



QEP Request for Proposals for Undergraduate Research Consultant Team (URCT) Program



Introduction: The University's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) seeks to improve awareness of what it means to be a research university, align the missions of producing world class research and providing a world class undergraduate education, and promote opportunities for students to engage in research and scholarship. One such opportunity supported by the QEP is the Undergraduate Research Consultant Team (URCT) Program. URCT's are small interdisciplinary "strike teams" of students prepared to complete one-semester projects guided by a graduate research assistant and/or a faculty advisor. The goals of the URCT program are to: (1) provide students with the opportunity for inquiry and discovery in the context of cutting-edge research and (2) foster **interdisciplinary collaboration**. URCT projects also represent opportunities for seed funding to generate pilot data for faculty.

Call for proposals: We are seeking proposals from **interdisciplinary teams** of 3-5 students, led by a faculty advisor, who have a well-defined research question, outreach need, or design challenge that could be completed in a relatively short time period. ***Teams may choose to address any research topic.*** For example, a faculty member in Exercise & Sport Science interested in genetic factors predisposing individuals to knee osteoarthritis risk could develop a URCT composed of students with expertise in biomechanics, biology, and genetics. Or, students in Women & Gender Studies might investigate gender-specific economic disparities with a team composed of students in Women & Gender Studies, Economics, and Public Policy. Some projects may require more than a single semester to complete. In these instances, clearly defined objectives for the semester during which funding is provided should be outlined in the application, as well as a plan for continuing the project beyond the funding period.

Eligibility: Proposals will be accepted from faculty from any department in the College of Arts & Sciences or the Professional Schools. The members of the URCT should represent at least 2 disciplines within the University.

Award Information: Awards of up to \$10,000 per team will be provided to cover the costs of conducting the project (e.g. supplies, travel, etc.) and graduate research assistant support. Students will register for a 1-credit course (IDST 195) under the supervision of the faculty advisor as part of the award. URCTs will be required to present their findings at the Annual Celebration of Undergraduate Research.

Guidelines for Proposal Submission: Proposals may be submitted by either the faculty advisor or by a student leader and will be reviewed by a committee of faculty and staff, and should include the following:

1. Title
2. A brief narrative (1,500 words max) that includes:
 - a. A description of the project including specific objectives and anticipated outcomes (e.g. research report, design, model, or outreach material, etc.)
 - b. A list of specific skills required by student members of the URCT
 - c. Anticipated benefits to society and members of the URCT
3. Statement of feasibility
 - a. Relevant experience mentoring undergraduate researchers
 - b. Relevant skills and experience of each team member
 - c. Existing lab/department infrastructure or organization to support the project
4. Timeline of activities
5. Proposed budget for the project
 - a. A budget justification should also be included that outlines the need for each item for which funding is requested along with the associated amount of funding. **Table format is preferred.**

Proposals for Fall should be submitted by **5pm November 1st** and for Spring by **5pm May 1** as a single pdf file via email to Boots Quimby, PhD, Associate Director of the Office for Undergraduate Research (bquimby@email.unc.edu).