

THE UNC-CH RESEARCH EDUCATION SUPPORT PROGRAM: Pre-Ph.D. Undergraduate Research Component

Attention! Did you know that African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Native Americans make up more than 26% of the U.S. population but make up only 3% of those who received Ph.D. degrees in the sciences in 2003? Nor is the situation in the social and behavioral sciences good! Please read the section below about the RES Program if you wish to expand your professional career options and opportunities.

Purpose and Goal

It is likely that many undergraduates do not consider research and academic careers because they are rarely encouraged to do so and do not have meaningful experiences that would stimulate them to explore those career options. This situation seems particularly true for minority students. The Research Education Support (RES) Program, via the National Science Foundation, seeks to play a role in encouraging more minority students at UNC-CH to consider advanced graduate degrees and research careers by providing them with support to engage in science as well as social and behavioral science research under the direction of UNC-CH faculty members.

A number of UNC-CH minority students have considerable potential as successful graduate students and subsequently well prepared researchers. Simultaneously, UNC-CH has many faculty members who are conducting high quality, cutting-edge research. As a consequence of those two conditions, a purpose of the Pre-PhD component of the RES Program is to provide more undergraduate minority students with experiences in and exposure to high quality life, physical, and computational science as well as social and behavioral science research under the direction of faculty research preceptors. One goal is that the students' participation in the program will stimulate their desire to pursue graduate studies and research careers. Another goal is that the students' participation in RES will make them quite competitive and attractive to high quality PhD programs.

Program Overview

Selected students--with records that indicate their competitiveness for graduate programs and the persistent nature that will make them good prospects for graduate studies--will be involved in research under the direction of UNC-CH faculty members. The intent is for Pre-PhD students to have meaningful experiences that prepare them for the critical research aspects of graduate school and subsequent research careers.

Each student will be accountable to his or her faculty research preceptor and is expected to spend at least 12 hours per week involved in research. Examples of this involvement include: Working directly with faculty, postdoctoral fellows, and graduate students as part of a research team; working directly with a faculty member on a research project; or working on a selected individual research project under the supervision and direction of a faculty member.

At the end of each academic year, Pre-PhD students should have evidence of their research or their contribution to the research project. Evidence should be in the form of a poster or material for an oral presentation that students will present at meetings and conferences. The expectation is that participants will present their research. Participants will receive at least \$2,000 per semester and a travel allowance to attend conferences. Additionally, up to \$125 per month for expendable supplies will be available for each student.

Finally, in addition to the academic year, Pre-PhD students will have opportunities to continue their research experiences during the summer. They will have the option to spend one summer at UNC-CH doing research. As a way of building a strong curriculum vita (resumé), we particularly urge off-campus summer research at sites such as other research universities/institutes or national research laboratories.

For applications and additional information, visit our web site at www.uncres.org or contact Kathy Wood at 962-2509 /kathy_wood@unc.edu or Irene Baskerville at imbasker@med.unc.edu