



OSCAR
URSP NARRATIVE GUIDELINES



The Undergraduate Research Scholars Program (URSP) is a flexible opportunity providing funding for a student-mentor team to address a scholarly question during a semester.

General Guidelines

This application is for a competitive grant. Always use complete sentences and a professional tone. Your audience is the Student Scholarly Activities subcommittee, an interdisciplinary group with faculty and student representatives from across campus. Be sure to explain concepts and define acronyms clearly that will not be familiar to a general collegiate audience. The large text fields in the application hold 3600 or 4000 characters; all applicants are expected to stay within the confines of the application fields. The process of completing this application increases your written communication skills and general understanding of the research process.

Short Cover Letter (3,600 Character Limit)

In this section, the applicant should write a short personal statement addressed to the review committee summarizing the proposed project and your personal goals and expectations. Be specific about how this project fits into your broader educational and professional goals. Using personal pronouns may be very appropriate here. Please include a statement about the origination of the project idea; e.g. "This project is part of the ongoing research in my professor's group." or "I came up with this idea when..."

Answer the question: *Why are you interested in this project?*

Outcomes from Previous Funding

Only applicants that were received funding from URSP will complete this section. Explain the specific products, outcomes, and results from the semesters (past and current) in which you were awarded funds from the URSP. You should clearly articulate how this proposal is different or builds upon your previous work.

Introduction (3,600 Character Limit)

This paragraph should clearly define the scholarly question and provide a discipline-specific context and rationale for the project. The applicant should identify how this work will add to the "big picture" by contributing to the knowledge of the discipline. How will this original project address a knowledge-gap in your field? The applicant should cite appropriate research and/or creative literature using in-text citations. Creative and/or performance based projects may describe the work of others as exemplars.

Answer the questions: *What is your project and why is it significant?*

Process (4,000 Character Limit)

In this section, you should describe the creative process, research design, and/or methods you will employ to complete the project. A description of materials and equipment necessary to complete the project should be included. If you need resources not available at Mason (e.g. a unique instrument or manuscript) to complete the project, you should obtain access to those resources before submitting your proposal and include a statement to that effect in this section.

Answer the question: *What will you do to answer your question or complete your creative activity?*

Timeline (2,500 Character Limit)

Please provide in this section a description of how you will invest the semester to complete the project. Consult with your faculty member regarding the different sections of the project and provide the review committee with a plan of work including detailed timetables for the semester. You may extend the

timeline beyond the semester as needed, however be clear what work you will perform during the semester you receive funding. Answer the question: *How will you schedule your time?*

Expected Outcomes (2,500 Character Limit)

Describe the anticipated outcomes, products and/or results of the project. It should be clear to the review committee how these results will contribute to the scholarly and/or creative community. Identify where the project outcomes may be shared, e.g. a Mason undergraduate research symposium, a professional conference, a submitted publication, juried show, and/or performance, etc.

Answer the questions: *What will you produce? How will your results/creative activity be disseminated in your field?*

Bibliography (2,500 Character Limit)

Include a list of every reference cited in the application narrative. Use the style most appropriate to the discipline. You may also include a selection of works consulted as space allows.

Budget

In this section, you should indicate how the award will be used to support your project. The total award for the traditional URSP is \$1500. The total award for the intensive URSP (summer only) is \$5000. In the traditional program, the student is allocated \$1000 for materials, supplies, research related travel and/or student stipend. In the intensive program, the student is allocated \$4000 for stipend and \$500 for supplies. In both, your mentor is awarded \$500 for either materials or a personal stipend. For stipends, you may indicate that these funds (maximum \$1000 or \$4000, traditional or intensive) will be compensation for your time and/or travel related to the project. For materials and supplies, preliminary prices and sources should be included in the justification. Do not include travel funds to present results of your project; URSP students have priority access to separate funds, the Undergraduate Student Travel Fund (USTF) for this purpose. For more information on USTF, please visit the OSCAR website (<http://oscar.gmu.edu/>).

Steps to Apply

- Go to urspapp.gmu.edu, click Student Login button and log in with your Mason Net ID
- Step 1: Complete the Student Profile: Enter your personal information then click the "Save Profile" button
- Step 2: Initiate Application: This short form identifies your project title, project semester and year, and project mentor. You may enter more than one mentor, if applicable. When you click "Submit and Email Your Mentor", your mentor will receive an email inviting them to complete their required portion of the application. Your mentor MUST complete their portion of the application before the deadline in order for your application to be reviewed. Please complete this portion of the application EARLY to allow your mentor time to complete his/her statement.
- Step 3: Complete Application: Enter your narrative text here for your application. Please note the character limits will appear in the sections once your start typing. You can scroll through the text boxes with a bar on the right. You may write your narrative in a Word processing program first, then paste it into the application. Click on the green question mark next to each section to view the descriptions listed in the Narrative Guidelines.
 - i. Supplemental Materials: Reference lists that exceed the space provided can be uploaded here. Support letters and/or IRB approval emails may also be uploaded. Do NOT upload additional narrative or project descriptions.
 - ii. Click "Submit for Review" to submit your application.

Questions?

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