

## **Undergraduate Research Mini-Grant Request for Proposals (RFP)**

### **University of Louisiana at Lafayette**

#### **For 2019 Calendar Year Awards**

#### **Goal**

The goal of the UL Undergraduate Research Mini-Grant program is two-fold: to insure that the undergraduate students at the university benefit from the university's growing R&D program, and to improve student outcomes by facilitating undergraduate research. It is believed that students who participate in directed undergraduate research will perform well in their majors and be more prepared for their future careers. Accordingly, the University has set aside \$40K to be awarded as 20 undergraduate research mini-grants of \$2000 each. The University's undergraduate research council, the Louisiana Council for Excellence in Undergraduate Research (LaCOUER), with representatives from each college, administers this mini-grant program.

#### **Scope of Grant**

Undergraduate research can be very broad, encompassing original creative and scholarly activities in every discipline. The mini-grant program requires that a qualified faculty or staff member be directly engaged in mentoring one or more undergraduate students. Mentoring allows students to explore their interests and to challenge themselves beyond the classroom environment. There are many opportunities for mentored research, from creative performance projects to innovative lab research on biomedical engineering. The Undergraduate Research Council encourages grant projects in all disciplines supported by the university. Interdisciplinary projects are allowed and encouraged.

#### **Eligibility**

All UL Lafayette faculty members (including instructors) and research active staff (such as Research Scientists and Library staff) are eligible to apply and serve as the Principle Investigator (PI) for an Undergraduate Research Mini-Grant project. Only one application per PI is permitted.

#### **Application Process**

Proposals will be submitted using the simple online submission form on the website shown below.

<https://honors.louisiana.edu/undergraduate-research/undergraduate-research-mini-grant-program>

All proposals must be submitted online by 30 Nov 2018. Once the online form is submitted, the PI will receive an email containing a copy of the full proposal. A copy will also be sent to the PI's Dean and Department Head, with a request that they Reply to either approve or disapprove. All proposals will be reviewed, but awards will not be made without administrative approval.

## **Selection Process**

The applications will be reviewed and awarded by LaCOUER. The rubric shown in Appendix A below will be used for scoring the proposals based on merit. In making the final awards, the first priority in the review process will be given to the merit score from the rubric. A secondary priority will be to insure that each college that has applied has at least one funded project. Reviews will be completed and PI's notified of acceptance by 15 December 2018.

## **Duration**

The mini-grant period of performance will be from 1 Jan 2019 until Dec 31, 2019.

## **Accounting**

All PI's will be assigned a Banner account number to use for the project, and the accounts will be managed by SPFAC, just like an external grant. Project funds may be used for any reasonable and ordinary project-related expenses, including equipment, supplies, travel, registration, student stipends, and so on. The only restrictions are that project funds may *not* be used for faculty compensation, and all standard university travel, purchasing, and approval processes policies apply. LaCOUER is not involved in the approval process for expenditures. The Department Head, in consultation with the PI, may approve minor re-budgeting within the original scope, budget, and intent of the project. PI's are encouraged to keep a close eye on their expenditures. Overspending of the account will render the PI ineligible for future RFP's, and the PI's department may be required to reimburse the university for the overage. A final report that details project expenditures is required, as described below.

## **Deliverables**

At the end of the project period, all PI's who are awarded an Undergraduate Research Mini-Grant are required to submit a brief report describing the results of the project, as shown in Appendix B below. PI's will also be responsible for requiring their students to create a PowerPoint presentation describing the project, which must also be submitted at the end of the project period. In addition, they are highly encouraged to facilitate an actual student presentation, demonstration, performance, or show of the scholarly work at some appropriate venue, such as the Undergraduate Research Conference hosted each year by the Honors Program (<https://honors.louisiana.edu/undergraduate-research/undergraduate-research-conference>). PI's who do not submit the required final report and PowerPoint presentation within 30 days of the end of the project will not be eligible for consideration in future RFP's.

**Appendix A**  
**Undergraduate Research Mini-Grant Evaluation Rubric**  
**University of Louisiana at Lafayette**

<b>Scholarly Merit of Project</b>	<b>0=Poor or Absent</b>	<b>1=Fair</b>	<b>2 = Good</b>	<b>3 = Exceptional</b>
<p>1. Background. Synthesizes other work in the field and characterizes current trends in the research.</p>	<p>Vague discussion of field suggests lack of understanding or effort. No attempts at insights or analysis.</p>	<p>Vague discussion of cited works. Some conventional or underdeveloped insight or analysis is provided about individual work, but no connections are made.</p>	<p>Good discussion of cited works. Adequate depth of insight/analysis. Is able to describe research trends and connections that are clearly related to the proposed work.</p>	<p>Excellent discussion of cited works. Impressive depth of insight/analysis. Makes meaningful connections among cited works and communicates research trends that are clearly related to proposed work. PI has a firm grasp on relevant concepts.</p>
<p>2. Disciplinary Context. Explains how the proposed project fits into the disciplinary context. Also impact of project to discipline.</p>	<p>No logical relationship exists between the topic and existing information in related areas of knowledge. Disciplinary foundations are not evident or are misused.</p>	<p>A weak relationship exists between the topic and existing information in related areas of knowledge. Proposal drifts from its disciplinary foundations.</p>	<p>A relationship exists between the topic and existing information in related areas of knowledge. Proposal is rooted in disciplinary foundations.</p>	<p>A clear relationship exists between the topic and existing information in related areas of knowledge. Clearly describes how the project will advance the field. Proposal is firmly rooted in disciplinary foundations.</p>

<b>Project Design</b>				
3. Method. Describes appropriate methods or techniques for the project, with explanation of choices.	Methods or approach is not described.	Inadequately explained or inadequate approach. There is no relationship between what the student proposes to do and why.	PI explains the approach and why the methods are good for the topic of study.	Shows evidence of exceptional insight and understanding of methodological issues in the discipline; methods are appropriate for topic and discipline.
4. Timeline. Proposal outlines an achievable project with a realistic timeline for a semester-long project (can end as late as July 31, 2016).	The scope of the proposal is unreasonable in terms of time and resources available. PI has not considered and made plans for key steps of the project.	The scope of the proposal is of some concern in terms of time and resources available. The PI has considered and made plans for some key steps of the project.	The scope of the proposal is moderately reasonable in terms of time and resources available. The PI has considered and made plans for most steps of the project.	The extent of the proposed study is reasonable in terms of time and resources available. The PI has considered and made plans for all steps of the project.
<b>Research Writing Skills</b>				
5. Writing. Proposal is clearly written for a non-expert audience and follows conventions for academic writing.	Proposal includes an unacceptable number of grammatical errors. Proposal fails to properly cite sources. Description does not provide a general picture of the proposed activities or uses too much jargon.	The proposal includes some grammatical errors. Writing style is sometimes difficult to read. Description is hard to understand, verbose, or uses too much jargon.	The proposal includes occasional grammatical errors. Writing style is easy to follow. Description depicts the project well, but uses some jargon or is otherwise hard to understand.	The proposal is free from grammatical errors. Description is clear, concise, and uses appropriate non-technical descriptions and terms.

<b>Funding of Research</b>				
6. Budget. The proposal must provide a brief explanation of how the funds will be used for the project.	PI has no explanation/documentation of how the funds will be used for grant project.	PI has some documentation of how the grant funds will be utilized for the project.	NA	PI provided a brief explanation of how the grant funds will be used for project implementation. (Does not need a formal budget)
<b>Impact on Students</b>				
7. Impact. The proposal should make a significant impact on the students involved.	There is little or no evidence of significant student learning. For example, the grant may simply propose to purchase equipment.	Student learning is likely to be limited to rudimentary cognitive tasks, such as remembering or understanding existing knowledge.	Student learning will include medium-level cognitive tasks such as applying and/or analyzing.	Student learning will include high-level cognitive tasks such as evaluating and/or creating.
8. Number of students involved.	No identification of any specific students being directly involved. If students are mentioned, no plan is presented to recruit the students.	One or two specific students will be involved. If specific students are not already identified, a reasonable plan for getting students is identified.	Three or four specific students will be involved. If specific students are not already identified, a reasonable plan for getting students is identified.	Five or more specific students will be involved. If specific students are not already identified, a reasonable plan for getting students is identified.

**Review Comments**

Strengths of the Proposal:

Areas for Improvement:

Score \_\_\_/24

**Appendix B**  
**UG Research Grant Mini-Grant Final Report**

**Name of Recipient:**

**Title of Research Grant:**

**Department:**

- 1. Abstract of Project (500 words or less), including the significance of findings or work accomplished.**
  - a. Impact on students**
  - b. Total number of students involved.**
- 2. List any publications, presentations, performances, or joint inter-professional work that have or may result from this project.**
- 3. Provide a detailed budget describing how the grant monies were spent.**
- 4. List any plans for future sustainability and funding.**