Texas Excellence in Jobs and Service (TEJAS):
Finding a Research Placement

DR. BRANDON CAMPITELLI, PROGRAM COORDINATOR
Who am I?

Brandon Campitelli, PhD
TEJAS Program Coordinator
Instructional designer & consultant
Experiential learning coordinator
Assistant professor of instruction
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All of this information is available online!

https://cns.utexas.edu/tides/undergraduate/funding-opportunities

https://cns.utexas.edu/tides/undergraduate/undergraduate-research/getting-started

◦ (we will review these now in this workshop)
Today’s agenda

What is TEJAS?
Why do research at all?
6-steps to securing a research placement
Questions
What is TEJAS?

Texas Excellence in Jobs And Services
Award details

~30 awards available

Needs-based

Typical award is $1500 - $2000 per semester
- Determined by financial aid, and is individual specific
- Starting salary is currently $11 per hour
- This amounts to ~10 hours per week for 14 weeks

Your wage comes from two sources
- 70% is paid by TEJAS through your financial aid package
- 30% is paid by your employer (e.g., your research supervisor’s grant)

Runs for two semesters (fall and spring)
- Must be approved again after fall semester
Eligibility

Submitted a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
  ◦ https://admissions.utexas.edu/afford/undergrad-aid

Needs-based award
  ◦ You must be eligible for financial aid

Qualify for work-study
  ◦ Indicate in your financial aid profile that you would like some of your package to be made available through work-study (WS)

Sophomore up to a senior

Have secured a research placement
Why should I try research?

- Learn by experience
- Skill building
- Build your network
- Knowledge creation
- Determine if research is for you
- Learn more about graduate school
Finding a research placement: **Step 1**

What do you think you are interested in?
What drew you to science in the first place?
Are there courses or topics you want to know more about?

Explore your interests
Finding a research placement: **Step 2**

**Come up with 3-5 professors you want to contact.**

- Your network – professors/instructors, TA’s, your peers, courses, advisors
- Try the [EUREKA!](#) search tool
What is Eureka?

Eureka is a searchable database supporting undergraduate participation in research and creative activity across The University of Texas at Austin.
Affiliated Departments
- Cockrell School of Engineering (343)
- College of Natural Sciences (672)
- College of Pharmacy (91)
- College of Fine Arts (176)
- College of Education (167)

Faculty Search Results
UT faculty displayed in alphabetical order
Displaying 1 - 10 of 3033

Search:
genetics

Scott Aaronson
Research Interests: Scott Aaronson Dr. Aaronson’s research interests center around the capabilities and limits of quantum computers, and computational complexity theory more generally. aaronson@cs.utexas.edu
Departments: Computer Science

Chris Abboyd
This is me! When I clicked in, I noticed it wasn’t terribly accurate, but a good starting point.
Finding a research placement: **Step 2**

Come up with 3-5 professors you want to contact.

- Your network – professors/instructors, TA’s, your peers, courses, advisors
- Try the [EUREKA!](#) search tool
- Browse [CNS departmental](#) professor profiles
Finding a research placement: **Step 2**

Come up with 3-5 professors you want to contact.

- Your network – professors/instructors, TA’s, your peers, courses, advisors
- Try the EUREKA! search tool
- Browse CNS departmental professor profiles
- Join the CNS experiential learning listserve

I have a list of professors for you!
Finding a research placement: **Step 3**

Do some preliminary research on the list of professors you made

- Visit their home webpage and scan their current research projects
- Find a recent publication of theirs, and scan the article (these are often on their lab webpage, or can be found using tools such as [Google Scholar](https://scholar.google.com))
The Juenger Laboratory - CNS Sites - The University of Texas at Austin
https://sites.cns.utexas.edu/juenger_lab/home

Tom Juenger is an Associate Professor in the Section of Integrative Biology at the University of Texas at Austin.
You've visited this page 5 times. Last visit: 3/17/19
04.05.2019
Graduate student Albina led manuscript on the genetic architecture of shoot and root divergence in *P. hallii* is online.

03.24.2019
Check out our recent Plant, Cell & Env paper on gene expression variations in *P. hallii* caused by day length and diurnal patterns.

12.19.2018
*Panicum hallii* genome paper published in *Nature Communications*.

01.18.15
Podcast on Arabidopsis research in the Juenger lab released.

01.01.15
Transgenerational effects of inter-ploidy cross direction on reproduction and F2 seed development of Arabidopsis thaliana F1 hybrid triploids

Key message

Reproduction in triploid plants is important for understanding polyploid population dynamics. We show that genetically identical reciprocal F1 hybrid triploids can display transgenerational epigenetic effects on viable F2 seed development.
Finding a research placement: **Step 3**

Do some preliminary research on the list of professors you made

- Visit their home webpage and scan their current research projects
- Find a recent publication of theirs, and scan the article (these are often on their lab webpage, or can be found using tools such as Google Scholar)

Find their research website or use Google scholar to find a recent publication now!
Finding a research placement: **Step 3**

Do some preliminary research on the list of professors you made

- Visit their home webpage and scan their current research projects
- Find a recent publication of theirs, and scan the article (these are often on their lab webpage, or can be found using tools such as [Google Scholar](https://scholar.google.com))

Prepare for contact

- Plan to contact each of them separately
To: i.b.scientist@utexas.edu; betty.biologist@utexas.edu; dean@cns.utexas.edu

Subject: wanna do research with you

hey professor,

i am looking to do research to help with my med school applications next year.
can i work in your lab?

i can work mondays from 3:15-4:00 and thursdays 6-7 starting next week.

thanks,

joe
Dear Dr. Campitelli,

   Hello, my name is Student and I am a sophomore at UT. My major is currently undeclared, but I want to apply to become a Human Biology major in the College of Natural Sciences.

   During the Fall 2016 semester, I took Dr. Biology's genetics class and it turned out to easily become my favorite class that I have taken at UT. I think I enjoyed it so much because learning about inheritance and how we acquire our traits is just interesting to me, as someone who loves reproductive science, the sexiest science of them all. Also, Dr. Biology just has a reputation for being a super friendly, cute guy. Because of this class, I would like to increase my knowledge of genetics by doing research in it.

   According to Eureka, you are researching: "Genotyping, Selection, Genetics, Phenotyping, Quantitative Genetics, PCR, DNA, DNA Sequencing, Population Genetics, Genomics, Molecular Markers, Genetic Diversity, Genetic Analysis, Molecular Population Genetics, Quantitative Trait Loci Mapping, Genotype x Environment Interaction, Plant Genetics”

   All of these topics greatly appeal to me, and I would love to become involved if possible. I can send a resume and meet you in person first as well, so you can see if I am suited for your type of research.

Sincerely,

Student
Finding a research placement: **Step 4**

**Compose an email**
- Use professional, formal language
- Introduce yourself
- Provide background & qualifications
- Show interest in their research, not just personal gains
- Express desire to get involved
- Include formal signature with contact information
To: betty.biologist@utexas.edu  
Subject: Interest in your antibiotics research

Dear Professor Biologist,

I am a sophomore molecular biology major here at UT Austin. Last semester my BIO 327Q instructor, Prof. Professorson, had us read your 2016 antibiotics microbial synthesis paper and I was really interested in your field of research.

I am interested in participating in research work while here at UT and was hoping you might be willing to meet with me to discuss possible opportunities in your laboratory.

I have not yet done formal research work. However, in my laboratory classes, I have been very successful in bench work and my BIO 233M instructor said I follow protocols well. I have a 3.8 GPA and all A’s in my microbiology courses. Attached is my resume with more details on my background. I am a hard worker and would be happy to make a multi-year commitment to work in your group, should you find I am perform to your standards.

Thank you for your consideration of this meeting request. I look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

Joseph B. Researcher | Molecular Biology Major
University of Texas at Austin
Subject line: Seeking Undergraduate Research Opportunity

Dear Dr. ______,

My name is ________, and I am a ________ year ________ major interested in conducting research related to ______________. I have taken __________ and __________.

I have read your recently published articles on ______________ and find them very interesting. I’m especially intrigued by ______________.

Would it be possible to meet with you to further discuss your research and my possible involvement on the project? I am generally free _________ and _________ afternoons during the week.

Sincerely,
____________
You should mention that you are applying for a TEJAS award. But you will also want to be transparent about what TEJAS is.

“I am currently inquiring about my eligibility—and intend to apply—for a research-based work-study award called TEJAS (https://cns.utexas.edu/tides/undergraduate/funding-opportunities) to support my time doing research. I would be happy to discuss this with you.”
Finding a research placement: **Step 4**

**Compose an email**
- Use professional, formal language
- Introduce yourself
- Provide background & qualifications
- Show interest in their research, not just personal gains
- Express desire to get involved
- Include formal signature with contact information

**Or visit office hours if at all possible**
- Find office hours, or suggest it in your email
Finding a research placement: **Step 5**

**Prepare for an interview:**
- Why do you want to get involved in research?
- What is it that made you reach out to our research group?
- Do you have prior research?
- What would you like to do after graduation?
- How much time can you commit to research? (hrs/wk, number of semesters)
- Do you have any questions for me?
Finding a research placement: **Step 6**

**Fill out Research Supervisor-Student Agreement Form:**
- On the back TEJAS – Info & Research Supervisor-Student Agreement Form, you will find a fillable area
- Have your newly found research supervisor fill this out
- You will need to include this in your application form for TEJAS
Recap

1. Explore your interests
2. Come up with 3-5 professors/labs
3. Do some preliminary research & plan for contact
4. Compose an email
5. Prepare for an interview
6. Fill out Research Supervisor-Student Agreement Form
Other questions?

Drop-ins
- Friday Feb 28th 9-11am in PAI 1.32
- Friday Mar 6th 9-11am in PAI 1.32
- Friday Mar 13th 9-11am in PAI 1.32

Please also feel free to contact Brandon Campitelli at any time if you have additional questions regarding TEJAS.

brandon.campitelli@utexas.edu
Texas Institute for Discovery Education in Science
College of Natural Sciences
The University of Texas at Austin
PAI 3.04
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 a year 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 year, I have been....

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

Sincerely,
Student B