Expanding Your Academic Experience Through Research

Kimberly Schneider, Ph.D., Director
Office of Undergraduate Research
TC II, Room 209
www.OUR.ucf.edu
KRS@ucf.edu
UCF Office of Undergraduate Research

• Mission:
  – Strengthen and enrich the undergraduate research climate at UCF
  – www.OUR.ucf.edu
WHY?

• **Research shows:**
  – Skills and confidence  
    (Kardash 2000; 2004; Bauer and Bennett 2003; Seymour et al. 2004)
  – Career clarification  
    (Lopatto 2003; Seymour et al. 2004)
  – Continuing education  
    (Nagda et al 1998; Hathaway et al. 2002)

• **Other reasons:**
  – Letters of recommendation
  – Unique experience to discuss during interviews, essays, and applications
  – Opportunity to expand resume
• Spectral Analysis: Eradication Effectiveness and Growth Patterns of *Lygodium microphyllum* in South Florida Using Landsat Imagery
• Evolutionary History and Polymorphism of the Eyelash Palm Pit-Viper
• An Apple Snail a Day Keeps the Plants Away: Effects of an Invasive Snail on Aquatic Ecosystems
• The Role of Cerationlin in the Natural History of *Schistocerca ceratiola*
• Using the Current Latitudinal Range in Plant Species as a Predictor for Theoretical Range Expansion Due to Global Climate Change
• Queen and Worker Dynamics of the Fire Ant During Egg Laying Events
• Equifinal Ecosystem Productivity Despite Biodiversity Variance in Replicate, Open Ecosystems
• Little Deer, Little Genetic Diversity: Investigating a Bottleneck in the Florida Key Deer
• Tracking the Geographic Origin of Stranded Dolphins Potentially Impacted by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Near the Florida Panhandle
Where?

- On-Campus
- Off-Campus
On-Campus: Steps

• Mentor
  – Current/previous faculty

• Project
  – Can assist and/or develop independent project

• Programs
  – Thesis
  – Independent research credit
• Present (and network)
  – On-campus
  – Undergraduate Research Conference
    • Florida Undergraduate Research Conference
    • National Conference on Undergraduate Research
  – Biology specific conferences
    • Southern Ecology and Evolution Conference

• Publish
  – Undergraduate Research Journals (UCF)
  – Disciplines specific journals
Off-Campus

- 100s of opportunities for life science
- Typical requirements: Prefer sophomore and juniors (i.e., rising juniors and seniors)
  - 3.0/4.0 GPA
    - Some require 3.5
  - Interest in topic (shown through coursework, previous research)
  - Course requirements
What?

• Period: June through end of July/early August.
  – Usually full-time positions
  – Set program length or flexible time
• Length: 8-12 weeks
• NOTE:
  – Fall and Spring opportunities are available
  – Students can create their own opportunities
What?

• Application Deadline:
  – Available in November and December
  – Due between November and March, with a concentration of due dates in February
    • Sometimes the accept before deadline
  – Some have rolling through spring semester

• Benefits
  – Stipend or hourly (up to $6000)
  – Housing, food, transportation
Programs

• [http://www.our.ucf.edu/opportunities/summer.php](http://www.our.ucf.edu/opportunities/summer.php)
Steven Carrion: NSF REU, Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium

• "Examining the Long-term Impacts of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill on Infaunal Communities in Terrebonne Bay".
• Location: Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium (LUMCON)
• Stipend: $5,000 plus travel, housing, meals, and research funds.
• "This opportunity allowed me to experience the day-to-day life of a marine biologist, and hence, I woke up each day to do exactly what I want to be doing in life, motivating me even more to achieve my dreams."
NSF REU:
UNF Coastal Biology

• WHEN
  – Applications due March 17

• ELIGIBILITY
  – First REU, 3.0 GPA

• BENEFITS
  – Stipend ($5000), travel, meals, and housing.
NSF REU: Bermuda Institute of Ocean Science

- **WHEN**
  - Applications due May, program runs in Fall Semester
- **ELIGIBILITY**
  - Two years of undergraduate study
- **BENEFITS**
  - Stipend (at end of program), travel, and housing.
- **WHAT**
  - Students will design and conduct independent projects under faculty supervision.
REU-China: Ecological and Environmental Research in an Urbanized Landscape

• **WHEN**
  – Applications due February 7

• **ELIGIBILITY**
  – 3.0, good ‘physical condition’, passport, interested in graduate work

• **BENEFITS**
  – Stipend, travel, and housing.
Advice

• Be persistent.
• Be creative.
• Be proactive.
• Be open-minded.
• UCF students: Let us know if we can help
  – www.our.ucf.edu OR our@ucf.edu
  – TC II, 209
  – Peer Mentor Drop-in Hours: Mondays and Thursdays