

Policy on Faculty Mentors of Undergraduate Research

The Office Undergraduate Research (OUR) supports student involvement research, scholarship, and creative projects with a faculty research mentor. The guidance and support of a content expert (i.e., faculty mentor) is a crucial component of undergraduate students' experiences in research and creative scholarship, in all academic disciplines.

For the purpose of the programs offered through OUR, undergraduate researchers must:

- Conduct their research or creative work under the guidance of a faculty mentor who is employed by UCF or another accredited university. These faculty will be asked to confirm that they have supervised and guided the undergraduate researcher's work when students apply for opportunities through OUR (e.g. funding opportunities, student award programs). See additional information below for who can serve as a faculty mentor.
- Engage in a systematic inquiry to answer an original question (e.g. research question, objective, or artistic statement), using their academic discipline's accepted methods. Examples may include developing scientific experiments, analyzing literature, and creating new models/works of art. This work culminates in knowledge advancement in the respective discipline(s) through dissemination (e.g. publication or a presentation).

Who is eligible to mentor undergraduates in research?

Faculty mentors make a valuable contribution to the training and development of undergraduate researchers. They serve as content reviewers and guide students throughout the research process. For the purpose of programs offered through OUR, the basic criteria for serving as a faculty mentor are:

- Full-time employment as a faculty member at UCF (typically this is within an academic department).
- Post-doctoral associates at UCF.
- Expertise in areas compatible with the intended research project and, usually, a terminal degree (e.g., Ph.D., M.D., MFA).
- Qualified faculty members from outside institutions (e.g., other university, federal research institutes) may serve as faculty mentors for those presenting at the annual Showcase of Undergraduate Research Excellence (SURE), seeking Travel Awards to present at external conferences, or publishing in *The Pegasus Review: UCF Undergraduate Research Journal (URJ)*. Please contact OUR for more details.

While these faculty are typically tenured or tenure-seeking with titles of Assistant, Associate, Professor, or Emeritus status, and Lecturers are also eligible to serve as faculty mentors. Visiting faculty, adjunct faculty and instructors may serve as mentors with the full support of their department chair (OUR will contact department chairs; students do not need to do so).

Graduate students may also play a role in mentoring projects with the consent of their research faculty advisor who meets the above qualifications.

If you are unsure whether a mentor meets these criteria, please contact OUR before applying to any opportunities.