

# Maryland Summer Scholars Program

Maryland Center for Undergraduate Research  
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The logo for the Maryland Center for Undergraduate Research (MCUR) is a vertical rectangle with a red background and white text. The letters 'M', 'C', and 'U' are stacked vertically, with 'R' at the bottom. The 'R' is partially cut off by the bottom edge of the logo.

MCUR

**MARYLAND CENTER FOR UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH**



## Why do undergraduate research?

- Allows you to get a fuller understanding of your major and of how discoveries are made
- Learn new skills, processes, and programs/applications
- Opportunity to develop professional contacts and friendships within your major/career path
- Provides highly relevant, desirable experience for graduate & medical school applications

Maryland Summer Scholars supports UMD undergraduates who want to do mentored research projects during the summer:

- Mentored research = Supervision and guidance by UMD faculty member
- YOU propose a research question or topic in your major field. Can be your own topic or related to faculty mentor research
- Research in any major/discipline taught at UMD, including humanities, STEM, and social sciences
- Funding: \$3,000 stipend for the summer (paid at end of spring semester) plus a possible additional \$1,000 for research-related travel

## Eligibility:

- Have earned 30 or more credits by the end of spring semester
- Have a minimum GPA of 3.4 at the time of application
- Open to freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and to returning seniors who will be enrolled at UMD or studying abroad in the fall
- All nationalities and citizenship statuses are eligible
- Seniors planning to graduate at the end of this spring semester are ineligible to apply

## Maryland Summer Scholars Program Requirements:

- Must complete approx. 300 hours or more of research during 8 to 10 weeks during summer. Can be worked around a part-time summer job
- Must submit a final report or other formal product of your summer research:
  - May be a 8 – 10 page report (double-spaced) submitted by mid-September;OR, by approval, no later than the end of fall semester:
  - A poster/paper/article submitted to a conference or publication
  - A thesis paper or other for-credit extension of your summer research;
  - A multimedia representation of your summer work (DVD, art portfolio, etc.)
- Must present poster during Undergraduate Research Day the following spring (unless graduating in December or studying abroad during spring semester)

## Finding a faculty research mentor:

- Mentors should have full-time teaching or research appointments at UMD; they do not have to be tenure-track; contact MCUR with specific questions
- Project mentors may be full-time researchers based off campus (i.e. NIH, NASA) if a UMD faculty member can serve as a 'sponsoring' mentor on campus
- Most MSS proposals build on an existing relationship with a teacher/mentor; some may be built on a relationship you develop specifically for this purpose
- To identify potential mentors talk to your teachers and undergraduate major directors and advisors; use your major departments website faculty listings to learn about potential mentors

## Components of a Summer Scholars Application:

Deadline:

Tuesday, February 8,  
2017

- A completed online application form
- A student-written summer research proposal
- An unofficial Maryland transcript (and an official transcript from any prior transfer institution)

### Two letters of recommendation:

- One from the proposed mentor, addressing the merit of the proposed summer research and the student's qualification to undertake that project; must include a mentoring plan/timetable
- A second letter of recommendation which may be from a secondary mentor/advisor for the summer research project or a general academic reference addressing the student's academic abilities and potential

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# Putting together a Maryland Summer Scholars proposal

- Look at website, <http://www.ugresearch.umd.edu/current-summer-scholars.html>, especially “Advice for Project Proposal:”  
<http://www.ugresearch.umd.edu/current-mssprojectproposal.html>
- Identify your faculty mentor before the start of winter break; meet with your mentor to help define/refine proposal topic and summer research plan; get feedback from your mentor on your MSS proposal drafts
- Start work on your proposal **EARLY!!!**



# Key Characteristics of MSS Project Proposals

Proposal should be about two pages, single-spaced; use endnotes to cite sources

## 1. Introduction – one or two paragraphs

- Concise statement describing your topic; should address:

*Goals for research accomplish - Impact of your research*

## 2. Context or Background – one paragraph

- Why is this topic significant?
- What work has previously been done?
- Use facts, figures, and statistics and cite sources in endnotes (on separate page)

## Key Characteristics of MSS Project Proposals (cont'd)

### 3. Your Research Questions and Plan – two or three substantial paragraphs

- What are research questions you will pose and try to answer?
- Is off-campus travel necessary for your project?
- What will be your final product?
- Timeline for research

### 4. Your Mentoring Plan – one paragraph

- Name and title of mentor, and mentor's relevant research expertise
- Plan for meeting throughout summer to discuss progress of your project
- If you have a non-UMD mentor, who is your UMD faculty 'sponsor'

## Key Characteristics of MSS Project Proposals (cont'd)

### 5. Your Key Qualifications and Background for this Project – one paragraph

- Describe how your academic preparation (courses taken or study abroad), extracurricular activities, skills (languages, knowledge of software programs, or other abilities) have prepared you to undertake this research

### 6. Your Broader Reasons for Undertaking this Project – one paragraph

- Will the project contribute to your academic and or professional trajectory?
- Will your summer work become part of a larger project (Honors thesis, continuing research, publication, presentation or performance) in the following semester or academic year?

## Some Final Thoughts:

- Deadline: Tuesday, February 8, 2017; online submission form and other materials by email to: [ugresearch@umd.edu](mailto:ugresearch@umd.edu)
- If you want to apply for next summer, start looking for a research mentor now. Plan to meet with them to discuss and fine-tune your proposal
- Feel free to make an appointment to discuss your questions by writing to us at [ugresearch@umd.edu](mailto:ugresearch@umd.edu)