

April 2025

Undergraduate Research Scholars Thesis Program

Annabelle Aymond, Associate Program Director
Office of Undergraduate Research



Undergraduate Research
DIVISION OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Definition



A mentored investigation or creative inquiry conducted by undergraduates that seeks to make a scholarly or artistic contribution to knowledge.”

- Council on Undergraduate Research

EXAMPLES

- Evaluating, improving, testing, building, creating, expanding, etc.
- Finding new uses for tools, materials, processes, etc.
- Applying new perspectives to questions, ideas, or experiences

Examples



Undergraduate Research and Capstones Collection: <http://hdl.handle.net/1969.1/3365>

- **Walk Across Texas: An Analysis of the Economic Impact of an Online, Community-Based Physical Activity Program**
by Jordan Moore, a Public Health major
- **Applications of Neural Architecture Search to Deep Reinforcement Learning Methods**
by William Allen, a Mathematics major
- **Effect of Omega-3 and Omega-6 Polyunsaturated Fatty Acids on Gene Expression**
by Sophia Valdez, a Biomedical Sciences major
- **A Flexible Tether Management Model for Heterogeneous Marsupial Robot Systems**
by Carson Duffy, a Computer Engineering major

Student Benefits



***There is an endless
possibility for
bettering yourself”***

**- Peter Elhajj '25, Psychology
Undergraduate Research Ambassador**

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL

- Refine communication and time management skills
- Learn independence, resilience, and positive failure
- Improve leadership skills
- Build a supportive network
- Connect coursework to real-world settings and get specialized training
- Simulate graduate and professional school experiences

Misconceptions



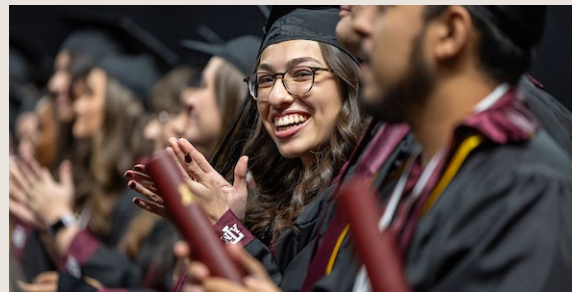
ONLY FOR STUDENTS GOING TO GRAD SCHOOL

Undergraduate research teaches you transferrable skills that all employers are looking for.



ONLY FOR STUDENTS WITH THE BEST GRADES

Anyone is capable of doing undergraduate research, and participating in research activities often helps students improve their grades!



LIMITED TO STEM* DISCIPLINES

Undergraduate research happens in every field, and research looks different for everyone!



Overview: Purpose



- Supplements Existing Research Experiences
- Provides Thesis and Publication Support
- Provides Presentation Experience
- Grows your Network
- Recognizes Honors- and Graduate-level Work

Overview: Requirements



- Find an Eligible Faculty Research Advisor
- Commit to Fall 2025 and Spring 2026 Semesters
- Work through the Application and Proposal Approval Process
- Work through the Specific Program Requirements
- Make a Public Presentation
- Produce a Written Undergraduate Research Scholars Thesis (minimum 5,500 words)
- Work through the Final Thesis Approval Process

Overview: Considerations



Course Credit

XXXX 291/491 Preferred course for research experiences.

XXXX 285/485 Acceptable course for research experiences.

XXXX 297/497 Acceptable course for capstone-related research experiences.

Talk to your academic advisor and your faculty research advisor about enrollment, expectations, and credit hours!

Overview: Considerations



****HONORS IS NOT REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE****

Honors and Capstone Credit

- ☒ University Honors/Honors Academy
- ☒ College and Departmental Honors Programs

****Talk to your Honors Advisors AND Academic Advisors to
determine associated requirements****

Overview: Eligibility



- ✓ Any major
- ✓ Existing research project with eligible Faculty Advisor
- ✓ Commit to fall 2025 and spring 2026 semesters
- ✓ 12+ credit hours from classes taken at Texas A&M
- ✓ 90+ credit hours from classes in total
- ✓ 3.0+ GPA cumulative
- ✓ Teams up to 5 are OK

✗ **Ineligible: December 2025 Graduates**

✗ **Ineligible: Honor Code or Student Conduct Code Violations**

Overview: Perks



- ☑ University-Level Honors Distinction
- ☑ Transcript Designation
- ☑ Graduation Regalia
- ☑ Recognition in Commencement Program
- ☑ Eligibility for Outstanding Thesis Award
- ☑ Priority Registration in Spring 2026
- ☑ Possible Eligibility for Travel Awards or Free Poster Printing
- ☑ Eligibility to Register for UGST 405: Thesis Writing Class
- ☑ Publication of Thesis in Permanent Library Collection

Program Timeline



FALL 2025


Timeframe	Program Item
June-August	Application Period
August-September	Application Acceptances
September-October	Orientation Period
Mid-October	Small Group Meeting 1
Early-November	Orientation Quiz
Mid-November	Small Group Meeting 2
Late-November	Progress Report 1


You are Working on Research, Writing, and Seeking Feedback from Your Faculty Advisor at ALL Times


SPRING 2026


Timeframe	Program Item
Mid-January	Thesis Formatting Quiz
Mid-January	Progress Report 2
Late-January	Draft Installment 1 (1,375 words)
Late-January	Small Group Meeting 3
Mid-February	URS Symposium
Mid-February	Progress Report 3
Early-March	Draft Installment 2 (4,125 words)
Late-March	Small Group Meeting 4
Early-April	Presentation Report
Early-April	Final Thesis Due (5,500+ words)


▼ Module 1


 Welcome and Introduction


 Get to Know the URS Program Staff


 Roles and Responsibilities


 Student Rules

 Attendance, Participation, and Grading


 Professional Etiquette


 Technology Requirements


 Time Management and Suggested Milestones


 Small Group Meetings


 UGST 405: Thesis Writing Course


 Public Presentation Expectations

 Research Compliance and Ethics

 Choosing a Thesis Template


 Thesis Template Downloads


 Thesis Organization Overview


 Citation Basics





▼ Formatting Guide Module


 2425 URS Thesis Formatting Guide.pdf


 Formatting Basics: Document Page Specifications


 Formatting Basics: Text and Font Specifications


 Formatting Basics: Paragraph Specifications


 Formatting Basics: Additional Text Specifications


 Preliminary Pages: Title Page


 Preliminary Pages: Research Compliance Certification


 Preliminary Pages: Table of Contents


 Preliminary Pages: Abstract Page


 Preliminary Pages: Dedication Page


 Preliminary Pages: Acknowledgements Page

 Preliminary Pages: Nomenclature Page

 Main Body: Headings

 Main Body: Subheadings

 Main Body: Paragraphs, Lists, and Block Quotes

 Main Body: Figures



**GENOMIC EVOLUTION OF ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE UNDER
SELECTIVE PRESSURE IN TREATED CANCER PATIENTS**

An Undergraduate Research Scholars Thesis

by

MEGAN MAHON

Submitted to the LAUNCH: Undergraduate Research office at
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of requirements for the designation as an

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOLAR

Approved by
Faculty Research Advisor:

Dr. Jessica Galloway-Peña

May 2024

Majors:

Biochemistry
Genetics

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What is an installment?



The purpose of this program is to help you:

- Write your thesis in progression
- Prepare a professional document that matches university standards

You submit your draft thesis template for review twice before the final thesis.

Each installment submission is checked by a document reviewer for
writing progress and **document formatting**.

Application: Basics



- Multi-step Process
- Requires an “Intent to Apply”
- Requires a formal, multi-part “Thesis Proposal”
- **3-Part Approval Process:** UGR Office, Proposal Reviewer, and Your Faculty Advisor

Application: Proposal



- Project Summary
- Introduction
- Objectives/Goals
- Methodology/Theoretical Framework
- Bibliography/References/Works Cited
- Research Compliance Acknowledgement
- Contingency Plan
- Timeline: September and October Goals
- Timeline: November and December Goals
- Timeline: January and February Goals
- Timeline: March and April Goals

Application: Example 1



Section 2: Proposal

Section 2.1: Project Summary

FOR EVERYONE:

In **250-300 words**, describe the overarching research project over the course of the eight-month program and how you propose to accomplish the objectives of the research project. The project summary should contain:

1. A statement of your motivation, problem, and research question.
2. A justification and importance of your research topic.
3. How does your project differentiate itself in the current research field and how does it build on previous research in your broader discipline? Make sure you understand the previous research that has been done in your broader discipline and in your specific subfield. Be specific throughout.
4. The expected outcome(s) of the research project and its associated objectives.

IN ADDITION:

FOR CREATIVE WORKS:

Creative Works theses combine critical and creative modes. In the critical mode, you should explore previous research in your field and concentrate on how your project applies innovative methods to existing mediums and/or uses established modes to develop new knowledge through its application. This research will help you design a specific motivation, problem, or question you want to answer through your Creative Artifact. As part of the creative mode, you should develop a Creative Artifact that is appropriate for the genre or medium that you are exploring. Your Creative Artifact should answer your research question and will be further developed through exhibition and reflection throughout the academic year. The Creative Work thesis is the combination of your analysis, artifact, and reflection.

Creative Works project summaries must also answer the following questions:

5. How does your anticipated Creative Artifact build on previous research in your genre or medium? What processes or medium-specific tools will it incorporate; why?
6. What form will the anticipated Creative Artifact take and what new knowledge will it produce?

Application: Example 2



Section 2: Proposal

Section 2.1: Project Summary

FOR EVERYONE:

In **250-300 words**, describe the overarching research project over the course of the eight-month program and how you propose to accomplish the objectives of the research project. The project summary should contain:

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Application: Example 3



Section 5.2 Examples: November and December Goals

➤ [Jump to Section 5.2 Instructions](#)

STEM EXAMPLE

November

Week 1: Seed HUVEC and A2780 spheroids in the aTME-Chip. Prepare Fall progress report.

Week 2: Attend small group meeting with thesis reviewer. Continue culture of aTME-Chip, add Bevacizumab, and live cell fluorescence microscopy imaging every 48 h.

Week 3: Thanksgiving Break

Week 4: Finalize and submit Fall progress report.

December

Week 1: Process images and data.

Week 2: Process images and data.

Week 3: Winter Break/Write first thesis installment.

Week 4: Winter Break/Write first thesis installment.

➤ [Jump to Section 5.2 Instructions](#)

ARTS, HUMANITIES, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES EXAMPLE

November Goals

- Week 1: November 1-11
 - Submit Presentation on Nov. 1 to be finalized for the Symposium.
 - November 3: Attend POWER Writing Productivity Session
 - November 8-10th: Deliver presentation at Never Forgotten: Conflict Archaeology and Military History at Texas A&M Symposium.
 - Identify a publisher and begin writing an abstract.

Application: Research Compliance



The steps to clear your research compliance status are the following:

- Discussion with Faculty Advisor
- Submission of application with completed RCB acknowledgement (appears in application template)
- Approval by advisor and UGR Staff
- Once accepted, if your project changes, notify faculty advisor BEFORE you collect any data to determine if you need compliance training or approval
- Submission of final thesis with completed RCB acknowledgement (appears in thesis template)

Direct questions about obtaining compliance to the appropriate RCB Committees:

Human Subjects: Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Vertebrate Animals: Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)

Biological Hazards: Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)

Application: Contingency Plan



Students are required to apply with a contingency plan that describes how the URS project will be completed if you are unable to follow the scope of the original project proposal.

Depending on the project, this contingency plan could address, but is not limited to, the following:

- Lack of physical access to research space, data, or other resources
- Inability to obtain equipment, permission, data, or other resources
- Limited and/or restricted travel
- Inability to hold in-person meetings
- Partial or incomplete data, trials, experiments, reviews, analyses, design, etc.
- Virtual project completion if moved fully online

Give a detailed description of a contingency plan that will guide you as you plan ahead for potential disruptions and/or unanticipated impacts on your URS thesis. The purpose of this contingency plan is to help you complete the URS thesis program on time and to fulfill graduation or other program requirements, such as Honors.

URS Resources

Repository of URS Theses

<https://oaktrust.library.tamu.edu/handle/1969.1/3367>

URS Outstanding Thesis Awards

<https://launch.tamu.edu/Undergraduate-Research/URS/Outstanding-Thesis-Awards>



<https://tx.ag/URSthesis>



New website, application system, and submittal system in progress.

UGR Resources



EXPLORATIONS AND JLS

<https://explorations.tamu.edu>

<https://launch.tamu.edu/undergraduate-research/jls>

RESEARCH OPPS DATABASE

[https://tx.ag/
ResearchOpportunities](https://tx.ag/ResearchOpportunities)



UGR AMBASSADORS

<https://tx.ag/AskUsAboutUGR>





THANK YOU

Office of Undergraduate Research
Texas A&M University

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ugr@tamu.edu***