

# 2023 Undergraduate Research Opportunities Center (UROC)

“Providing Undergraduates with Faculty-Mentored Research Opportunities and Preparation for Graduate Studies”

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## UROC Program Overview & Mentorship Agreement

### OVERALL PURPOSE

The purpose of faculty-mentored research is to develop the academic aspirations and research skills of emerging research scholars. Students will learn by participating in research under the supervision of a faculty mentor. Upon completion of the program, students will have experienced the academic mentoring relationship and the independence of the research environment.

### UROC

The Undergraduate Research Opportunities Center (UROC) at UC Merced was established in Spring 2014. Fostering access to faculty-mentored research opportunities for undergraduate students from all academic disciplines with structured support and training to prepare for graduate studies and future careers. UROC is designed to equip undergraduate students with research experience, graduate school preparation, and leadership development to help them become competitive when applying to graduate school and more confident to contribute their diverse perspectives in the creation of new knowledge. The current programs under UROC include UC LEADS, CAMP, UROC-H, SURF, and JGI. Most programs under UROC are highly competitive and predominantly for students who are from first generation, disadvantaged or underrepresented minoritized backgrounds.

All UROC Scholars participate in a 9-week Summer Undergraduate Research Institute (SURI) or an external REU program. After SURI, students are encouraged and funded to attend academic and professional conferences, present their research, and participate in programing and advising sessions to prepare and assist them through the graduate school application process.

## Roles and Responsibilities for UROC Scholars & Faculty Mentors

Communication and encouraging attitudes are important in undergraduate research. Establishing a strong, positive relationship between scholar and faculty mentor is essential to the success of the UROC program. UROC is a great opportunity for undergraduate students to become inspired by research and gain insight into what graduate school is all about. Through mentorship, scholars and will gain experience communicating their research to academic and non-academic audiences.

### UROC RESEARCH SCHOLAR'S ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

UROC Scholars will be involved in research projects based on their defined area of research interest or academic field. Each students' specific research project will differ according to the faculty mentor and subject matter. All students are expected to conduct individual research projects and be shown where and how their individual work fits the overall goal or direction of the mentor's research project.

- Meet with Faculty Mentor 1-2 times a week during SURI.
- Check-in with the UROC Coordinator once a semester to provide updates on the status of their research project and applications and submissions for graduate school, conferences, presentations, and publications.
- Participate in UROC's SURI program in-person/remotely/hybrid (June 5 – August 4, 2023) and present your research at the Annual Summer Undergraduate Research Symposium on August 4th, 2023.
- Be responsible (i.e. contact your faculty mentor/coordinator ASAP) and put forth your best effort
- Actively participate in your research project, if necessary

- Be patient, open, and honest with your Faculty Mentor
- Take initiative & expand on the information your Faculty Mentor provides you (i.e. through additional readings, etc.)
- Update UROC coordinators regarding presentations and publications as they arise
- Be self-motivated, but ASK for help to make sure you fully understand your research
- Be open to advice from your Faculty Mentor
- Show respect for EVERYONE

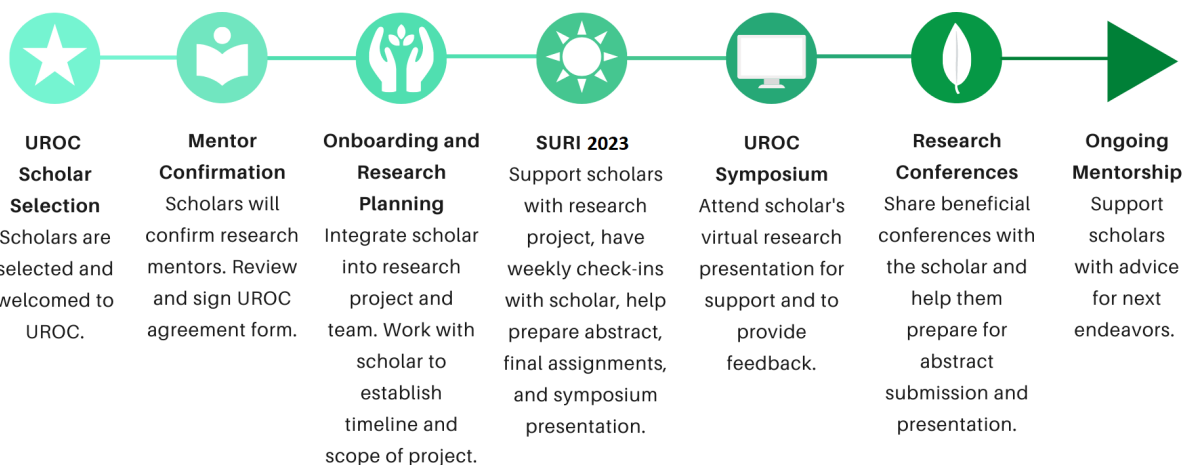
## FACULTY MENTOR ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

One of the key characteristics to a successful mentoring experience is the willingness to guide, instruct and assist students to reach their research objectives. Beyond serving as an advisor on a research project, the mentor takes an active interest in the student’s academic and professional development as a scholar. The ideal mentor seeks to quickly establish a positive working relationship with the student to promote confidence, student inquiry, focus, and discipline. Regular communication with your student is a fundamental element of a successful research experience. Schedule a regular time to meet face-to-face or virtually, talk on the phone or communicate via e-mail, and don’t underestimate the value of informal conversation; all are productive and revealing exchanges.

- Be available to your scholar and set clear expectations
- Exchange or confirm contact information with your scholar
- Teach your scholar core research methods and principles, how to perform routine tasks, and how-to problem solve
- Integrate scholars fully into your research team and supervise the student’s research activities. Students **should not** be involved with daily clerical responsibilities.
- Lead and facilitate the IRB/IACUC process (if necessary for project) with your scholar and emphasize scientific honesty, accuracy, ethics, and reliability (**Undergraduates cannot initiate process alone at UC Merced**)

## UROC FACULTY MENTOR TIMELINE

A brief overview as a UROC Faculty Mentor



## Mentoring Tips

- Talk about various issues associated with choosing and preparing for graduate school and what it means to be a professional in your field.
- Discuss career options with your student and the importance of making the most of his/her remaining undergraduate studies.
- If satisfied with your student’s performance, offer to write letters of recommendation.

- Do not make assumptions about prior knowledge by under or overestimating academic skills and abilities. Regularly encourage your student to speak up if there is something that is not understood, and then take the necessary steps to fill in any knowledge gaps.
- Based on the student and the nature of their research experience you may need to adjust your level of hands-on guidance. Some students may be capable of relatively independent work and others may need, or the situation may dictate, a more guided experience. Discuss your concerns with the student and with our office if they arise.
- Provide critical feedback, when necessary, as developing undergraduates as researchers is the ultimate goal.
- Promptly communicate to program administrators any problem that may arise with your student so they may resolve the issue as quickly as possible.
- Faculty members may utilize graduate student research assistants and/or postdoctoral scholars as research mentors under the careful guidance of the faculty mentor.

By e-signing the following, I have read the roles and responsibilities of UROC scholars and faculty mentors stated above and agree to join in a UROC research mentorship with the other party stated below.

Proposed research location:	
Briefly describe research project:	
UROC Scholar:	Print Name
	Electronic Signature <span style="float: right;">Date</span>
Faculty Mentor:	Print Name
	Electronic Signature <span style="float: right;">Date</span>

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Diana Hernandez Garcia, UROC Program Coordinator at [dhernandezgarcia@ucmerced.edu](mailto:dhernandezgarcia@ucmerced.edu) or [uroc@ucmerced.edu](mailto:uroc@ucmerced.edu).