Summer Opportunities Workshop

Co-hosted by:
Texas Institute for Discovery Education in Science (TIDES)
Science Undergraduate Research Group (SURGe)

Presenters:
Lynda Gonzales, Director for Student Programs (TIDES)
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Today’s agenda

• Finding an opportunity that’s right for you
• Crafting the components of an application
• Q&A

**We will send you all the materials and notes from today after the event.**
Activity: 5 minutes / Groups of 3

Sort the slips into 3 categories
Rank them from most important to least important

1 - Strategies for Finding a Summer Experience
   On Campus

2 - Strategies for Finding a Summer Experience
   Beyond Campus

3 – These are really terrible tips!
Finding an opportunity that’s right for you

- On campus
- Beyond campus/away from UT Austin/abroad
On Campus

- Assist on a faculty member’s project; work in a lab
- More independence as you advance
- Summer only or can be continuation of academic year position
- Volunteer (early) or funded (more advanced)
- Goals:
  - Make contacts
  - Get experience
  - Fine-tune your research interests
  - Devote time to exploring a research topic
Resources for getting involved

- CNS undergraduate research listserve
- **EUREKA!** search tool – new and improved
- Your network - faculty members/instructors, TA’s, your peers, courses, advisors
- **CNS departmental** faculty profiles and lab pages
- TIDES **weekly walk-in advising**
  - Tuesdays 1-3pm
  - Thursdays 10am-12noon

and....
Research Launch

The Research Launch Workshop will help CNS students find research opportunities in faculty labs on the UT campus.

During the workshop, students will be guided in:
- Finding labs that are of interest,
- Approaching a faculty mentor,
- Exploring possible course credit options, and
- Planning for faculty expectations.

Find Research Opportunities!

Snacks will be provided!

Friday, Nov 17th
3–5pm
WEL 2.110
Summer programs – beyond UT Austin

• Research or research internship programs with formal application process and firm deadlines
• Competitive
• Hosted at universities, institutes, agencies across the country
• Significant time commitment – full time for 8-10 weeks
• Benefits:
  – Intensive summer experience without distractions
  – Make contacts
  – Explore career paths or grad school possibilities
  – Travel!
• Usually offer a generous stipend, often with support for travel/room and board
• Application season November – February (right now!)
Finding a program

- NSF Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) – database can be searched by area of interest or location (600+ programs)
- Science.gov – database of federal fellowships/internships in STEM
- Pathways to Science – database of summer research and internships
- Professional societies (ex: American Chemical Society, American Mathematical Society, etc) Find a more complete list with links on CNS Summer Research page.
- CNS Health Professions Office list of summer programs
- Texas Institute for Discovery Education in Science (TIDES): Summer Research webpage
Research abroad

• Combine your passion for science with exploration of a new culture!
• Travel and live abroad
• Funded or volunteer/on your own
• Second language not required

- Pasteur Foundation Summer Internship Program - in Paris
  - For summer after your junior year (completed three yrs of undergrad degree)
  - Placements at Institut Pasteur - dedicated to the study of biology, microorganisms, diseases, and vaccines

- DAAD RISE – various locations in Germany
  - biology, chemistry, physics, earth sciences and engineering
  - Students must have completed 2 years of undergrad degree

- LSAMP Summer Research Academy Abroad – UT System Schools
  - 8 fellowships per year from System schools
  - $8,000 for 8-10 weeks in summer

Find more programs here: CNS Research and Internships Abroad
Activity: 5 minutes / Groups of 3

Scavenger Hunt
Find the items on your list!

Ideas…

NSF REU
UT’s EUREKA! site
Pathways to Science
Take away...
There are so many opportunities!

Narrow your options by...
Topic
Eligibility
Location
Dates
Benefits
Structured vs. on your own?
Application requirements
What were the application requirements for your opportunity?

– Personal statement
– Letter of recommendation
– Research description (if applicable; crafted with guidance from research supervisor)
– Resume/CV
– Transcript
What’s your experience?

1. Think of two experiences you have had that influenced your interest in research or helped you develop a skill or strength. Note: this could be a challenge you overcame.
2. Write these down.
3. Take turns sharing with a neighbor, discuss your experiences for 2 min.
4. Choose one experience and list the skills you developed, techniques you learned, and ways that you demonstrated your strengths through that position.
What’s your plan?

1. What is a longer-term goal you would like to achieve that research could help with?
2. Write it down.
3. Take 2 min. to share with a neighbor: how will a research experience help you achieve that goal?
How to craft a Personal Statement

Hint: You just started!

1. Tell a story! Paint a mental picture of who you are.
2. Use specific anecdotes and examples of your experience to show how you are a good fit for the opportunity.
3. Make it clear that you understand the opportunity by referring to the program description or specific faculty who are involved.
4. Explain how this opportunity will help you achieve your goals and future plans.
5. Write clearly. Ask several people to proof-read your work.
When you think about approaching faculty for recommendation letters, what do you think is important to remember?

- Select someone you think will be supportive
- Remind them of your relationship (you like their course. . .)
- Ask *before* you list them as a reference
- Ask for if they can write a supportive letter
- Waive your right to read the letter
- Provide necessary materials including more info about you
- Allow enough time (at least two weeks, a month is better)
- Send a thank you note
Using the criteria we listed, what do you think of this message?

Hey Dr.----:

My name is -----. I was in your CH 301 class 2 years ago. You might remember me. I would like to ask for a recommendation letter for my application to a summer research position.

Thank you
Student A
Dear Dr.-----

I hope this email finds you well. My name is ---. I was in your CH 301 class two years ago. I enjoyed that class very much, and I am writing to ask if you would write a letter of recommendation on my behalf. I am applying for.....

During the past couple of years, I have been....

For your convenience and more information, I have attached my resume. I will be glad to meet with you in person to discuss the letter and the opportunities I am considering.

Sincerely,
Student B
Resume Resources - CNS Career Services
PAI 5.03

- On-line templates and examples
- Step-by-step instruction
- Events:
  - Resume Basics Presentation: learn how to create a resume
  - Resumania: quick, 15-minute resume reviews
Recap

• Materials will be emailed to you and posted on CNS Summer Research page
• TIDES walk-in advising every Tuesday (1-3pm) and Thursday (10am-12noon) in PAI 3.04
• Research Launch event next Friday
• Q&A

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