The 2019-2020 academic year presented challenges in the spring as the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted normal operations on the Texas A&M campus and around the world. However, our students demonstrated great resilience as they adapted their projects and completed their Undergraduate Research Scholars (URS) theses on time, often without access to labs, computers, and equipment they would normally use on campus. Students continued to attend virtual informationals and workshops hosted by the LAUNCH: Undergraduate Research office in spring and summer of 2020. Virtual meetings offered a new opportunity to connect with students on the Qatar, Galveston, Caruth School of Dentistry, and McAllen campuses. Unfortunately, all in-person summer activities were curtailed, and only three summer undergraduate research programs were able to offer online summer undergraduate research programs.

Despite the effects of the pandemic, LAUNCH: Undergraduate Research continued to increase campus partnerships, provide funding, and create new initiatives. We expanded the URS thesis program through a new partnership with students studying Dental Hygiene, which included the development of new thesis template and program guidelines for undergraduate students at the Caruth School of Dentistry. Participation in the URS program by students at the Qatar campus grew to the largest cohort we have ever had at 18 scholars, 15 of whom traveled to the College Station campus in February 2020 to attend and present their research at the URS Symposium. Additionally, we were able to pilot a new summer program with the department of Architecture as a gateway into the URS program, and we sponsored six students during their summer research activities. These successes augment our ongoing partnerships with the Galveston campus, the Glasscock Summer Scholars program, and the Aggie Creative Collective.

Although the pandemic persists, the LAUNCH: UGR office continues to transition programs into virtual formats that will allow us to offer the same services and high-impact activities without interruption in the coming year.

Dr. Sarah M. Misemer

Associate Director for Undergraduate Research, LAUNCH, and Full Professor, Hispanic Studies
ARTS/HUMANITIES AND CREATIVE WORKS RESEARCH IS GROWING

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

2016-2017
32 students
NEW ARTS/HUMANITIES TEMPLATE RELEASED

2017-2018
38 students
NEW CREATIVE WORKS TEMPLATE RELEASED

2018-2019
55 students
EST. PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE TEXAS A&M SCHOOL OF LAW, AGGIE CREATIVE COLLECTIVE, AND HAGLER INSTITUTE

2019-2020
57 students
EST. PARTNERSHIP WITH THE DEPT. OF ARCHITECTURE.


# OF STUDENTS USING URS THESIS TEMPLATES

# OF STUDENTS IN URS PARTNER PROGRAMS

- Glasscock Scholars
- Aggie Creative Collective
- Architecture
- Hagler Scholars
- Law School
- Philosophy for Children
- LT Jordan Fellows
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.

COUNCIL ON UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

> cur.org

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

The definition of undergraduate research as defined by CUR.

An inquiry or investigation conducted by an undergraduate student that makes an original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline.

Our Involvement in CUR Professional Conferences

Presentation: Lessons Learned: A Decade of Publishing Explorations: The Texas A&M Undergraduate Journal

Presenters: Sumana Datta, Ph.D., Sarah M. Misemer, Ph.D., Annabelle G. Aymond, and A. Nicole Guentzel

THE DIVISION OF RESEARCH AT TEXAS A&M

> vpr.tamu.edu

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.
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH EXPO

On 2 October 2019, LAUNCH: Undergraduate Research held its third all-day Undergraduate Research Expo in the Memorial Student Center on the campus of Texas A&M University.

This Expo expands on the two-hour resource fair held in years past with panels, workshops, and 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 Texas A&M: Where Are We Now & Where Are We Going?” “Building Your REU/SURE Program in Qualtrics,” “Undergraduate Research and Preparing for Law School: A Discussion with the TAMU School of Law,” 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: Freshmen and Sophomores Needed,” and “Getting Off Campus: Research Opportunities”). The day culminated with 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 research opportunities and involvement.

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

On Wednesday, February 26, 2020, LAUNCH: Undergraduate Research held the third annual Undergraduate Research Scholars Symposium in the Memorial Student Center. The Symposium showcases undergraduate researchers in the LAUNCH Undergraduate Research Scholars (URS) thesis program. The Undergraduate Research Scholars (URS) thesis program 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)

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.

174 TEXAS A&M STUDENTS PRESENTED AT THE URS SYMPOSIUM

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

106

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

68

STUDENTS FROM TAMU QATAR

15

STUDENTS FROM TAMU GALVESTON

3

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

59

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

10

HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO GET INVOLVED IN UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AFTER YOUR EXPERIENCE ATTENDING THE URS SYMPOSIUM?

OVERALL, HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE LAUNCH URS SYMPOSIUM? (PARTICIPANTS)

OVERALL, HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE LAUNCH URS SYMPOSIUM? (FACULTY)
PARTNERSHIPS

CARUTH SCHOOL OF DENTAL HYGIENE

Caruth School of Dental Hygiene students collaborate with multiple advisors at the College of Dentistry through a structured course with Dr. Faizan Kabani.

2019-2020 Caruth School of Dental Hygiene Scholars

Proposal: Resin Infiltration Therapy: A Micro-invasive Approach to Treat White Spot Lesions in Dentistry
Danielle Nicole Allen, Courtney Marie Fine, and Malorie Newton
URS Advisor: Faizan Kabani, BSDH, MHA, MBA, Ph.D.; Kathleen Muzzin, RDH, MS; and Kayla Reed, RDH, MS

Proposal: The 2017 AAP Periodontal Classification Guidelines: What Every Dental Office Should Be Implementing
Taylor Lynn Cornuaud, Allie Brown, and Regan Gopffarth
URS Advisor: Faizan Kabani, BSDH, MHA, MBA, Ph.D. and Jane Cotter, RDH, MS, CTTS

Proposal: Miswak: An Alternative Approach to Traditional Oral Hygiene Care
Anh Vu Tram Nguyen, Maria G. Mirakhmedov, and Sarah Laredo
URS Advisor: Faizan Kabani, BSDH, MHA, MBA, Ph.D.; Lisa Mallonee, BSDH, MPH, RD, LD; and Maureen Brown, RDH, BSDH

Proposal: Infectious Disease Disclosure by Dental Health Care Providers: A Patient’s Right to Know
Melanie Elizabeth Patterson, Kimberlynn N Patzold, and Abbigale Danielle White
URS Advisor: Faizan Kabani, BSDH, MHA, MBA, Ph.D.; Leigh Ann Wyatt, BSDH, MA, MS; and Tracy King, RDH, MS

Proposal: Ammonium Hexafluorosilicate: A Prospective Alternative to Silver Diamine Fluoride
Alexandra Renee Politz, Lauren M Scott, and Hannah Nicole Montz
URS Advisor: Faizan Kabani, BSDH, MHA, MBA, Ph.D.; Kathleen Muzzin, RDH, MS; and Kayla Reed, RDH, MS

Proposal: Effects of Dental Media Hype On Patients’ Perception of Treatment
Alternative to Silver Diamine Fluoride
Madai Ruiz, Daniela Sarai Duarte, and Nikita Thapa
URS Advisor: Faizan Kabani, BSDH, MHA, MBA, Ph.D. and Jane Cotter, RDH, MS, CTTS

Proposal: Chlorhexidine: An Investigation of the Gold Standard on Wound Healing Healing
Alternative to Silver Diamine Fluoride
Katie Shea Smith, Sadie Nguyen, and Jennifer Lee Copeland
URS Advisor: Faizan Kabani, BSDH, MHA, MBA, Ph.D. and Eric Fox, RDH, MS

Proposal: The Evolution of Dental Composites: A Preventative Approach to Restoration Failure
Alternative to Silver Diamine Fluoride
Alexandra Janice Williams, Leann Renae Wilson, and Rahil Mirmohammadi
URS Advisor: Faizan Kabani, BSDH, MHA, MBA, Ph.D. and Eric Fox, RDH, MS

OVERALL, HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE LAUNCH URS SYMPOSIUM? (FACULTY)
FIRST YEAR EATS AND THE HUNGER CONSORTIUM

The LAUNCH First Year Eats Living-Learning Program centers on food and community. First Year Eats emphasizes helping college students develop skills related to eating well in the new environment of residence hall living on a college campus: selecting, buying, preparing, storing, and even growing the items needed or wanted for nutritious meals while living in a residence hall. The Hunger Consortium connects faculty, staff, students, and local community members involved in research, food preparation, management, and education with each other and others who want to make a difference by addressing hunger and food insecurity. A partnership was formed between First Year Eats, The Hunger Consortium, and the Department of Statistics to research food insecurity on campus.

2019-2020 First Year Eats and the Hunger Consortium Scholars

Proposal: First Year Eats: A First Attempt at Combating Food Insecurity on College Campuses
Alexander Scott Peters, Statistics
URS Advisors: Dr. Alan Dabney and Dr. Suma Datta

LAUNCH – DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE UNDERGRADUATE SUMMER INITIATIVE

The LAUNCH – Department of Architecture Undergraduate Summer Initiative is a program that links creative works, undergraduate scholarly research, and architecture.

Summer 2020 LAUNCH – Department of Architecture Undergraduate Summer Initiative Scholars

Thesis: Survey of Surge Capacity and Alternative Care Settings During COVID-19
Madison Lesmeister; Virgilio Duarte; Nallely Chavarria Duran; and Alanna Burnett, Environmental Design Architectural Studies
URS Advisor: George Mann, AIA

Thesis: Whole as a Part: an Examination of Design in Supportive Housing
Maggie Martin, Environmental Design Architectural Studies
URS Advisor: James Michael Tate, M.Arch

Thesis: The Decorated Shed in the 21st Century
Robert Williams, Environmental Design Architectural Studies
URS Advisor: James Michael Tate, M.Arch
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.

Summer 2020 Aggie Creative Collective Scholars

Proposal: El Espíritu Santo
Erica Dixon, History
URS Advisor: Dr. Jason Harris

Proposal: These Uncertain Times
Abbigail Forrest, Political Science
URS Advisor: Dr. Lowell White

Proposal: Song of the Night
Aarushi Mudavangatil, Industrial Engineering
URS Advisor: Dr. Lowell White

Proposal: And the Cat Looked
Meredith White, English
URS Advisor: Dr. Lowell White

Proposal: Radicalization, Class Warfare, and Technologically-Catalyzed Upheaval from a Fantasy Perspective
Gabriel Zolton, Chemical Engineering
URS Advisor: Dr. Lowell White

Proposal: Angel Down
Lebukse Mokanse, English
URS Advisor: Dr. Jason Harris

Proposal: Strawberry Farms (The Egg & Avocado Show)
Cheryl Cruz, Visualization
URS Advisor: Dr. Samuel Woodfin

Proposal: That Tall, Skinny, Green Hill
Ryan Steel, English
URS Advisor: Dr. Jason Harris

Proposal: Jokers and Thieves: A Graphic Novel
Kyle Rively, Visualization
URS Advisor: Dr. Samuel Woodfin

Proposal: Greatest Hits: A Visual Exploration of Mental Illness in the Music Industry
Jordan Stawski, Visualization
URS Advisor: Dr. Samuel Woodfin

Proposal: Look Beyond the Veil: Coping with Anxiety and Trauma
Jordyn Goodman, Visualization
URS Advisor: Dr. Samuel Woodfin

Proposal: Troubled Pilgrimage to the Grotto: Exploring the Deconversion Narrative in Fantasy
Torruella Alvarado, Sebastian Andres, English
URS Advisor: Dr. Jason Harris

Proposal: Greatest Hits: A Visual Exploration of Mental Illness in the Music Industry
Jordan Stawski, Visualization
URS Advisor: Dr. Samuel Woodfin

Proposal: Look Beyond the Veil: Coping with Anxiety and Trauma
Jordyn Goodman, Visualization
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Proposal: Troubled Pilgrimage to the Grotto: Exploring the Deconversion Narrative in Fantasy
Torruella Alvarado, Sebastian Andres, English
URS Advisor: Dr. Jason Harris
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 2020 Glasscock Summer Scholars

Proposal: Wind in Film: A study of on-screen energy anxiety
Lauren Curtis, International Studies, Global Cultural Studies Track
URS Advisor: Dr. Carmela Garritano

Proposal: A Multimodal Semiotic Analysis of Cartoons on the US and Russian Relations Under the Barack Obama and Donald Trump Administrations
Ariadne Pacheco, International Studies, International Politics and Diplomacy Track
URS Advisor: Dr. Gabriela Zapata

Proposal: Climate Fiction Appealing to Humanities
Gabrielle Doucet, International Studies, International Politics and Diplomacy Track
URS Advisor: Dr. Carmela Garritano

Proposal: How Texan Is Your Wine?: A Social Semiotic Analysis of Texas Wine Marketing
Steven Gooch, Marketing, Analytics and Consulting Track
URS Advisor: Dr. Gabriela Zapata

Proposal: Texan Identity and the Republican Party: A Social Semiotic Analysis of Political Artifacts
Yzach Dominguez, University Studies, Society, Ethics and Law Concentration
URS Advisor: Dr. Gabriela Zapata

Proposal: Human Capital and Consensual Trafficking: The Domestication of Mail-Order-Brides
Zoe Simmons, English
URS Advisor: Vanita Reddy

Megha Viswanath, International Studies, International Politics and Diplomacy Track
URS Advisor: Dr. Vanita Reddy

Nydia Gomez, International Studies, International Politics and Diplomacy Track
URS Advisor: Dr. Vanita Reddy

Proposal: Aging, Lonely, & Overworked: The Emergence of New Affective Outlets in Japanese Society
Alysabeth Lipmon, International Studies, International Politics and Diplomacy Track
URS Advisor: Dr. Vanita Reddy
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!

2019-2020 Texas Sea Grant Scholars

**Thesis:** Chemical Characterization of Sargassum Fluitans  
**Marcus Wharton,** Marine Studies  
**URS Advisor:** Dr. Karl Kaiser and Dr. Olbelina Ulloa

**Thesis:** Illuminating the Impacts of Tourists With Hand-Held Lights on Sea Turtles  
**Margaret Guy,** Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences, Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Option  
**URS Advisor:** Dr. Lee Fitzgerald

**Thesis:** Effects of the Emerging Marine Chemical Pollutant Oxybenzone on the Metabolic Physiology of Embryo-Larval Zebrafish  
**Kristina Simons,** Marine Biology  
**URS Advisor:** Dr. David Hala

**Thesis:** The Role of Zebrafish (Danio rerio) Metabolism in Influencing Physiological Fitness Under Metabolic Stress  
**Mikelee Brink,** Marine Biology  
**URS Advisor:** David Hala

**Thesis:** Synthesis of Hydrogenase Mimics for Use as Catalysts in the Hydrogen Evolution Reaction  
**Madlyn Crist,** Marine Sciences  
**URS Advisor:** Dr. Olbelina Ulloa

**Thesis:** Study on the Prevalence of Antibiotic Resistant Gene Following Hurricane Harvey  
**Kelci Chamers,** Marine Biology  
**URS Advisor:** Dr. Jessica Labonté
REU/SURE PARTNERSHIPS

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
Undergraduate Research Day at the Capitol

Undergraduate Research Day at the Capitol is a biannual event where student participants and their faculty advisors have the opportunity to tour the Capitol, attend committee hearings and observe the daily meeting of the Senate and/or House of Representatives. Student participants are encouraged to work with their institution in scheduling meetings with their respective legislators. The last Undergraduate Research Day at the Capitol was held in April 2019 and the next event will be hosted in April 2021.

The goal of this event is to promote undergraduate research in the State of Texas. The Council of Public University Presidents and Chancellors (CPUPC) partners with the Texas Association of Graduate Admission Professionals (TxGAP) in order to provide event participants with access to Texas graduate school information.

This event is coordinated by CPUPC, and the Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas, Inc. (ICUT). Visit https://www.txstate.edu/continuinged/Events/Undergraduate-Research-Day to learn more!

Visit https://www.txstate.edu/continuinged/Events/Undergraduate-Research-Day to learn more!
2019-2020 Activities

1. Professional Seminar: Visualizing Your Research Story – Austin – October 2019

2. Research Exchange: Undergraduate Research Scholars Symposium – College Station – February 2020

3. Professional Seminar: Briefing and Workshop on Higher Education Issues and Advocacy (Prep for Day at the Capitol) – College Station – February 2019

4. Professional Seminar: Funding your Research: Grants and Broader Impacts – College Station – February 2020

5. Research Exchange: Virtual Longhorn Research Poster Session – Austin – April 2020 (Participation Limited Due to COVID-19)

6. Networking: Mix & Mingle with Administrators on both campuses – February and April 2020 (April Participation

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
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.

COMPLETION RATE
248 STUDENTS COMPLETED THE PROGRAM

89.2%

AVERAGE GPR
OF THE 248 STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED THE URS PROGRAM

3.67

KEY

AG: College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
AR: College of Architecture
BA: Bush School of Government & Public Service
ED: College of Education & Human Development
EN: College of Engineering
GB: Bush School
GE: College of Geosciences
GV: Texas A&M University at Galveston
LA: College of Liberal Arts
PH: College of Public Health
SC: College of Science
VM: College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences
QT: Texas A&M University at Qatar
DN: Dental Hygiene

248 students
completed the 2019-2020 URS thesis program
Urs Thesis Template Usage in 2019-2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Template Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STEM Thesis</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative Works Thesis</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts/Humanities Thesis</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latex Thesis</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Honors Affiliation in 2019-2020

- Out of 248 students who completed the program, 9.68% are students in University-Honors.
- 39.11% of students in College and/or Departmental Honors.
- 51.21% of students not in any honors program.

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

21 students enrolled in the thesis writing class.

17
OPTIONAL UGST 405 COURSE IN 2019-2020

COMPLETION RATE
OUT OF THE 248 STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED THE URS PROGRAM 21 STUDENTS COMPLETED THE COURSE

8.47%

DIFFERENT MAJORS
FROM THE 21 STUDENTS THAT COMPLETED THE COURSE

1
EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

3
ECONOMICS

1
PSYCHOLOGY

1
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES

1
ENGLISH

3
BIOLOGY

1
BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING

1
HISTORY

1
PHYSICS

1
CIVIL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING

1
POLITICAL SCIENCE

6
BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE (2 DOUBLE MAJORS IN ENTO)

STUDENTS WITH DOUBLE MAJOR AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

19
STUDENTS THAT COMPLETED THE URS PROGRAM HAD A DOUBLE MAJOR
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.

26.67% acceptance rate
12 out of 45 submissions published

Board Members
7 out of 18 applicants joined
7 continuing members

Faculty/Staff Reviewers
36

Articles by Discipline

- 1 article from a Qatar team
- 1 article from an Undergraduate Research Ambassador
- 1 article from a NSF – GRFP awardee
- 12 of the 17 students participated in URS
- 2 of the 17 participated in the University Honors Program
- 2 of the 17 participated in the Engineering Honors Program
- 1 of the 17 participated in the Physics Honors Program
- 1 of the 17 participated in the Liberal Arts Honors Program
- 1 of the 17 participated in the Architecture Honors Program
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AMBASSADORS

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

2019-2020 UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AMBASSADORS

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 Gasacon, Biomedical Sciences
Ashley Hayden, Biology
Desyn Rice, Applied Mathematics
Mckaela Hodge, Genetics
Tawfik Hussein, Biomedical Engineering
Marita John, Biomedical Sciences
Kanisa Yamaguchi, Biochemistry, Genetics
Quinton Lawton, Meteorology
Summer Lehman, Psychology
Ashwathi Nair, Biomedical Engineering
Madison Parks, Psychology
Eliza Price, Chemical Engineering
Natalia Quintero-Arevalo, General Studies

Everett Yang, Computer Science

2020-2021 UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AMBASSADORS

Addie Bishop '21 Biology
Nicole Deere '21 Anthropology
Oula Eldow '21 Biomedical Science
Cora Garcia '21 Biomedical Science, Entomology
Patrick Hall '21 Biomedical Engineering
Hannah Horch '21 Political Science
David Lee '21 Biomedical Science
Jacquelyn McCullough '21 Genetics
Alex Peters '21 Statistics
Michael Pittonak '22 Biology
Nat Quintero '20 Nutritional Science
Tanner Ramirez '21 Mechanical Engineering
Emily Wilson '21 International Studies
Texas A&M University suspended all in-person REU/SURE programs in Summer 2020 due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. As a result, LAUNCH cancelled all REU/SURE events. Three REU/SURE programs proceeded virtually: MATH REU, Costa Rica REU, and the O-REU.

**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.

- 3 workshops held
- 190 unique attendance at all workshops
- AG: 7 (3.68%), ED: 5 (2.63%), EN: 39 (20.53%), GE: 3 (1.58%), GS: 8 (4.21%), LA: 95 (50%), BA 7 (3.68%), PH: 2 (1.05%), SC: 15 (7.89%), VM: 9 (4.74%)

**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.

- 7 sessions held
- 314 unique attendance at all sessions
- AG: 148 (47.13%), AR: 3 (0.96%), ED: 10 (3.18%), EN: 42 (13.38%), GV: 3 (0.96%), GS: 6 (1.91%), GE: 3 (0.96%), LA: 36 (11.46%), BA: 4 (1.27%), PH: 2 (0.64%), QT 38 (12.10%), SC: 9 (2.87%), VM: 10 (3.18%)

**Mentoring Undergraduate Researchers Workshops**

All REU/SURE programs were cancelled for summer 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and therefore the Summer 2020 workshop was cancelled as well.
NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP Awardees

THE ASTRONAUT SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION’S SCHOLARSHIP

The Astronaut Scholarship Foundation’s mission is to aid the United States in retaining its world leadership in technology and innovation by supporting the very best and brightest scholars in science, technology, engineering and mathematics while commemorating the legacy of America’s pioneering astronauts. Today, the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation awards more than fifty scholarships valued up to $15,000 to each selected scholar. The ASF scholarship award is just the beginning for our Astronaut Scholars, and their selection is the beginning of a life-long relationship with astronauts, alumni, and great leaders who span academia, technical research, and corporate leadership.

Awardees

- Camella Carlson
- Oscar Gonzalez

BARRY GOLDWATER SCHOLARSHIP AND EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation was established by Congress in 1986 to serve as a living memorial to honor the lifetime work of Senator Barry Goldwater, who served his country for 56 years as a soldier and statesman, including 30 years in the U.S. Senate.

By providing scholarships to college sophomores and juniors who intend to pursue research careers in the natural sciences, mathematics and engineering, the Goldwater Foundation is helping ensure that the U.S. is producing the number of highly-qualified professionals the Nation needs in these critical fields. Over its 30-year history, Goldwater Scholarships have been awarded to thousands of undergraduates, many of whom have gone on to win other prestigious awards like the National Science Foundation’s Graduate Fellowship, Rhodes Scholarship, Churchill Scholarship and the National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate Fellowship that support our Scholars’ graduate school work. Today, Goldwater alumni can be found conducting research that is helping defend the Nation, finding cures for catastrophic diseases and teaching future generations of scientists, mathematicians and engineers.

Awardees

- Jonathan Lo
- Cody Martin
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The NSF GRFP recognizes and supports outstanding graduate students in NSF-supported STEM disciplines who are pursuing research-based master’s and doctoral degrees at accredited US institutions. The five-year fellowship includes three years of financial support including an annual stipend of $34,000 and a cost of education allowance of $12,000 to the institution.

Awardees

- Natalie Coleman, Engineering - Civil Engineering
- Katherine Daiy, Social Sciences - Biological Anthropology
- Oscar Gonzalez, Chemistry - Inorganic Materials Chemistry
- Sarah Jones, Engineering - Biomedical Engineering
- Quinton Lawton, Geosciences - Physical and Dynamic Meteorology
- Cecillia Moreira, Social Sciences - Economics
- Eliza Price, Engineering - Chemical Engineering
- Amanda Rakoski, Engineering - Biomedical Engineering
- Lois Wampler, Engineering - Mechanical Engineering
- Lorenzo Washington, Life Sciences - Organismal Biology
- Stephanie Wilcox, Engineering - Systems Engineering

TEXAS A&M BECKMAN SCHOLARS

With support from The Beckman Foundation, Texas A&M Beckman Scholars are identified as the top undergraduate students majoring in specific science fields during their freshman year. Once selected, Beckman Scholars receive a generous stipend and begin their research careers with designated Beckman faculty mentors the summer prior to their sophomore year. Beckman Scholars continue their research projects through graduation and also participate in various activities:

- Leadership Development
- Networking opportunities
- Review and publication of scientific research
- Preparation for National Fellowship, graduate, or professional school applications.

Awardees

- Brandon Look Fong
- Ryan Rahman
STUDENT SUCCESS

ENGAGING FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS

14.5% OF STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED URS WERE FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS

14.0% OF STUDENTS ATTENDED THE UGR EXPO WERE FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS

14.3% OF STUDENTS IN UGRA WERE FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS

38.6% OF URS SYMPOSIUM ATTENDEES WERE FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS

14.3% OF STUDENTS IN EXPL VOLUME 12 WERE FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS

65.3% OF STUDENTS ATTENDED THE GSIR WORKSHOP WERE FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS

11.8% OF STUDENTS IN EXPL (AUTHORS/COVER ARTISTS) WERE FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS

19.8% OF STUDENTS ATTENDED THE URS INFORMATIONAL WERE FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS
LAUNCH
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH