Office of Undergraduate Research

Strategic Priorities
2015-2020
Experiential learning opportunities provide students increased confidence, awareness of potential career paths and greater understanding of their chosen field. Many University of Tennessee departments already provide opportunities for applied learning through internships, research involvement, and other co-curricular learning experiences. The goal of the Office of Undergraduate Research is to ensure all students are provided the opportunity for academic engagement through research-based experiences.

The benefits of conducting undergraduate research have been widely published in literature and include enhanced critical thinking skills, retention, and degree persistence (Boyer Commission, 1998; Crowe and Brakke, 2008; Hunter et. al, 2007; Lopatto, 2004; Russell et. al, 2007). These benefits coupled with exposure to the art of inquiry, provide adequate evidence as to the need for a structured undergraduate research program.

Marisa Moazen
Director
Strategic Priorities: 2015 - 2020

There are multiple avenues for student engagement in undergraduate research at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

- Participating in a faculty member’s sponsored research program.
- Enrolling in a for-credit course offered within an academic department in which undergraduates work either on an individual or group assigned research project.
- Enrolling in a for-credit independent study course and pursuing a research-focused opportunity mentored by the faculty member.
- Identifying an opportunity for an off-campus research-based internship.

Through the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR), several opportunities exist for students to exhibit the outcomes of their research experiences including the Exhibition of Undergraduate Research and Creative Achievement (EURēCA), SEC Symposium, Tennessee Posters on the Hill, Capitol Posters on the Hill sponsored by the Council on Undergraduate Research, and the Undergraduate Research Student Association Symposium and research journal Pursuit. Travel funds are also available for conference presentations. Several University departments also offer avenues for research dissemination.

Baseline numbers will be collected during the 2014-2015 academic year to inform the three 2020 goals established for the Office of Undergraduate Research:

- Double the number of undergraduate students participating in research.
- Increase faculty participation in undergraduate research.
- Establish the Office of Undergraduate Research as a nationally recognized leader in undergraduate research.

In order to advance the excellence of undergraduate research at the University of Tennessee, OUR has developed the following are strategic priorities for 2015 – 2020.
1. Increase involvement in undergraduate research through expansion of current initiatives

1.1 Expand OUR’s on-campus faculty-mentored undergraduate research programs.

1.2 Expand EURēCA to provide an on-campus forum for demonstration and celebration of students’ achievement in scholarly research, creative works, and artistic performance.
1.3 Provide structured travel grants for research poster presentations at national conferences.

1.4 Restructure Summer Internship Program.

1.5 Support Undergraduate Research Students Association (URSA).

1.6 Create an International Research Opportunities Program (IROP) to support ONSF initiatives.
2. New Initiatives

2.1 Establish a Fall Undergraduate Research Exhibition to highlight students returning from spring and/or summer experiential learning activities.

2.2 Provide workshops on key undergraduate research topics such as responsible conduct of research, when do you need IRB, statistical computing packages, oral and poster presentations, and discipline specific research methods.

2.3 Create an ‘R’ designation for academic courses that include significant original research.

2.4 Offer a 0-3 hour credit course for students who conduct non-course based research. (Possibly through FYS)
2.5
Offer a 1-hour seminar course on research methodology offering a cross-discipline look at research and the steps in the research process, geared towards freshman and sophomores. (Possibly through FYS)

2.6
Create a student research incubator fund providing funds to competitively selected undergraduates to pursue their own research ideas.

2.7
Develop a graduation recognition mechanism for students who participate in a minimum number of research activities.

2.8
Partner with the Humanities Center to create an annual undergraduate research conference in the Humanities to be held annually at UT.

2.9
Develop an Outstanding Undergraduate Researcher of the Year award.

2.10
Offer regional tours for undergraduates of research-related companies.

2.11
Provide funding for year-round on-campus research internship opportunities.
3. Increase faculty engagement

3.1 Develop recognition and awards for faculty champions of undergraduate research.

3.2 Increase the number of faculty proposals to external funding sources that include funding support for undergraduate research.
3.3 Provide seminars on topics such as IRB for undergraduates both in and outside of courses, how to integrate undergraduates into your research, how to integrate research into your undergraduate course.

3.4 Integrate undergraduate research into faculty workload and tenure and promotion guidelines.
4.1 Develop campus-wide community partnerships to advance undergraduate research.

4.2 Create video vignettes and written student profiles to highlight undergraduates conducting research.

4.3 Redesign and update the undergraduate research website to include information about opportunities, workshop content, videos, and student profiles.
4.4
Create year-round opportunities for undergraduate research exhibition across campus.

4.5
Maximize collaboration opportunities with Oak Ridge National Laboratory and Cherokee Farms.

4.6
Develop funding streams to assist with costs associated with research, presentation, and publication of student work.

4.7
Develop an undergraduate research annual report for UT Knoxville.
Performance Indicators

### Office of Undergraduate Research Summer Research Internship Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Apps/Awards</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Awards</th>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>97/30</td>
<td>2010</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2009</td>
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### Undergraduate EURêCA Participants

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<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
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Potential Future Performance Indicators

- Participation in Research Opportunities: Research Course Enrollment, On-Campus Research, Off-Campus Research
- Number of Students Served by the Office of Undergraduate Research
- Investments in Undergraduate Research
- Website Statistics: Unique Visitors/Page Views
- Number of Undergraduate Publications and Conference Presentations
- Number of Undergraduate Exhibitions/Performances
- Percentage of Faculty Participating in Undergraduate Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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