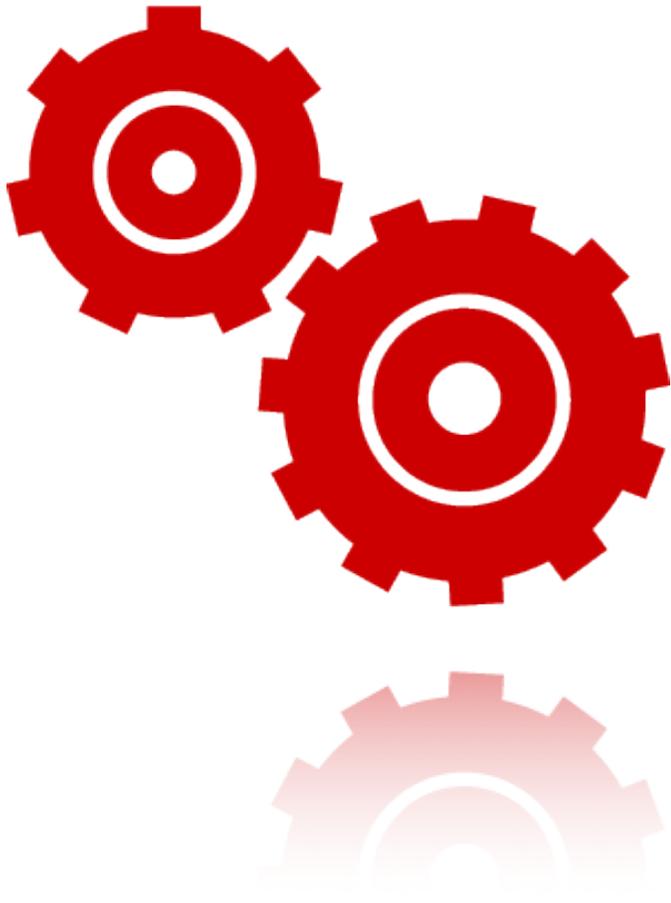


NC STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR)



Federal Work Study Research Assistant Program Handbook

How the OUR Helps
Students Earn Wages
While They Participate in
Undergraduate Research
and Creative Projects

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Welcome Letter

Congratulations on being involved with the Federal Work-Study Research Assistants Program! Whether you are new to the world of undergraduate research or have completed research in the past, we are excited to have you.

The academic year 2020-2021 is the fourth year for this initiative. It is our hope you will benefit from this experience and it will meet both yours and our expectations. Work-study is a valuable experience that can allow a student to earn a wage while also enhancing their academic career.

Students, we are excited you are engaging in the research and hope you gain all of the advantages a research experience offers students. Take this time to test drive a career, find out what it would be like to attend graduate school, learn more about what you are passionate about, and build a connection to a faculty mentor. Immerse yourself into your and/or your mentor's department's activities, ask questions and try new things.

Faculty, we also want you to have a valuable experience mentoring your undergraduate student research assistant. Help us introduce students to research in your discipline, challenge them by assigning meaningful projects, and engage them in opportunities to present what they have found at discipline conferences as well as to their peers at the annual spring or summer undergraduate research symposium sponsored by the Office of Undergraduate Research.

The Office of Undergraduate Research is here to support you on your journey. Please contact our office if you have any questions.

Best Regards,

Heather King
Program Coordinator
hking@ncsu.edu

General Information

What is the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR)?

The Office of Undergraduate Research coordinates and promotes the undergraduate research and creative activities that exist across the NC State University. Undergraduate research and creative activities can be pursued in a variety of ways, which include assisting a faculty member on his or her project, managing your own research project under the mentorship of a faculty member, conducting research as part of a listed course and conducting research as part of an independent study. Our office is here to support these activities in all manners and across all disciplines.

Where is the Office of Undergraduate Research?

The Office of Undergraduate Research is currently located in Broughton Hall Room 2229. The office will be moving to the second floor of DH Hill Library some time in the late summer or early fall of 2020.

What programs does the Office of Undergraduate Research?

NC State University has a strong commitment to undergraduate research. The Office of Undergraduate Research is funded by the State of North Carolina, the Division of Academic and Students Affairs, and the Office of Research and Innovation to coordinate and support undergraduate research activities across the campus. Some of these activities include the spring and summer campus-wide undergraduate poster and creative works symposium and the Undergraduate Research Speed Networking event.

Individual research opportunities include this Federal Work-Study Research Assistant program, the research award program in fall, spring, or summer which provides financial support for materials and supplies for students to conduct research on-campus with a faculty member, and one-on-one office hours. We also support students traveling to professional conferences to present the outcomes of their research efforts. Additional travel support for students to attend the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR), ACC Meeting of the Minds and other OURIC promoted conferences. Students may also submit their work for publication in *Explorations: The Undergraduate Research Journal* of the the State of North Carolina higher education system.

For more information on our programs visit <https://undergradresearch.dasa.ncsu.edu/>.

What is a Work-Study Research Assistant (RA)?

The Office of Undergraduate Research collaborates with the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships to allow students to use federal work-study funds to support undergraduate research assistants for NC State University faculty. Work-Study RAs are assigned to a specific faculty member to help work on a research project. While much of the work may be basic (entering and coding data, collecting specimens, conducting literature searches, communicating with participants), the goal is for the student to make a meaningful contribution to the project while learning about the process of research or scholarship in the field. We expect for RAs to be fully integrated in research teams or discussions. RAs can also take on additional responsibility for projects as they gain experience. At the conclusion of the academic year, it is the expectation that the RA will be able to present their research at the Spring Symposium.

OUR Federal Work-Study Research Assistants

Terms and Conditions

(as determined by the Offices of Scholarships and Financial Aid and the OUR)

Students are required to meet the followings terms and conditions. To be eligible to be an OUR Federal Work-Study Research Assistant, she or he must:

1. File a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and be determined to have financial need. A new FAFSA must be submitted every year to continue to receive FWS. Check the Financial Aid website for deadlines.
2. **Have FWS awarded on their financial aid package.**
3. Be an undergraduate student at NC State University
4. Be enrolled at least part-time (at least 6 credit hours per semester).
5. Be a U.S. Citizen or eligible non-citizen.
6. Be achieving Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).
7. Not be in default on a student loan.
8. Submit all documents required by the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarship.
9. Not work more than one FWS job simultaneously. Students may work other non-FWS jobs.
10. Be supported by only one OUR funding program at a time. A student may not simultaneously be supported as a Work-Study Research Assistant and Undergraduate Research Awardee. However, all students are eligible for travel awards and other non-paid OUR activities.
11. Complete the Voucher to Hire and all HR Hiring paperwork in a timely manner and prior to the start of work.

- I. Students who fail to complete the hiring process will NOT receive back pay for hours worked. All hours worked prior to completing the HR hiring process will be considered volunteer time.

Additionally, students acknowledge:

- No student may earn more than his/her Federal Work Study award per semester/ academic year.
- No student may work more than 20 hours within a work week from all University employment.
- Any unearned funds will be forfeited at the end of the Spring semester.
- Students are paid as biweekly employees who clock in and out in Wolf Time and FWS awards are not lump sum awards.
- NC State University has the right to terminate any Federal Work-Study position due to changes in availability of FWS funds or due to changes in the student status that could affect continued eligibility for financial aid. Failure to abide by University policies and procedures, unsatisfactory performance, poor attendance, unethical work behavior or dishonesty may also result in the loss of your FWS award.
- The OUR has the right to terminate any student from an OUR Federal Work-Study Research Assistants program with cause. This means that students have an obligation to fulfill the duties of the position. Willful misconduct and deliberate neglect of your duties are justifiable reasons for termination. Mentors have an obligation to discuss with students the expectations of the position, and to guide students if they are not fulfilling the duties of the position. Faculty should counsel students about corrective action before requesting that the student be terminated. Students and faculty are both welcome to contact the OUR if they need assistance in navigating this professional relationship.
- The OUR has the right to terminate an OUR Federal Work-Study Research Assistants position if the project ends or the faculty mentor is not fulfilling the basic obligations of the mentoring relationship. Efforts will be made to find the student a suitable alternative placement.

Federal Work-Study Guidelines

What is Federal Work-Study?

Federal Work-Study (FWS) is a program which provides part-time employment opportunities to eligible students to help meet the costs of post-secondary education. Based on the results of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), eligible students are awarded an allotment which may be earned through part time employment in FWS approved positions either on or off campus. The program is designed to provide students with an opportunity for employment arranged around class schedules. Students must be enrolled at least half-time (six credit hours per semester) to be eligible for this program. **If you wish to be considered for this program, you should indicate this preference on the FAFSA or, if not awarded FWS in your initial award package, you should contact your Financial Aid Counselor**

How do I apply for Federal Work-Study?

Federal Work-Study eligibility is based on demonstrated financial need. To be considered for a Federal Work-Study award at the NC State University, you should complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Since work-study funds are limited, you should file the FAFSA as early as possible. If you are not awarded Federal Work-Study as part of your initial award package, you should contact your financial aid counselor for additional instructions. If you are subsequently awarded a Federal Work-Study award, you will receive a revised Award Notification.

How will I know if I qualify for Federal Work-Study?

After filing the FAFSA, the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships will send an Award Notification to students whose applications are complete and who are eligible for need-based financial aid. This notification will describe the types and amounts of awards offered, including FWS. If this notification does not include a FWS award, you are not currently eligible to obtain a position under this program. If you are interested in FWS but are not awarded a FWS award, contact your financial aid counselor and let them know you are interested.

How much can I earn?

Your FWS salary will be at least the current federal minimum wage. Your total FWS award depends on when you apply, your level of financial need, and the amount of FWS funds available. The amount you earn cannot exceed your total FWS award.

What happens if my earnings reach my maximum award?

You are responsible for ensuring that you do not earn more than your FWS award total. The OUR may notify you that you are approaching your limit, but you should monitor your total hours worked and total gross earnings. The department has the option of either continuing your assignment and paying 100% from their departmental budget or ending your assignment altogether. The OUR will not pay for income over the award limit.

Are Federal Work-Study wages considered taxable income?

YES. Federal Work-Study wages are taxable income. It is in your best interest to file a federal tax return with the IRS by April 15th. You will receive W-2 forms from NC State University for your work-study earnings in January. You can find the W-2 in your MyPack Portal - Employee Self Service section.

How do I learn more about Financial Aid and Federal Work-Study?

The website for Student Services (<https://studentservices.ncsu.edu/>) is your first stop. The website has information under "Your Money" - "Financial Aid", and you are also welcome to visit the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid located in Harris Hall, 2831 Thurman Drive, between 8am and 5pm, Mondays-Fridays.

Important Dates

Date	
July 1, 2020	Beginning of Federal Work-Study Fiscal Year
August 19, 2020	Beginning of Fall Semester - First day able to work
December 16, 2020	End of Fall Semester - Last day able to work
January 11, 2021	Beginning of Spring Semester - First day able to work
March 2021	Spring Symposium Registration Opens
April 30, 2020	Spring Symposium - RA's Present or submit Reflection paper
April 30, 2020	End of Federal Work Study OUR Fiscal Year - Last day able to work
May 15, 2021	End of Spring Semester

Contact Us

OUR FWS RA Program Coordinator - Heather King - hking@ncsu.edu

General Contact Information for the OUR:

The Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR)

undergraduate-research@ncsu.edu

919/513-0095

Dr. Chris Ashwell, Director of the Office of Undergraduate Research
Professor, Prestage Department of Poultry Science

Annie Carlson Welch, Associate Director

Heather King, University Program Coordinator

FACULTY

What Does it Mean to be a Mentor?

“Students report the most important aspect of their undergraduate research experience is the relationship with the mentor” (Temple, Sibley & Orr, 2010¹).

- Mentors are essential in ensuring the success of a student’s experience with research. For some students, they will serve as the first individual to intellectually stimulate them outside of the classroom.
- The mentor teaches a variety of applied skills, methods and techniques that fosters curiosity and allows students to ask question. They help students to develop critical thinking and analytical skills.
- Mentors provide opportunities to collaborate on research projects and publications. They provide guidance in planning professional progress and achieving necessary milestones.
- Mentors train a new generation of scholars and practitioners.

Recruiting

Write a Good Job Description

All positions must give the students direct experience with research or scholarship, at a level that is consistent with the student's skills and interests. These are not office support or other administrative support positions. We expect that you will treat the Office of Undergraduate Research Federal Work-Study Research Assistant as a full member of your research or creative team.

A good position description will include:

1. 2-5 sentences describing the project and requirements for the position
2. reasonably nontechnical and written in language geared toward undergraduate students
3. include contact information, in case a student has direct questions about the position

The OUR will post and advertise the position. The OUR will share the applicant information with the faculty by a set date, typically early in the fall semester.

Faculty will select from the candidates those with whom they wish to interview or meet with to further discuss the position. Faculty may select to interview all, some or none. These

¹ Temple, L., Sibley, T.Q., & Orr, A.J. (2010). How to mentor undergraduate researchers. Washington: Council on Undergraduate Research.

applicants have already been confirmed that they have a FWS award and any other requirements are completely up to the faculty.

Once a candidate is selected the faculty will notify the OUR, specifically Heather King at hking@ncsu.edu, and the OUR will send out the hiring notification to the student and cc the faculty member on the email notification.

The OUR will complete the hiring process and HR forms which typically can take up to two weeks during which time the student would be able to volunteer until they are able to start clocking in and out for pay.

Hours and Schedule Setting

Student FSW awards may vary and are typically up to \$2,000 per academic year. Faculty will be able to see the award amount during the application review process.

Schedules should be worked out between the student and faculty member. Students are not allowed to work more than 20 hours per week for all combined University employment. If the student has a FWS position as well as a non-FWS position on campus then they would only be able to work a maximum of 20 hours between both positions. This should be something that the faculty discusses with the student. Please keep in mind that the OUR FWS RA positions will be advertised at a rate of \$10 per hour for new hires and \$11 per hour for returning OUR FWS RA's. Student employees are paid every two weeks and may earn up to the amount of their award total.

Holidays and closings: FWS students should not work on holidays or days the university is closed without direct faculty member supervision and approval. Student employees earn time and a half if they work during a University holiday. Students are not allowed to work during winter break, between semesters for any reason.

Federal regulations state that a student may not work during their scheduled class time even if the class is cancelled. It is the responsibility of the department to verify that students are not working during scheduled class time.

If a student works over his/her award amount, the department may be given the option to cover the student employment pay or the student, but the OUR will not cover overages and the student will be terminated from the OUR RA position.

Timesheets

Students will record their time by clocking in using WolfTime within the MyPack Portal either on a mobile device, computer or time clock (if the department so chooses). A mandatory 30

minute break is required when a student works six consecutive hours. This must be shown on the WolfTime as time In and time Out.

Students who forget to clock in or out should contact Heather King at hking@ncsu.edu as soon as possible to ensure that a correction is made. The student will not receive pay for any exceptions not cleared up through the OUR by the payroll deadline.

Evaluating Students

Faculty will be asked to assess the student's work through a annual appraisal form provided by the OUR. This form should be sent to the OUR office by the end of the spring semester or fall semester if the student does not plan to work in the spring for any reason.

Discipline and Terminations

Faculty members have the right to terminate a student's employment. Faculty members should make every effort to coach the RA and offer the opportunity to improve before termination of employment. However, some situation may warrant immediate termination. The OUR should be notified of any early termination of students.

STUDENTS

What Does it Mean to Do Research?

CUR defines **undergraduate research** as an inquiry or investigation conducted by an undergraduate student that makes an original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline. **Undergraduate research—a term that encompasses scholarship and creative activity**—is recognized as a high-impact educational practice that has the ability to capture student interest and create enthusiasm for and engagement in an area of study.²

Students will understand how knowledge is generated and disseminated through research, and the importance of research to society.

- ✓ Distinguish between personal beliefs and evidence
- ✓ Understand research methods used in a discipline
- ✓ Understand how knowledge is transmitted within a discipline, across disciplines and to the public

Students will engage in the key elements of the research process and situate the concepts, practices or results of research within a broader context.

How to Apply

Obtaining a FWS OUR RA position is a competitive process so an early start is essential to success. Students can start interviewing prior to the first day of classes. Being awarded a FWS does not guarantee a OUR RA position.

All FWS positions including the OUR RA positions are posted to MyPack Portal and the link to the job opportunities may be found on the student services page:

<https://studentservices.ncsu.edu/your-money/financial-aid/types/student-employment/>

The OUR RA job description within the FWS site is generic and is used to post to a wide audience. Specific job descriptions may be found on our website. Students may apply to the open call or a specific position(s) or both.

<https://undergradresearch.dasa.ncsu.edu/our-awards/our-federal-work-study-positions/>

Below are the instructions for students to follow to search for and apply to the OUR RA positions:

2. Visit the OUR website at <https://undergradresearch.dasa.ncsu.edu/our-awards/our-federal-work-study-positions/>
3. Complete the online application via Qualtrics link found on the page above or within the FWS job posting. Please be prepared to include a cover letter and resume/CV as part of the application. Click Link to go to application [OUR-FWS-RA-2019-2020](#)

² https://www.cur.org/assets/1/23/COEUR_final.pdf

4. Once your application is received and reviewed the OUR will send to possible faculty mentors. If a faculty member wishes to interview the student, the OUR will notify the student to contact the faculty member to arrange a time that is agreeable with both student and faculty.

Enrollment Requirements

- Enrolled undergraduate students are eligible to work as student employees. If you have graduated, you are not considered a current student and therefore, are not eligible for student employment.
- Be enrolled at least part-time (at least 6 credit hours per semester).

Professionalism

The Office of Undergraduate Research RAs are representatives of the Office of Undergraduate Research.

The Office of Undergraduate Research would like to project a professional image. Since you, as an employee, represent Office of Undergraduate Research, unprofessional behavior should be avoided. This includes dressing appropriately – use the appearance of others in your work environment as a guide, and if you have any questions about what is acceptable, you should ask your mentor.

Work-Study Positions are Real Jobs

- Your department and your supervisor are counting on you to be there when you are scheduled. It is unacceptable for you to make a habit of being late or not showing up. It reflects badly on you and your department. Consistent lateness or missing work is a cause for termination.
- If you have an unexpected emergency, make sure to call and inform your supervisor so that adjustments can be made.
- Work-Study Does Not Mean Study During Work
- During your scheduled hours you are there to work. Work-Study supervisors are aware that you are trying to juggle an academic schedule with a work schedule.
- You and your supervisor should plan a work schedule that will best accommodate your academic hours and study time. When discussing your work schedule, be sure to leave time outside of your work hours for studying.

Hours

- Students may not work more than 20 combined hours per week from all University employment. This includes FWS and non-FWS positions.
- Students may not work more than 8 hours in one day, and must take a ½ hour break when working 6 or more hours.

- The NC State biweekly payroll week runs Saturday through Friday
 - Students may not work on days where the University is Closed due to holidays nor may students work during winter break between Fall and Spring semesters.
-

Schedule Setting

- Students must arrange a mutually agreeable work schedule with his/her supervisor and adhere to it.
 - Arrange a work schedule that does not interfere with your class schedule.
 - Follow the schedule carefully once it has been established. Always, notify your supervisor if you are unable to work.
 - During final exams and midterms supervisors must accommodate the student's study/exam schedule.
 - Be punctual.
 - Student must provide prior notification to supervisor of inability to report for scheduled work hours.
 - All OUR RA positions will automatically end (terminate) the last Friday before finals begin.
-

Timesheet's and Pay Periods

- Timesheet's are completed through the online WolfTime system. The link is found in the MyPack Portal.
 - Time reports need to be approved by the OUR or your faculty supervisor in a timely manner and by a specific deadline. It is the students responsibility to notify the OUR of any missed time punches.
 - Students who punch in for time in excess of 20 hours will be notified of a reduction in hours for that pay period.
 - Students are paid on a bi-weekly pay period as set by the University.
 - Students are required to use Direct Deposit for payroll.
-

Resignation and Terminations

- Students should give a notification of at least two weeks if planning to resign from their FWS position. The notification should be in the form of an email to the faculty mentor as well as the OUR.
- A student's continued employment is contingent upon satisfactory performance as determined by their supervisor. If the supervisor decides that the student's performance is not satisfactory, the student may be dismissed. Student employees may write a letter of appeal to be placed in their student employment file.
- If they knowingly submit fraudulent information, students will be dismissed from the program and may face student conduct consequences.

Professional Development and Reflection Requirements

- The student is required to complete an online brief research Final Report Survey:
Due April 30, 2020
- The student is required to complete one professional development experience each semester and submit a brief reflection within 3 weeks of the experience using the web based form on the OUR website.
 - A) Attend a Career Development Center “PackPros Development Series” presentation. <https://careers.dasa.ncsu.edu/about/career-workshops/packpros/>
 - B) Attend a Career Development Center Career Fair or Mock Interview session <https://careers.dasa.ncsu.edu/gain-experience/career-fairs/>
 - C) Attend a college or department career fair
 - D) Attend a dissertation defense or lecture relevant to your research area
 - E) Other events/programs may count towards this requirement; check with the OUR.
- The student is required to complete one of two reflection requirements A) A reflection paper OR B) A poster presentation.
 - A) A reflection paper. In 2-3 double spaced pages, please address these three questions:
 2. What did you do and what did you learn in assisting your mentor’s research?
 3. How did your work on the project meet or differ from your expectations?
 4. How did your participation in this program impact your undergraduate experience at NC State?
 - B) A poster presentation. Students choosing this option must prepare a poster and present it at the Annual Spring Undergraduate Research Symposium in April. Students must register themselves to present at this event by the deadline. The OUR will cover costs associated with printing the poster if students follow the poster printing instructions provided during registration.