guidelines this summer. Lab use was strictly monitored. Additionally, meetings and paper presentations that in years past had been held in person moved online.

“The big things were the meetings,” said **Dr. Susan Piacenza**, assistant professor in the Department of Biology. Piacenza oversaw three SURP projects.

“Obviously, we weren’t meeting in person,” she added.

One of the projects Piacenza oversaw had a student studying sea turtle nester and hatchling disorientation caused by light pollution on the beach at the Gulf Islands National Seashore. The student worked in coordination with the National Park Service.

Because foot traffic at the park was light and the research was being conducted outdoors, the pandemic didn't make maintaining distance while conducting fieldwork much trickier, Piacenza said.

However, fewer people on the beach also meant fewer campers, flashlights, and automobiles – all potentially significant sources of light pollution. The researcher had to take that into consideration, Piacenza said.

Often, research conducted as part of SURP leads to opportunities to continue the work after the program ends. Piacenza said some students who participated in SURP this year have continued collecting and analyzing data.

For more information about SURP, contact Dr. Allison Schwartz at aschwartz@uwf.edu.

New publications

Congratulations to Dr. Valerie Morganson, associate professor in the Department of Psychology, whose paper, "A Tale of Two Leaders: Employee Work-Family Experiences in the Context of Dual Leadership," was recently accepted at the Journal of Managerial Psychology.

Have you or your students published something recently? Let us know. Send your paper's name and where it's published to jcassady@uwf.edu. Please include a link to your paper, if possible.

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