Expanding opportunities for students across campuses and disciplines is an ongoing goal for the LAUNCH: Undergraduate Research (UGR) office. During the past three years, we have increased focus on integrating underserved areas on campus by developing partnerships with departments and colleges, providing funding, and creating new Undergraduate Research Scholars theses that reflect scholarship norms in the arts and humanities. While Texas A&M continues to support robust undergraduate research opportunities in the STEM fields, we are also fostering experiences for students in the liberal arts and creative works fields. To do this, we continue to partner with summer programs like the Glasscock Summer Scholars, as well as create new summer initiatives such as the Aggie Creative Collective, the LAUNCH-Department of Architecture Undergraduate Summer Scholars, and the Hagler-LAUNCH Undergraduate Scholars. We also collaborated with our partners on the Galveston, Qatar, Caruth School of Dental Hygiene, College of Dentistry, and the Texas A&M School of Law campuses to open gateways for students to produce undergraduate research theses and publish in Explorations: The Texas A&M Undergraduate Journal. Finally, the creation of new Liberal Arts and Creative Works thesis templates for the Undergraduate Research Scholars program means that students engaged in creative works and humanities-based research are now more able to participate in the Undergraduate Research Scholars program through formats that support the inquiry-based research they are producing and reflect the norms of their disciplines.
ARTS/HUMANITIES AND CREATIVE WORKS RESEARCH IS GROWING

# OF STUDENTS USING THE ARTS/HUMANITIES & CREATIVE WORKS THESIS TEMPLATES

- **NEW ARTS/HUMANITIES TEMPLATE RELEASED**
  - 2016-2017: 32 students
  - 2017-2018: 38 students
  - 2018-2019: 55 students
  - 2019-2020: 75 students

- **NEW CREATIVE WORKS TEMPLATE RELEASED**
  - Est. partnership with the Texas A&M School of Law, Aggie Creative Collective, and Hagler Institute

- **Est. partnerships with the Caruth School of Dental Hygiene and Dept. of Architecture**

# OF STUDENTS USING URS THESIS TEMPLATES

- **2016-2017**: 32 students
  - Arts and Humanities: 26
  - Creative Works: 6
  - STEM: 0

- **2017-2018**: 38 students
  - Arts and Humanities: 28
  - Creative Works: 10
  - STEM: 0

- **2018-2019**: 55 students
  - Arts and Humanities: 42
  - Creative Works: 13
  - STEM: 0

- **2019-2020**: 75 students
  - Arts and Humanities: 60
  - Creative Works: 15
  - STEM: 0

# OF STUDENTS IN URS PARTNER PROGRAMS

- **2012-2013**: Glasscock Scholars: 1
- **2013-2014**: Aggie Creative Collective: 5
- **2014-2015**: Architecture: 5
- **2015-2016**: Hagler Scholars: 1
- **2016-2017**: Law School: 1
- **2017-2018**: Philosophy for Children: 1
- **2018-2019**: LT Jordan Fellows: 1
- **2019-2020**: Glasscock Scholars: 4
  - Aggie Creative Collective: 5
  - Architecture: 5
  - Hagler Scholars: 1
  - Law School: 1
  - Philosophy for Children: 1
  - LT Jordan Fellows: 1
LAUNCH MISSION STATEMENT

The LAUNCH office is a collaboration of six teams that work together supporting students, faculty, and staff across the Texas A&M University System. Through community building and high-impact practices, personal and professional development opportunities, and the recognition of excellence, LAUNCH encourages all Aggies to expand their minds, take on challenges, dare to dream, and get involved.

OUR SERVICES

LAUNCH provides high-impact educational experiences and challenges students in all academic disciplines to graduate from an enriched, demanding curriculum. The programs administered by the office bring together outstanding students and faculty to build a community of knowledge-producers, life-long learners, nationally-recognized scholars, and world citizens. Through LAUNCH, motivated students have access to Honors courses, co-curricular enrichment activities, scholarly engagement, and/or research programs that can be customized to enhance each student’s personal, professional, and intellectual development.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

LAUNCH is a unit of Undergraduate Studies in the Division of Academic Affairs. Many of our programs are supported through student fees and generous contributions from the Office of the Provost, the Texas A&M Foundation, The Association of Former Students, and our generous donors Ralph and Barbara Cox.

- Office of the President
- Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President
- Division of Academic Affairs
- Undergraduate Studies
- LAUNCH
- Undergraduate Research

LAUNCH STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY

▶ diversity.tamu.edu

LAUNCH joins the university community in making Texas A&M a welcoming environment for all individuals. We are committed to helping our students understand the experiences that make each of us unique and appreciate the shared values that bring us together.
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH at Texas A&M

Texas A&M University is an institutional member of CUR, a campus-wide resource renewed annually by LAUNCH: UGR.

The Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR) is an organization of members from around the world. CUR members share a focus on providing high-quality and collaborative undergraduate research, scholarly, and creative activity opportunities for faculty and students.

Benefits of Undergraduate Research

- Enhances student learning through mentoring relationships with faculty
- Increases retention and graduation in academic programs
- Increases enrollment in graduate education and provides effective career preparation
- Develops critical thinking, creativity, problem solving, and intellectual independence
- Develops an understanding of research methodology
- Promotes an innovation-oriented culture

Our Involvement in CUR Professional Conferences

Presentation: Academy of Undergraduate Researchers Across Texas
Undergraduate Research Program Directors (URPD) 2019

Presenters: Dr. Sarah M. Misemer and Dr. Robert Reichle

THE DIVISION OF RESEARCH AT TEXAS A&M

Texas A&M’s Division of Research delivers strategic support to further the University’s research mission through, facilitating collaborations to grow federal funding, strengthening the research infrastructure, promoting the value of research, encouraging commercialization partnerships, and ensuring research compliance. The division is committed to a truly comprehensive university, where students, researchers, and inventors bring scholarship and innovation to bear for the benefit of the community, the state, and the nation.

Visit the VPR’s website for more on research at Texas A&M, including research expenditures, fact sheets, and other statistics.
CREATING UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

PRIMARY GOALS

- Offer more opportunities for undergraduates to become involved in research
- Highlight undergraduate research on the Texas A&M campus
- Expand the visibility of undergraduate research

ACTION ITEMS

- Research Opportunities Database
- Undergraduate Research Expo
- Undergraduate Research Scholars Symposium

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES DATABASE

▶ tx.ag/ROdatabase

To make the variety of undergraduate research opportunities more accessible to students at Texas A&M, LAUNCH: UGR designed a database that allows students to search and filter programs, presentation venues, as well as funding and publication applications. The database also lets the student explore both on- and off-campus positions during the fall, spring, and summer semesters.

To post your research opportunity for undergraduate students, just complete a short form on our website! The LAUNCH: UGR office reviews all submissions before posting.

OPPORTUNITIES POSTED

193
On 3 October 2018, LAUNCH: UGR held its second all-day Undergraduate Research Expo in the Memorial Student Center on the campus of Texas A&M University.

The Undergraduate Research Expo expands on the two-hour resource fair held in years past with panels, workshops, networking opportunities along with a Resource Fair to highlight undergraduate research at Texas A&M. The event showcases opportunities for faculty, staff, graduate students, and undergraduate students to find ways to get involved in undergraduate research.

Morning round tables provided students, faculty, and administrators the opportunity to hear perspectives on the role of undergraduate research as a high-impact practice at a research-intensive university with discussions on “Undergraduate Research at an R1: What Defines Student and Faculty Success at Texas A&M?” and “Experiences in Mentoring Undergraduate Researchers.”

In the afternoon, multiple spaces in the MSC Bethancourt Ballroom housed concurrent events for undergraduate students that included: a two-hour Resource Fair, the Aggie Research Program’s poster presentations, and three break-out sessions led by faculty, staff, and graduate students (LAUNCH: UGR’s Getting Started in Research, Aggie Research Program Informational, and Research Opportunities and Resources Informational). The day culminated in a Speed Research Networking Panel, in which faculty and staff from across campus presented 60-second blurbs on their research and opportunities for undergraduates. A Networking Social followed in the Bethancourt Lobby and gave students and faculty the chance to visit informally about opportunities and involvement.

Volunteers for the Expo include LAUNCH Undergraduate Research Ambassadors, Learning Communities’ Peer Mentors, and LAUNCH staff members.

Based on our survey results, the revitalized Undergraduate Research Expo was well-received by students and recommended by faculty.

**FACULTY/STAFF RATING OF THE EXPO**

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

**63 OPPORTUNITIES REPRESENTED**

**551 UNIQUE STUDENTS ATTENDED**
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOLARS SYMPOSIUM

On Wednesday, February 27, 2019, LAUNCH: Undergraduate Research held the second annual Undergraduate Research Scholars Symposium in the Memorial Student Center. The URS Symposium showcases undergraduate researchers in the LAUNCH Undergraduate Research Scholars (URS) thesis program, a program that provides undergraduates with a graduate student experience by allowing them to participate in research, produce a professional document, and communicate their findings as principal authors to the University's scholarly community.

The URS Symposium is not judged and no prizes are given. Students practice presentation skills, share their research, and receive comments on how to improve their projects. Active Listeners made up of faculty, staff, and administrators gave feedback to students on three areas:

1. Body language and delivery
2. Effective communication of the research question and why it is important
3. Effective use of visual aids (if used)

The LAUNCH URS Symposium also fulfills the URS thesis program requirement for students to do a public presentation and also offers them a chance to receive constructive feedback on their research projects and presentation skills. The LAUNCH URS Symposium features both poster and oral presentations by undergraduate researchers in a variety of disciplines.

The Undergraduate Research Scholars Symposium also served as an annual meeting for the Academic of Undergraduate Researchers Across Texas (AURA Texas), a group of twelve elite student researchers from the state's two flagship universities, Texas A&M University and the University of Texas at Austin.

134 TEXAS A&M STUDENTS PRESENTED AT THE URS SYMPOSIUM

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

76

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

58

STUDENTS FROM TAMU QATAR

7

STUDENTS FROM TAMU GALVESTON

2

FACULTY/STAFF RATING OF THE SYMPOSIUM

STUDENT RATING OF THE SYMPOSIUM

52 FACULTY MEMBERS AND POST-DOCS VOLUNTEERED AS ACTIVE LISTENERS AT THE UGR EXPO

16 GRADUATE STUDENTS FROM THE AGGIE RESEARCH PROGRAM VOLUNTEERED AS ORAL SESSION MODERATORS

FACULTY/STAFF RATING OF THE SYMPOSIUM

STUDENT RATING OF THE SYMPOSIUM
PARTNERSHIPS

AGGIE CREATIVE COLLECTIVE

The Aggie Creative Collective, supported by the University Writing Center, Department of English, and LAUNCH, is a new summer program that links creative arts, undergraduate scholarly research, and performance.

Undergraduate students, under the guidance of TAMU creative writing faculty, spend five weeks (one summer session) developing a research question tied to a long-term creative writing project (e.g., novel, creative non-fiction, short prose or poetry collection, screenplay, or staged play) that culminates in a public reading at the end of the summer session. In workshops and through individual conferences, they learn about the structure of a creative thesis proposal, develop their creative writing, and refine their performance skills. After completing the Aggie Creative Collective, students are required to apply to LAUNCH’s Undergraduate Research Scholars thesis program. Once accepted, they work with a faculty advisor to develop their undergraduate creative thesis project during the fall and spring semesters, adhering to LAUNCH’s creative works thesis template.

AGGIE CREATIVE COLLECTIVE STUDENTS

**Proposal:** Home Movies  
Anna Seguin, English  
URS Advisor: Dr. Jason Harris

**Proposal:** Mother of Monster  
Hannah McNease, Human Resource Management  
URS Advisor: Dr. Jason Harris

**Proposal:** The Empathy Collection: Yo te entiendo  
Amy Guzman, English  
URS Advisor: Dr. Jason Harris

**Proposal:** daydreamed  
Katie Pattison, English  
URS Advisor: Dr. Jason Harris

**Proposal:** The King of the Conchs  
John Heselton, English  
URS Advisor: Dr. Lowell White

**Proposal:** Kmorch Nakry: A Ghost’s Story  
Grace Hough, Visualization  
URS Advisor: Dr. Lowell White

**Proposal:** Leaving Wisdom  
Zoe Sherman, English  
URS Advisor: Dr. Lowell White

**Proposal:** Still Infinity—a Contemporary Crossover Novel  
Examining Loss and Healing  
Kyrie Garlic, English and Philosophy  
URS Advisor: Dr. Lowell White
GLASSCOCK SUMMER SCHOLARS

The Glasscock Center is dedicated to fostering and celebrating the humanities and humanities research among the community of scholars at Texas A&M University and in the world beyond the academy. The Glasscock Center awards residential fellowships, research fellowships, course development grants, funding for working groups, publication support, and research matching awards for independent and cross-disciplinary research in the humanities.

The objective of the Summer Scholars program is to expand undergraduate research in the humanities by providing an intensive summer research experience in which students are introduced to important research questions, trained in methods of research and analysis, and guided in the development of critical thinking, independent learning, and communications skills. The students enroll in a two-week intensive seminar taught by a Faculty Director. In the seminar the students are immersed in a focused topic and develop a research question that they continue to investigate under the mentorship of the faculty member for the remaining eight weeks of the summer. Students attend writing workshops created especially for this program by the University Writing Center. This summer experience serves as a mandatory gateway program into the LAUNCH Undergraduate Research Scholars thesis program.

Visit http://glasscock.tamu.edu/archives/undergraduate-summer-scholars-program-archives to learn more about the Glasscock Summer Scholars program.

Summer 2019 Glasscock Summer Scholars

Proposal: Justification for a Right to be Forgotten
Jacob Alexander Espinoza-Stewart, Philosophy
URS Advisor: Dr. Linda Radzik

Proposal: Forgiveness and Punishment
Tory Ann Martin, Philosophy
URS Advisor: Dr. Linda Radzik

Proposal: The Ethics of Pediatric Medical Decision-Making
Ava Ryan Molecular and Cell Biology
URS Advisor: Dr. Linda Radzik

Proposal: A New Way to Cope: Social Media as Coping with Racial Discrimination
Lincoln-Abdullah El-Amin, English
URS Advisor: Dr. Adrienne Carter-Sowell

Proposal: Home Sweet Home? Neighborhood Cohesion Offers a Coping Mechanism for Gender Discrimination linked with Psychological Distress
Chloe Harrison, Classics
URS Advisor: Dr. Adrienne Carter Sowell

Proposal: The Philosophical and Legal Implications of Granting Natural Objects Legal Personhood
Eric William Nash, University Studies, Society, Ethics and Law Concentration
URS Advisor: Dr. Linda Radzik

Proposal: Public Law 280, Tribal Sovereignty, and The Value of Sovereignty
Jordan P. Dunlap, Philosophy
URS Advisor: Dr. Linda Radzik

Proposal: Community Planning in Urban Gardens: Integrating Children as Participants in the Local Food System
Grace Ann Lu, International Studies
URS Advisor: Dr. Sarah Gatson
**L T JORDAN INSTITUTE**

The L.T. Jordan Fellows Program provides highly qualified Texas A&M University undergraduate and graduate students with an opportunity for personal enrichment and education through an international research experience. This is achieved by the program participants designing an independent international research project in another country that will enhance their academic or career goals. The program annually selects up to ten qualified students to receive a grant of up to $2,000 with which to assist trip expenses. As a part of the program, the Fellows must prepare their own travel itineraries, description of research activities, budget estimates, and an extensive report and public presentation describing the experience abroad.

Each year, one undergraduate Jordan Fellow will be selected to work in partnership with LAUNCH: Undergraduate Research in a two-year research program called L.T. Jordan Undergraduate Research Fellows for an additional grant up to $2,000. The first year of the program consists of the completion of the LT. Jordan Fellows program, including the international research and post-trip reflection, and the second year working with a faculty mentor to write an undergraduate thesis through the Undergraduate Research Program.

**Summer 2019 LT Jordan Fellows**

**Proposal:** Physiological differences in two shade tolerant species, *Carapa guianensis* & *Otoba novogranatensis*, adapted to different microclimatic conditions at two elevations in Costa Rica  
Manuel Flores, Ecological Restoration  
URS Advisor: Dr. Georgianne Moore

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**TEXAS SEA GRANT SCHOLARS**

Texas Sea Grant’s mission is to improve the understanding, wise use and stewardship of Texas coastal and marine resources. Texas Sea Grant is a unique partnership that unites the resources of the federal government, the State of Texas and universities across the state to create knowledge, tools, products and services that benefit the economy, the environment and the citizens of Texas.

Each year, Undergraduate Research Scholars projects related to the marine environment are selected by Texas Sea Grant to apply for a $1,000 stipend for research expenses. Upon completion of the URS thesis program, Texas Sea Grant Scholars’ theses are published in both the Texas Sea Grant Archives and the Texas A&M OAKTrust Repository.

Visit http://texasseagrant.org/publications and https://oaktrust.library.tamu.edu/handle/1969.1/3367 to read undergraduate research theses by our Texas Sea Grant Scholars!

**2018-2019 Texas Sea Grant Scholars**

**Thesis:** The Effects of Salinity and Pharmaceuticals on the Physiology of the Sheepshead Minnow (*Cyprinodon variegatus*)  
Taylor Cubbage, Marine Biology  
URS Advisor: Dr. Lene Petersen

**Thesis:** The Recent Expansion of Invasive *Tubastrea Coccinea* Throughout the Northern Gulf of Mexico  
Zakary Derouen and Miranda Peterson, Environmental Studies  
URS Advisor: Dr. Hsiao-Hsuan Wang

**Thesis:** The Effects of Salinity and Pharmaceuticals on the Physiology of the Sheepshead Minnow (*Cyprinodon variegatus*)  
Taylor Cubbage, Marine Biology  
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**Thesis:** The Recent Expansion of Invasive *Tubastrea Coccinea* Throughout the Northern Gulf of Mexico  
Zakary Derouen and Miranda Peterson, Environmental Studies  
URS Advisor: Dr. Hsiao-Hsuan Wang

**Thesis:** Differences in Resource Allocation Between Post-Mating Male and Female Olive Ridley Sea Turtles (*Lepidochelys olivacea*)  
Ashley Nicole Guentzel, Biology  
URS Advisor: Dr. Duncan MacKenzie

**Thesis:** Maritime Cyber Security: A Comparative Analysis of U.S. and International Regulation on AIS Data Receptors  
Sarah Hamrock, Maritime Administration  
URS Advisor: Dr. Joan Mileski

**Thesis:** Transcriptome Assembly and Characterization of the Benthic Annelid *Paramphinome jeffreysii*  
Irene Martinez, Marine Biology  
URS Advisor: Dr. Jessica Labonté

**Thesis:** Microbial Communities and Ecosystem Recovery of Galveston Bay Post-Hurricane Harvey  
Jordan Walker, Marine Biology  
URS Advisor: Dr. Jessica Labonté
LAUNCH: UGR is a gateway for information related to summer undergraduate research experiences and provides resources to help coordinate programs. However, LAUNCH: UGR does not run any specific REU or other summer undergraduate research experiences (SURE). To promote the success of summer undergraduate research programs at Texas A&M, LAUNCH works closely and collaboratively with many departments on campus, including but not limited to:

- Office of the Registrar
- Office of Admissions
- Residence Life
- Student Business Services
- AABS
- Scholarships & Financial Aid
- Student Health Services
- University Risk & Compliance
- Undergraduate Studies
- Aggie Honor Code Office
- Student Conduct Office
- University Police Department
- Title IX Office
- Research Compliance & Biosafety
- Environmental Health & Safety
- University Writing Center
- University Libraries
- McFerrin Center for Entrepreneurship
- LAUNCH: National Fellowships
- MSC LT Jordan Institute
- Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
- Melbern G. Glasscock Center for Humanities Research

LAUNCH: UGR coordinates activities for students, faculty, and staff throughout the year:

- Coordination Meeting in late-January/early-February for information on resources and policies
- Professional Development Seminar
- Summer Undergraduate Research Poster Session
- Safety Training
- Other Activities
ACADEMY OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCHERS ACROSS TEXAS

This Academy of Undergraduate Researchers Across Texas (AURA Texas) is a networking and professional development opportunity for an elite group of undergraduate researchers at the two flagship universities in Texas. AURA Texas provides these exceptional students with networking opportunities, the chance to hone their professional skills, a venue to discuss the importance of undergraduate research and the impact it has on their lives, and opportunities to present their research to state officials in Austin, Texas.

Established 2017-2018
Visibility/Advocacy | Community | Professionalization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Exchanges</th>
<th>Professional Seminars</th>
<th>Networking</th>
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<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Research Scholars Symposium</td>
<td>Getting Started in National Fellowships</td>
<td>Mix &amp; Mingle with TAMU Administrators</td>
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<td>Managing Your Research Identity Online</td>
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<tr>
<td>Longhorn Research Poster Session</td>
<td>Higher Education Issues and Advocacy</td>
<td>Reception with UT Administrators</td>
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<td>Innovation in Research</td>
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Undergraduate Research Day at the Capitol

On April 1, 2019 AURA TX student members traveled to the Texas State Capitol in Austin, Texas to engage in support for undergraduate research and share their student perspectives with state officials. Student members attended the day’s scheduled events, including poster presentations and tour of the capitol. TAMU-UT team visits to state officials were coordinated by our Offices of Government Relations, which provided students the opportunity to share their personal stories with their representatives. Some student members presented research posters in the Rotunda to state officials.

This event is coordinated biennially by the Council of Public University Presidents and Chancellors (CPUPC), and the Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas, Inc. (ICUT).
### Texas A&M University Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Major</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cora Drozd</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Claye Epperson</td>
<td>History</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anthony Gacasan</td>
<td>Biomedical Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jay Garza</td>
<td>Biomedical Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dillon Jones</td>
<td>Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences</td>
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<td>Karissa Yamaguchi</td>
<td>Biochemistry and Genetics</td>
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<td>Oscar Gonzalez</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ryan Randle</td>
<td>English and History</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morgan Chapman</td>
<td>Microbiology and Genetics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jasmine Derry</td>
<td>Visualization</td>
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### University of Texas at Austin Members

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Apgar</td>
<td>Neuroscience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stephanie Jeanneret</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joy Youwakim</td>
<td>Economics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thomas Dougherty</td>
<td>Mechanical Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tess Johnson</td>
<td>Speech-Language Pathology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Erin Choi</td>
<td>Biochemistry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Justin Mirazee</td>
<td>Biochemistry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kelsey Mumford</td>
<td>Nursing and Biology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zoe De Beurs</td>
<td>Physics and Astronomy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Becky Phung</td>
<td>Textiles and Apparel</td>
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</tbody>
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#### 2018-2019 Activities

1. **Reading on Funding in Higher Education – Individual Groups** – November 2018
2. **Research Exchange**: Undergraduate Research Scholars Symposium – College Station – February 2019
3. **Professional Seminar**: Briefing and Workshop on Higher Education Issues and Advocacy (Prep for Day at the Capitol) – College Station – February 2019
4. **Research Exchange**: Longhorn Research Poster Session – Austin – April 2019
5. **Professional Seminar**: Innovation in Research – Austin – April 2019
6. **Networking**: Mix & Mingle with Administrators on both campuses – February and April 2019
7. Undergraduate Research Day at the Capitol – Austin – April 2019

#### Advisors

- Dr. Sarah M. Misemer, Associate Director, Undergraduate Research, LAUNCH, Texas A&M University
- Dr. Robert Reichle, Senior Research Program Coordinator, Office of Undergraduate Research, University of Texas at Austin
- Annabelle G. Aymond, Program Coordinator for Undergraduate Research, LAUNCH, Texas A&M University

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2 cohorts
12 students each year
6 from Texas A&M
6 from UT
Mix of STEM, and
Arts & Humanities students

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UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOLARS THESIS PROGRAM

The Undergraduate Research Scholars (URS) thesis program seeks to provide eligible undergraduates with a graduate student experience by allowing them to participate in research and communicate their findings as principal authors to the University’s scholarly community.

80.4% COMPLETION RATE
181 STUDENTS COMPLETED THE PROGRAM

3.63 AVERAGE GPR
OF THE 181 STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED THE URS PROGRAM

181 students completed the 2018-2019 URS thesis program

KEY

ARCH: College of Architecture
BUSH: Bush School of Government & Public Service
CEHD: College of Education & Human Development
CLLA: College of Liberal Arts
COAL: College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
CVM: College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences
ENGR: College of Engineering
GEOS: College of Geosciences
GV: Texas A&M University at Galveston
QT: Texas A&M University at Qatar
SCIE: College of Science
**Thesis Writing Course**

Thesis Writing (UGST 405) is a 1-credit hour seminar course offered only in the spring semester exclusively for students participating in the Undergraduate Research Scholars (URS) program. Enrollment in the class is not required for participation in the program, but is an opportunity for any Undergraduate Research Scholar who needs writing instruction or would like assistance with thesis preparation. The course also serves to satisfy one credit of writing-intensive (W) course requirements for graduation. **Note:** Enrollment priority will be given to seniors who need a writing-intensive (W) course to graduate. Limited seats are available in the course. This course is taught by Dr. Sarah M. Misemer, Associate Director for Undergraduate Research, and features topics such as:

- Thesis Writing
- Academic Publishing
- Copyright and Digital Citizenship
- Research Presentations

**URS Thesis Template Usage in 2018-2019**

- 61.3% of students used the STEM Thesis Template
- 22.0% of students used the Creative Works Thesis Template
- 8.3% of students used the Arts/Humanities Thesis Template
- 8.3% of students used the LaTeX Thesis Template

**HONORS Affiliation in 2018-2019**

- 15% of students in University-Honors
- 34% of students in College- and/or Departmental Honors
- 50% of students not in any honors program

**Out of 181 students who completed the program**

- 61.3% of students used the STEM thesis template
- 22.0% of students used the Creative Works thesis template
- 8.3% of students used the Arts/Humanities thesis template
- 8.3% of students used the LaTeX thesis template

13 students enrolled in the thesis writing class.
EXPLORATIONS: THE TEXAS A&M UNDERGRADUATE JOURNAL

*Explorations: The Texas A&M Undergraduate Journal* is an interdisciplinary publication dedicated to fostering undergraduate research and scholarly work in all fields. The journal welcomes research, scholarly, and creative submissions of general interest from any discipline.

Publication in *Explorations* is a multi-stage process: First, a student submits a synopsis (an article pitch). The synopsis is reviewed in a double-blind process by both faculty and student board members. Reviewer decisions are ranked and the student editorial board discusses the submissions. If a synopsis is accepted after this first stage, the student is invited to submit a full manuscript. Full manuscripts go through another round of double-blind review before final selection.

**ACCEPTANCE RATE**
12 OUT OF 47 SUBMISSIONS PUBLISHED

**BOARD MEMBERS**
6 OUT OF 11 APPLICANTS JOINED 4 CONTINUING MEMBERS

**FACULTY/STAFF REVIEWERS**
33

1 article from a Galveston student
1 article from a Qatar student
1 article from a past HSC President
1 article from the 2019 Astronaut Scholarship Awardee
Cover artwork from the 2018 Astronaut Scholarship Awardee
7 of the 15 students participated in URS
4 of the 15 participated in the University Honors Program
4 of the 15 participated in the Engineering Honors Program
2 of the 15 participated in the Biology Honors Program
1 of the 15 participated in the University Scholars Program

**ARTICLES BY DISCIPLINE**
12

- Creative Work, 2, 16%
- Life Science, 2, 17%
- Engineering, 1, 25%
- Humanities, 3, 25%
- Social Science, 2, 17%
- Engineering, 3, 25%

12
The Undergraduate Research Ambassadors work to inspire broader engagement in undergraduate research by educating and serving the Texas A&M University community. The program began in 2013 with our inaugural class of 12 Ambassadors. New Ambassadors are chosen each spring.

200+ VOLUNTEER HOURS  21 STUDENT AMBASSADORS  5 COLLEGES REPRESENTED

Cameron Criswell, Biochemistry, Genetics
Nicole Deere, Anthropology
Jared Eichner, Biomedical Sciences
Morgan Chapman, Chemical Engineering
Oscar Gonzalez, Chemistry

Ashley Nicole Guentzel, Biology
Dillon Jones, Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences
Anthony Gasacan, Biomedical Sciences
Ashley Hayden, Biology
Devyn Rice, Applied Mathematics

McKaela Hodge, Genetics
Tawfik Hussein, Biomedical Engineering
Marita John, Biomedical Sciences
Karissa Yamaguchi, Biochemistry, Genetics
Quinton Lawton, Meteorology

Summer Lehman, Psychology
Ashwathi Nair, Biomedical Engineering
Madison Parkis, Psychology
Eliza Price, Chemical Engineering
Natalia Quintero-Arevalo, General Studies

Everett Yang, Computer Science

Alexandra Bishop, Biology
Nicole Deere, Anthropology, Classics
Danielle Yarbrough, Chemical Engineering
Kyung Ho Jung, Biochemistry, Genetics
Lois Wampler, Biomedical Engineering

Madelyn Phillips, Political Science
Tanner Ramirez, Mechanical Engineering
Oscar Gonzalez, Chemistry
Marita John, Biomedical Sciences
Sasha George, Chemical Engineering

Natalia Quintero-Arevalo, Nutritional Sciences
Alex Strasser, Chemical Engineering
Jacquelyn McCullough, Genetics
Natalie Coleman, Civil Engineering
Mona Fattahi, Chemistry

Morgan Chapman, Microbiology, Genetics
Summer Lehman, Psychology
Rachel Tindall, Chemical Engineering
Sandhya Ravichandran, Biomedical Sciences
Eliza Price, Chemical Engineering

Everett Yang, Computer Science
INFORMATIONAL SESSION AND WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE

Getting Started in Research Workshops

This panel-style workshop is led by the Associate Director for Undergraduate Research and the Undergraduate Research Ambassadors, a group of experienced undergraduate researchers, who discuss misconceptions about research, how they got involved, and how their participation in research changed their undergraduate experience. Students learn tips for seeking out and effectively working with faculty advisors, as well as what to expect generally as an undergraduate researcher.

- 4 workshops held
- 157 unique attendance at all workshops
- AG (8%), AR (1%), BA (2%), ED (2%), EN (53%), GE (4%), GS (2%), LA (11%), PH (2%), SC (9%), VT (6%) student attendance by college

Undergraduate Research Scholars Informational Sessions

LAUNCH: Undergraduate Research staff explains the details, opportunities, and eligibility requirements for the Undergraduate Research Scholars program. As long as you are an undergraduate, this program is open to all majors. Faculty research advisors are encouraged to attend with undergraduates.

- 6 sessions held
- 276 unique attendance at all sessions
- AG (59%), AR (0%), BA (2%), EN (14%), GN (1%), GE (3%), LA (6%), QT (4%), SC (7%), VM (4%) student attendance by college

Mentoring Undergraduate Researchers Workshops

This interactive workshop focuses on successful strategies graduate students can use when mentoring an undergraduate researcher or group of undergraduates conducting research. It also provides the opportunity to network with other graduate mentors and offers practical wisdom for mentoring undergraduates.

We discuss mentoring styles and give examples of approaches to specific problems. Some of the topics include fostering independence in undergraduate researchers, successful work and meeting schedules, keeping students motivated, responsibilities of graduate student mentors in passing on research ethics and conventions of the discipline, and strategies for dealing with problems or issues.

- 2 workshops held
- 48 unique attendance at all workshops
- AG (27%), AR (2%), BA (2%), EN (23%), GE (4%), GV (2%), LA (17%), MD (2%), SC (19%), VM (2%) student attendance by college
Welcome BBQ

Students, Directors, Coordinators, Mentors and Staff are invited to join LAUNCH: UGR each year in welcoming REU, USRG, and other summer undergraduate researchers to Texas A&M University. Attendees enjoy barbeque and mingle with other student researchers and campus staff as we kick off TAMU summer research programs!

Professional Development Seminar

This seminar is intended for undergraduates participating in REU and other summer undergraduate research experiences (SURE). Each year, LAUNCH: UGR holds a half-day seminar with speakers from around campus to introduce important information and skills to the aspiring undergraduate researcher. Topics, including: Welcome to Texas A&M, National Fellowships, Early Graduate Admissions Program, Copyright Basics, Scientific Writing, Writing Abstracts, and Poster Presentations.

Poster Session

LAUNCH: Undergraduate Research organizes the Summer Undergraduate Research Poster Session to showcase research, scholarly, and creative activity conducted at Texas A&M University by students from institutions worldwide. The event is held each year in late-July to early-August.

2018-2019 STATS

162 students presented 146 posters at the Summer Poster Session

29 REU/SURE programs were represented at the Summer Poster Session

74 institutions were represented at the Summer Poster Session

121 students attended the Kick-Off Welcome BBQ

51 students attended the Professional Development Seminar

143 students attended the General Lab Safety Training
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>58.7%</td>
<td>OF URS SYMPOSIUM ATTENDEES WERE FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51.3%</td>
<td>OF SUMMER POSTER SESSION PRESENTERS WERE FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AMBASSADORS WERE FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td>OF URS STUDENTS WERE FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>OF EXPLORATIONS BOARD MEMBERS AND AUTHORS WERE FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS</td>
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