Maryland Summer Scholars Program

Maryland Center for Undergraduate Research
1201 Marie Mount Hall
Email: ugresearch@umd.edu
Website: www.ugresearch.umd.edu
Why do undergraduate research?

- Get hands-on experience in your field
- Understand how discoveries are made
- Learn new skills, procedures, and computer programs
- Develop professional contacts and friendships, useful for later recommendations and networking
- Great experience for graduate school & medical school
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 or equivalent
- YOU propose a research project. Can be your own topic or related to faculty mentor’s research
- Research in any major/discipline 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 12 or more UMD course credits by the date of the application deadline
- Have a cumulative UMD GPA of 3.40 or higher by the date of the application deadline
- Expect to receive your undergraduate degree from UMD no earlier than December 2018
- Undergraduates who are US Citizens, permanent residents, or foreign citizens are all eligible (However, visa status must permit MSS fund payment)
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)
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 department’s website faculty listings to learn about potential mentors.
FINDING A FACULTY RESEARCH MENTOR:

- Use your major departments website faculty listings to learn about potential mentors
COMPONENTS OF A SUMMER SCHOLARS APPLICATION:

- A completed online application form
- A student-written summer research proposal, uploaded as PDF to the online application
- An unofficial Maryland transcript, uploaded as PDF to the online application
- 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 a) from a secondary mentor/advisor for the summer research project or b) a general academic reference addressing the student’s academic abilities and potential

Deadline:
Wednesday February 14, 2018
PUTTING TOGETHER A MARYLAND SUMMER SCHOLARS PROPOSAL


- 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**
   - What is your topic?
   - What do you hope to accomplish/learn through this project?
   - What is the potential impact of your project?

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).
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?
- What is your timeline for getting things done?

4. Your Mentoring Plan – one paragraph

- Who is your mentor?
  - If you have a non-UMD mentor, who is your UMD faculty ‘sponsor’
- What makes this person a qualified and appropriate project mentor?
- How do you plan to discuss the project throughout the summer?
KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF MSS PROJECT PROPOSALS (CONT’D)

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

- How do your prior or current experiences support your ability to carry out your project?
  - **Including**: studies (courses taken, study abroad), research experiences, internships, extracurricular activities, foreign languages, subject-specific knowledge (such as software programs), or other abilities

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?
MSS REVIEW AND SELECTION
CRITERIA:

MSS awards are made competitively, based on an academic review of the project proposal and other required application materials. All aspects of the application are considered carefully.

**Primary criteria for evaluation of proposals are:**

- Academic merit and feasibility of the proposed project
- Academic and other relevant preparation of the student for the proposed project
- Clarity and adequacy of the written research plan
- Degree of student initiative and responsibility for the work proposed
- Suitability of the proposed mentoring plan
- Impact of the proposed project on the applicant's development
MSS SUMMER FUNDING

- MSS must be your only source of research funding
- You may not use both the MSS and another summer research award to support for the same work you are proposing to carry out with MSS support
- If you will be paid hourly wages, or receive a non-MSS stipend or salary for the same work you are proposing to carry out with MSS support, then you are not eligible to receive the award
- Students offered MSS awards are free to decline MSS funding in favor of more advantageous offers
- Please consult with MCUR staff in advance of applying if you have specific questions regarding funding
HHMI UNDERGRADUATE FELLOWSHIP

- Students applying for HHMI summer funding are automatically considered for MSS if they meet MSS eligibility requirements.
- Students who wish to have HHMI research proposals considered for MSS do not need to submit an MSS application.
SOME FINAL THOUGHTS:

- **Deadline:** *Wednesday, February 14, 2018*; online submission form can be accessed from the “Apply Now” link on the website: http://www.ugresearch.umd.edu/current-summerscholars.html

- 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