Undergraduate Research Honors Scholar (URHS) Program

Students registered for the URHS program will receive information about undergraduate research funding, research opportunities, and other research-related resources. Registered students are also able to apply for essential supply and equipment grants to offset the costs of their URHS activities. Students completing the URHS Program including three semesters of research, creativity or scholarship, and publication/presentation of their work, will receive an “Undergraduate Research Honors Scholar” designation on their transcripts upon graduation. Students from all colleges and majors are eligible for this program. Transfer or distance learning students enrolled at ODU are eligible for this program; however, experience gained while not an ODU student will generally not qualify.

All questions about the URHS program, transcript designation, and requirements should be directed to Dr. David Gauthier, Director of Undergraduate Research, HCUndergradResearch@odu.edu

Requirements for Transcript Designation

To receive an “Undergraduate Research Honors Scholar” (URHS) transcript designation, the student must complete and document four research/creativity/scholarship (RCS) activities as defined below. At least one of these activities must come from both categories 1 and 3.

Category 1: Non-course-based research/creative/scholarly experience (at least one required for transcript designation):

Students must be involved in a substantive research, creativity, or scholarship (RCS) activity. A substantive RCS experience should include most or all of the following characteristics:

- At least 135 hours spent in work directly relevant to RCS activity.
- Support and mentorship of a faculty advisor, with regular meetings between advisor and student.
- RCS activities in part devised and self-directed by the student. Multi-semester projects should demonstrate increasing independence of the student for attaining project goals.
- RCS activities directed toward an end product, such as a publication, presentation, exhibition, or similar demonstration of the student’s work.

Note: In some instances, semester-long research experiences that have an unstructured course CRN associated with them (e.g. independent studies, undergraduate theses, senior projects, etc.) may be used to fulfill this requirement. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss such proposed experiences with the undergraduate research director prior to submission of these forms.

Category 2: Course-based Research Activity (Elective; up to two may be used)

Up to two of the four URHS requirements may be fulfilled through standard coursework, provided the course includes a significant RCS component as part of its structure. Standard lecture- or laboratory-based courses in which laboratory outcomes
are known in advance will generally not qualify for this requirement, nor will courses involving writing of literature reviews. Key characteristics of courses qualifying for this requirement are 1) novel inquiry or discovery and 2) learning/developing advanced skills in research, creativity, or scholarship.

A list of approved courses is available on the Undergraduate Research webpage (https://www.odu.edu/impact/student/undergradresearch/courses) and from the ODU Honors College. Application may be made to receive URHS credit for courses not on this list, with faculty endorsement.

**Category 3: Publication or Presentation (at least one required)**

- Presentation of RCS activity at a local, state, national, or international venue. Presentations may include oral or poster presentations at scientific conferences, exhibitions of artwork, concert recital, or similar activities. The student must be the presenting/first author on the work being submitted for credit. Presentation at the ODU Undergraduate Research Symposium may be used to fulfill this requirement.

  **AND/OR**

- Publication or submission for publication of an RCS project in a peer-reviewed journal, exhibition of creative works in a juried artistic venue, or performance of other high-impact dissemination as appropriate to the student’s discipline. First authorship is strongly encouraged, although other levels of participation will be considered, depending on discipline. The student is expected to have a played a substantial role in the publication or creative work.

**Application and Documentation of RCS Activities:**

URHS students will document and reflect on their RCS experiences as follows:

**Categories 1 and 2:**

- Completed application forms prior to every semester in which a qualifying Category 1 or 2 experience will take place, with the exception of approved undergraduate research courses. The form must include a description of the RCS activity and the endorsement of a faculty mentor. Applications will be reviewed and given preliminary approval if qualifying activities are proposed.

- A summary of completed activities with signature and endorsement of faculty mentor is required for URS credit. Students must also complete an Undergraduate Research & Creative Projects Program Survey online for credit.

**Category 3:**

- Proof of presentation. For presentations, this may take the form of a conference proceedings, schedule, or other documentation that presentation was given by the student. Students are strongly encouraged to inquire in advance whether a given presentation qualifies for this requirement.
and/or

- A copy of the publication, images of artistic work, or other documentation of RCS activities, along with the journal/venue to which it was submitted, and its current status. Students are strongly encouraged to inquire in advance whether a given presentation qualifies for this requirement.

**Deadlines**

- Pre-semester applications must be submitted before the end of the add/drop period, unless otherwise approved by the Undergraduate Research Program.

- Post-semester reports are due no later than two weeks after the end of finals for credit in the prior semester.

- Students can receive the URS transcript designation in any semester prior to graduation, or up to one year following graduation.

- Retroactive application can be made for fulfillment of URS requirements up to one semester prior to the current academic semester. Both application and reporting forms must be submitted for retroactive credit for semester experiences.

**Review**

All application and supporting materials will be reviewed by the Director of Undergraduate Research with assistance as needed from Honors College advisors and/or the Undergraduate Research Advisory Committee.