OUR Project Awards

Standard Operating Procedures: OUR Project Awards

Fall 2017

Office of Undergraduate Research
Program Snapshot: Funding is available to support undergraduate students conducting research under the mentorship of a UWF faculty member. Awards are made through a competitive process and funding is not guaranteed. Through a formal review process, at the recommendation of the faculty and with the approval of the Director of the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR), OUR will disburse funds to support undergraduate student research projects.

Title OUR Project Awards

Purpose Awards are intended to support undergraduate students conducting research under the mentorship of a faculty member.

Deadlines There will be two award cycles each academic year. An early fall semester deadline will be for projects spanning the fall/spring academic year and a mid/late fall deadline will be for projects to be completed in the spring semester. Applications must be submitted during one of these cycles.

Eligibility Current, undergraduate, degree seeking students who are in good standings with the University are eligible to apply.

Allowable mentors include current UWF faculty with a range of appointment types including adjunct, lecturers, post docs, and tenure line.

Funding OUR will fund a maximum of one OUR Project Award per student annually. The maximum award is for $500 for an individual student or $750 for a group of two or more students to support costs associated with conducting research. Allowable expenses include travel to get to field site, external library or archive facility; chemicals or laboratory equipment; photocopies of documents or research questionnaires; etc. Food/beverages, student or faculty stipends, and travel to attend conferences are not allowable expenses.

Scope The Associate Vice President for Research has approved funding to support the OUR Project Award program at the University of West Florida.

Oversight The Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) will manage the program, including advertisement of the program to students and faculty and coordination of applications, will initiate awards, and will serve as general oversight of the program. OUR will communicate with Research and Sponsored Programs (RSP) to disburse funds into the faculty activity code in the undergraduate research index within OUR.

Questions? Please read the FAQs at the end of the guidelines. For questions regarding your submission/award the OUR office: our@uwf.edu or 474-2298
Guidelines for Acceptable Research Projects – What is research?

Research can be conducted in any discipline. Please use the following guidelines to determine whether or not the project is “research”. If the research does not meet these criterion but you and your faculty mentor believe it is still a “research”, please contact our@uwf.edu.

- The research is an inquiry or investigation on a topic related to the student’s professional interests.
- The research is conducted by an undergraduate student under the mentorship of a UWF faculty member.
- The research makes an original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline.
- Format of the research is similar to a professional researcher’s in the discipline.

Application Procedures and Documentation - What is needed?

Applications are submitted via the electronic OUR Project Award application. The following items are needed for a complete application:

- Signed OUR Project Award Letter of Commitment (printed, scanned, and uploaded as pdf). Students should complete this letter with their faculty mentors prior to accessing the award application. The signed Letter of Commitment secures the commitment of the faculty mentor to supervise the student. The template for this Letter can be found on the OUR website.
- Project description (uploaded as a pdf file). This should be a 1-2 page narrative, including the relevant background information, objectives, methods, significance of your work to the discipline, and citations. Please remember that members of the faculty reviewing your application may be outside your discipline and so acronyms and abbreviations should be clearly defined or avoided.
- Completed budget table (filled out within online application) and budget narrative (one-page maximum, uploaded as pdf).

For multiple students working on a single project, group applications may be submitted. Please include a summary of the overall project and a description of the specific focus and objectives for the individual students.

The Office Administrator of OUR will email a confirmation of receipt of all OUR Project Award applications within two business days of submission.

Evaluation of Applications

The Office Administrator of OUR will use the Application Checklist to evaluate all applications for adherence to basic submission requirements. All applications that adhere to the basic submission requirements will be compiled and passed on to faculty members for review. Each application will be reviewed by at least two faculty (the Director of OUR may serve as one reviewing faculty member).

The Office Administrator of OUR will compile the individual reviews and forward to the Director of the Office of Undergraduate Research. The Director of the OUR, in consultation with the Assistant Vice President for Research, will make the final determination for funding.
Funding will be restricted to support high impact undergraduate student experiences.

Additional specific details regarding the flow of applications and awards before they are received by and after they leave OUR and RSP are available in a shared document flowchart.

Award Amounts

All awards will be funded at $500 for individual projects and $750 for group projects unless the budget review by the OUR Director indicates that significantly less funding is required to support the research project. On a case-by-case basis, an award of less than these amounts can be made. Any funds not used by the awarded student researcher will remain in OUR’s project award index and can be used at the discretion of the OUR Director to support additional undergraduate research projects and programs.

Notification of Awards and Review Timeline

Each Project Award cycle will be completed within one month of the submission deadline. The OUR Office Administrator will compile complete applications and share with members of the faculty within three business days of the submission deadline. The individual faculty reviews of the proposals will be forwarded to the Director of OUR within two to three weeks of receipt. Award and denial letters will be sent via email to the student(s) and CCed to the faculty mentor and office administrators in the home departments within one week after receipt of reviews by the Office Administrator.

The OUR Office Administrator will update the shared document to include all new application decisions on an award and denial letters are made. S/he will also send an email to the OUR Budget Manager in RSP as well as the Office Administrators for any departments that had pending applications during that review period to indicate that the shared document has been updated.

Disbursement of Funds

The OUR Office Administrator will assign each faculty mentor on an OUR Project Award with a unique activity code. All Project Award funds will be maintained in the OUR Project Award index (5246). All expenditures on the awards should be coordinated with the home department’s office administrator. All PCard charges should initially be charged to the home department’s index and reference the faculty-specific activity code. The OA in the home department will then complete a journal entry to initiate a transfer of the expenditure from the home department index to the OUR Project Award index. All journal entries will be reviewed by the RSP accounting staff.

Award Procedures and Conditions

Once a student has received notification of receiving an OUR Project Award, s/he must sign an OUR
Project Award Agreement to formally accept the award and accept the requirements that accompany this award.

It is recommended that applicants wait until official notification of an award has been made before incurring any costs associated with the research project. Note: any purchases made prior to award notices will not be reimbursed if the award is denied and the student researcher will be solely responsible for all expenditures.

Activity codes will be included on the award letter. After signing the Award Agreement, the student must coordinate with the office administrator in their home department to initiate the purchase of materials and supplies. Purchases and expenses must adhere to all UWF policies.

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**Student Deliverables/Reports**

Students who receive an award in the fall semester must submit an electronic Project Update Report before the end of the fall semester. Note: if the research project is completed before the end of the fall semester and the final project report is submitted on or before the last day of that semester, the requirement to submit a project update report is waived.

All students who receive an award must submit an electronic Final Project Report to the Office of Undergraduate Research before the end of the spring semester. This report includes the following required items:

- An uploaded photo of the student conducting or engaging in his/her research project
- An abstract of the research findings prepared for submission to a professional conference
- Details on a professional conference that this research could be submitted to, including name and dates of the conference, location, and abstract submission deadline (or close estimation based on previous year’s conference).
- Post-research survey of your experiences and benefits of research participation

**Student awardees must acknowledge the OUR Project Award on any poster, presentation, or manuscript of the research as “Research was supported [or partially supported] by the UWF Office of Undergraduate Research through an OUR Project Award.”**

Student awardees are required to present their research at the Student Scholars Symposium during the spring semester. Awardees can find guidelines and information regarding this presentation on OUR’s website.

Grant awardees are also required to act as ambassadors to the OUR program and speak to at least one approved campus event about your research experience at UWF. Campus events include classes (especially introductory level courses), campus tour groups, or other campus events.

In order to highlight research activity at the University of West Florida, OUR Project Award recipients may be contacted by the Division or University Marking and Communications Departments for more information on their research to publicize their research in both internal and external outlets.
OUR Project Award Letter of Commitment

Undergraduate Student:
I understand that, as an award recipient, it is expected that I will complete the research project described in my proposal by the end of the spring semester of this academic year. In applying for the OUR Project Award program, I understand that I am committing to the following requirements:

- Support the Mission, Vision, and Values and Goals of the University of West Florida
- Complete the research project as outlined in my application.
- Submit my abstract and present my work in the Spring Student Scholars Symposium (generally held toward the end of April).
- Submit a Final Project Report before the end of the spring semester.
- Submit a photo of myself conducting or engaging in research.
- Act as ambassadors to the OUR program and speak to at least one approved campus event about your research experience at UWF. Campus events include classes (especially introductory level courses), campus tour groups, or other campus events or volunteer for the Student Scholar Symposium and Faculty Research Showcase.
- Acknowledge OUR project support on any poster, presentation, or manuscript resulting from this research (i.e., “Research supported by the UWF Office of Undergraduate Research through an OUR Project Award.”)

My project award includes the following support:

- $500 for an individual student award
- $750 for a group award

If my research expenses are over the total award amount, I understand that OUR is not responsible for securing additional funds.

Faculty Mentor:
I understand that my role as a Faculty Mentor to an Undergraduate Student Researcher is a significant responsibility and I will make it a priority. In supporting my student researcher(s), I understand that I am committing to the following (please initial by each statement):

- Provide mentorship to my student(s) throughout his/her research project.
- Provide support to my student(s) to meet his/her obligations of this award.
- I ensure that the research being conducted will cost less than the award amount or that I will support expenses in excess of the award amount through other resources.
- I understand that failure of my students to meet the above requirements may jeopardize my future OUR funding.
- I have reviewed the proposal that is being submitted and I support the submission of this application.

Approved by:

Applicant Signature  Applicant Name (print)

Faculty Mentor Signature  Faculty Mentor Name (print)
Office of Undergraduate Research
Project Award Agreement

Date ____________________

College__________________________ Department____________________ Faculty Mentor____________________

Project title: ______________________________ ______________________________ ______________________________

I _________________________________ understand that, as an award recipient, it is expected that I will complete the research project described in my proposal by the end of the spring semester of this academic year. In accepted this OUR Project Award, I understand that I am committing to the following requirements:

Please initial each line

• Support the Mission, Vision, and Values and Goals of the University of West Florida _____
• Complete the research project outlined in my application ______
• Submit my abstract and present my work in the Spring Student Scholars Symposium (generally held toward the end of April) _______
• Submit a final project report before the end of the spring semester ___________
• Submit a photo of myself conducting/engaging in research _______
• Act as ambassadors to the OUR program and speak to at least one approved campus event about your research experience at UWF. Campus events include classes (especially introductory level courses), campus tour groups, or other campus events. Or you may also volunteer to help set up or break down at the 2018 Student Scholar Symposium and Faculty Research Showcase________
• Acknowledge OUR project support on any poster, presentation slides, or manuscript of the research (i.e., “Research was supported [or partially supported by] by the UWF Office of Undergraduate Research through an OUR Project Award.”) _______

I understand that my award includes the following support:

Individual Project Award: $500
Group Project Award: $750

If my research expenses are over $_______ the total award amount, I am responsible for securing the additional funds to cover the cost of completing my research project. _______

I understand that failure to meet the above requirements may jeopardize future OUR funding. _____ (please initial)

As the OUR funded researcher, I accept receipt of the OUR award and its responsibilities. _____ (please initial)

Signature________________________________________ date__________________

Student I.D._____________________________________

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## OUR Project Award Evaluation Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>3 = Exceptional</th>
<th>2 = Satisfactory</th>
<th>1 = Poor</th>
<th>0 = Absent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction (Context/Background)</strong></td>
<td>Specific background information provides a context for why the current project/question is being investigated Clear that student has firm grasp on relevant concepts</td>
<td>General background information is provided but link to current project/question is adequate Describes research trends that are clearly related to proposed work</td>
<td>Vague discussion of background information Lack of understanding or effort No attempt at linking background information to current project/question Background information provided are unrelated to proposed work</td>
<td>No background information provided</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Research Question or Objectives</strong></td>
<td>Specific research question is clearly articulated OR objectives of the project are clearly stated/described</td>
<td>The question or objectives are comprehensible but need further clarification or refinement</td>
<td>The question or objectives are insinuated but are not explicitly stated</td>
<td>No question or objectives provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology and Project Design</strong></td>
<td>Methodology and project design are clearly described Approach is clearly appropriate for the project</td>
<td>Basic methodology and project design are described in very general terms and with little detail Further clarification needed to determine if approach is appropriate for the project</td>
<td>Methodology and project design are not explicitly stated but there are statements inferring some kind of methodological approach OR they are stated, but major gaps exist</td>
<td>No methodology or project design provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mechanics/ Grammar/ Spelling</strong></td>
<td>Proposal is written clearly, logically, and intelligently, with no errors in spelling or grammar</td>
<td>Proposal is written clearly, logically, and intelligently, but with some errors in spelling or grammar OR proposal has no errors in spelling or grammar, but contains some lack of clarity Errors don’t represent a major distraction</td>
<td>Proposal is unclear and illogical OR contains many errors in spelling or grammar Number and seriousness of errors distract from proposal</td>
<td>Proposal is poorly written AND contains many errors in spelling or grammar Number and seriousness of errors add confusion to proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Itemized Budget</strong></td>
<td>Budget is clear and detailed, including unit price, total price, and shipping costs for each item</td>
<td>Budget is clear and detailed, including unit price, total price, and shipping costs for each item, but missing some key information</td>
<td>Some limited details on items or services to be purchased provided, cost estimates appear to be arbitrary</td>
<td>No budget provided</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additional Questions:

1) Based on the following definitions of undergraduate research, do you feel that the proposed project is appropriate for funding through the Office of Undergraduate Research?

The Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR) defines undergraduate research as “An inquiry or investigation conducted by an undergraduate student that makes an original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline."

The Arts and Humanities Division of CUR expands this definition to better define undergraduate research in these disciplines: Undergraduate research in the arts and humanities is student-driven, faculty-mentored inquiry, scholarly investigation, and/or creative activity. The undergraduate researcher’s work may contribute to outcomes including, but not limited to, individual or collaborative analytical writing; oral presentation; small analytical products; works of visual art; compilations of scholarship; exhibits; musical compositions; plays; performance; public scholarship; and/or peer-reviewed publication. Whatever the research product, its value is generally weighed by standards specific to experts in the field, whether jurors, editors, or reviewers.

2) What is your overall recommendation for funding of this project?
   a. Highly recommend funding
   b. Recommend if funds are available
   c. Recommend with major revisions
   d. Do not recommend

3) If answered “recommend with major revisions” to Question 2, please provide details.

4) Please provide comments or recommendations for improvement or feedback for the student(s).
OUR Project Award Application Checklist

Top section to be completed by OUR Office Administrator within three business days of application deadline.

Project Application Number

Applicant Name

Department

Requested Amount

Faculty Mentor

The application meets the following guidelines:

☐ Includes signed OUR Project Award Letter of Commitment
☐ Includes project description
☐ Includes completed budget table
☐ Includes Budget narrative

Bottom section to be completed by OUR Director within one month of application deadline.

Application Reviewed by:

________________________________________

☑ Approved ☐ Denied

Director of OUR Signature and Date

Awarded Amount: ___________________ Initial and date
### Fall 2017 Project Award Cycle
- **Call for Proposals**: Wednesday, August 30th
- **Proposal submission deadline**: Monday, September 18th (3+ weeks)
- **Proposals sent to SCAC members**: Thursday, September 21st (3 days)
- **Reviews returned to OUR**: Thursday, October 5th (2 weeks)
- **Award & Denial Emails sent**: Friday, October 13th (1 week)

### Spring 2018 Project Award Cycle
- **Call for Proposals**: Monday, October 16th
- **Proposal submission deadline**: Friday, November 10th (3+ weeks)
- **Proposals sent to SCAC members**: Wednesday, November 15th (3 business days)
- **Reviews returned to OUR**: Friday, December 1st (2+ weeks)
- **Award & Denial Emails sent**: Friday, December 8th (1 week)

### Tentative Summer 2018 Project Award Cycle
- **Call for Proposals**: Wednesday, January 24th
- **Proposal submission deadline**: Friday, February 16th (3+ weeks)
- **Proposals sent to SCAC members**: Wednesday, February 21st (3 days)
- **Reviews returned to OUR**: Friday, March 9th (2+ weeks)
- **Award & Denial Emails sent**: Friday, March 16th (1 week)