



### Summer Scholars Program Call for Proposals Summer 2026

The Center for Undergraduate Research & Scholarship (CURS) is pleased to announce a call for proposals for our Summer Scholars Program (SSP) sponsored by the Provost and the Vice Provost for Instruction.

The goals of the program are to:

1. **Advance high-impact scholarly activity** that promotes significant student development, strengthens academic achievement, and contributes to the research productivity of Augusta University.
2. **Provide intentional mentorship and professional development** through collaborative research and creative scholarship that cultivate meaningful and sustained faculty–student engagement.
3. **Deepen disciplinary knowledge and enhance evidence-based reasoning** through active participation in research and scholarly inquiry.
4. **Develop advanced written and oral communication skills** to effectively convey purpose, methods, and outcomes to diverse academic and public audiences.

#### Mentoring Expectations

Evidence shows the benefits of faculty mentoring on student success, and thus excellence in the mentoring relationship is a critical component for the SSP. Quality mentorship including the following behaviors are expected of each SSP mentor.

- clear communication of expectations and regular discussion of progress, challenges, and accomplishments
- a mutual openness to ideas, opinions, and collaboration
- an allowance of significant student responsibility to further the project's progress
- providing teaching, scaffolding, and guidance and to help students develop and deepen their knowledge, communication, and professional skills

A written mentorship philosophy is a requirement for the application. [The Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis \(IUPUI\)](#) has a great resource for developing and writing a mentoring philosophy.

Because the SSP is about collaboration and mentorship, faculty involvement is critical for a successful student experience. The project mentor must be a full-time AU faculty member or visiting faculty member and be the lead mentor on the project. Research associates, graduate students, residents, or other team members may assist but may not be the primary mentor or contact for the SSP. Mentorship involves a committed relationship and is *qualitatively different* from having a student to accomplish daily research tasks. For student assistants (versus mentees), please consider posting your opportunity on the [Handshake Job Board](#) through the Augusta University [Career Services](#) website.

**\*New 2026\*** If accepted into the program, you will be required to complete the OneUSG Momentum Short Course on Mentoring Undergraduates in Research.

#### Dates

The SSP will run two sessions to accommodate both those who desire a shorter or longer scholarly experience during the summer.

- Session 1 (9 week): May 18 -July 17, 2026
- Session 2 (5 week): May 18 – June 19; and July 16, 2026



Required Events (M = mentors, S = scholars)

- Mentor Orientation (M) Thursday, April 30 9:30am – 11:00am
- Kickoff and Student Orientation Breakfast (M, S) Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup> 9:30am – 11:30am (Mentors 9:30-10:30)
- Professional Development Workshops (M, S) Weekly during the program; Wednesdays 9:00-11:00am
- Summer Scholars Symposium (M, S) Thurs, July 17th 4:00 pm – 6:30 pm

**Attendance Expectations**

Because space is limited for this program and spots are competitive, participants are required to attend and participate in all events. In order to meet team and program objectives, all participants should be local to the Augusta area for the duration of the program and have availability during predictable times (generally 8am-5pm Monday–Friday). Therefore participants may not take/teach more than three credits at a time while in the program. ***Students may not take a course with a lab if participating in the SSP.*** Courses with a lab require a great deal of time and attention and thus are not compatible with the SSP. Travel to conduct or present research during the summer session should be discussed with the director, [Dr. Quentin Davis](#), during the application process.

Session 2 participants are not required at workshops outside the session but are required to attend the final symposium.

Faculty or students who will be out of the area or country for more than a few consecutive days should apply in another year when they are able to be physically present to participate in the program. Those who have travel plans that are not related to the SSP scholarly activity are encouraged to apply for another year when they have no schedule conflicts. Persons whose travel will prevent attendance at either the Orientation or final Symposium will be less competitive for the program.

**Selection Process**

1. Faculty applications are due by **January 5 by 11:59pm.**
2. All proposals are reviewed by an interdisciplinary review panel in January.
3. Faculty are notified of decisions and selected projects added to CURS website in late January.
4. Student applications are accepted from February 1 to 14. (Students will be able to review faculty mentor projects on the website and select up to 3 preferred projects.)
5. CURS reviews student applicants for eligibility and sends screened candidates to mentors for interviews.
6. Faculty mentors interview students and make their preferences for students via email to [curs@augusta.edu](mailto:curs@augusta.edu). CURS will make the FINAL decision for mentor/mentee selection and all final selections will go through our office.
7. CURS sends out award/declination letters to students.

**Funding**

The number of accepted projects will depend on the amount of funding and the expense of the projects proposed. Faculty mentors will receive a stipend of \$1500 per student (maximum of \$4500 depending on available funding). Twelve-month faculty do not qualify for the stipend but are still eligible to submit a proposal and participate in the program. Regardless of stipend, accepted mentors are expected to participate fully in all aspects of the program.

Student scholars will be employed by the university and receive payment for up to 20 hours of research per week (up to \$2700 depending on available funds).

*Multiple Funding Sources.* Faculty who have been awarded internal or external grants (RSCA, IGP, NSF, NIH, etc.) are eligible for SSP participation provided that the research project supported is the same. If a faculty stipend is covered by the salary or grant, CURS will provide the stipend for the student(s) only. If awarded multiple opportunities, CURS may provide supplemental funding for materials up to \$500. Faculty receiving an internal Educational Innovation Fund (EIF) grant are still eligible for SSP participation provided they justify the time to be dedicated to both projects; an individual's personnel costs may not be covered by both EIF and CURS. Applicants with questions about multiple grant applications are encouraged to consult with the program director, [Dr. Quentin Davis](#).

Funding requests (additional to personnel) of up to \$500 may cover supplies, or travel during the program to support research activity or presentations. Ineligible costs include publication fees, abstract fees, and related travel that occurs after July of the program. CURS covers the cost of one poster per student for the Symposium that may be presented at other conferences.

### **Student Selection**

Students must apply and be accepted to the SSP in order to participate. Some faculty may have students in mind whom they would like to mentor in the program, while others may not. CURS can facilitate student selection by screening students for base requirements (e.g., a particular course) and providing the faculty with the names of several potential SSP students. Mentors will then interview students and submit their preferences for a particular student(s). CURS will attempt to give everyone their first choice(s) whenever possible.

### **Instructions and Review Process**

Faculty should complete the online SSP application form (open Nov 1-Jan 5) through the [Augusta University InfoReady Portal](#) (<https://augusta.infoready4.com/>). Applicants must register in InfoReady to apply. The required Budget form will be downloaded from InfoReady for completion and then upload this into the application system. No hard-copy applications will be accepted. All proposals will undergo a review process by our interdisciplinary committee of faculty, thus any disciplinary-specific jargon should be clearly defined or avoided. The style and level of detail for discipline-specific grants (e.g., NIH, NSF) or journal articles are inappropriate for this application which should focus foremost on undergraduate student learning. We are seeking faculty who have strong communication skills, are passionate mentors, and are able to translate the objectives and application of their scholarship to a broad and diverse audience. Any questions or concerns should be directed to [CURS](#), 706-729-2094.

### **Additional Info:**

- The SSP has become more competitive in recent years as we have an increased number of faculty who apply to be part of the program. For this reason, as of Summer 2023 we are limiting the number of sequential years a faculty member can participate to 3 years, if funding is restricted. If a faculty member has participated 3 years in a row, they may be ineligible to participate for one year before they may apply again.
- Faculty who have previously been accepted into the program are not guaranteed a spot in subsequent years. It is highly recommended that faculty who are applying for a subsequent year



clearly state how the project has developed in the last year and how this research or scholarship will help to elevate the research status of the university.

- A well-written mentorship philosophy is a requirement for the program and a very important factor in our selection process. Faculty should take this seriously and carefully consider their mentoring priorities and strategies.
- Final acceptance into the SSP program requires IRB or IACUC approval (if applicable) by April 1<sup>st</sup>. Lack of approval by April 1 will result in the project being removed from the SSP for that year. Subsequent IACUC/IRB approval after April 1 will yield a guaranteed acceptance into the following year's SSP if the applicant wishes to participate the following year.
- If a student mentee is named in the proposal, the proposal should also describe the development of skills thus far in the research and how the program will differ from or build upon those experiences and add to the student's knowledge and skills.
- Faculty may name preferred student participants, but the student must apply separately during the student application period. Students who have graduated may be eligible for participation in the summer following award of the BS/BS degree, but they are less competitive than students returning in the next academic year.

### Project Proposal

The online project proposal will include the following sections. Use language for a broad non-discipline-specific reviewer. Each area is scored on a scale of 1-5; the scoring rubric is available online.

Research Title (Limit to 10 words) – Student-friendly title of the summer project. (This is NOT necessarily the same as a journal article title.).

1. Introduction (200-300 words)- Provide an overview of the research topic, including background context and the specific objectives of the proposed summer project. Explain the project's significance within your discipline and its broader impact using language accessible to non-specialists.
2. Student Success (300-400 words) – Clearly describe the student's role and responsibilities in the project. Identify the disciplinary content and research methods that will be taught and practiced, and specify the professional skills students will develop (e.g., data analysis, communication, teamwork, or problem-solving). Discuss how the experience will enhance their academic growth and prepare them for future study or professional careers.
3. Mentoring Philosophy (min 200 words) – Mentoring undergraduate researchers is a central component of the SSP program. Provide a description of your mentoring philosophy and approach. You may find the Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) resource on mentoring philosophies useful in developing this section.
4. Timeline (no word limit)- Provide a clear weekly schedule of student research activities and required meetings. Include planned milestones, deliverables, and scheduled check-in meetings.
5. Budget & Justification (no word limit)

Download the Budget form through InfoReady in the section "Supporting Documents".

**Part 1)** Justification and Explanation of Expenses: Describe how each requested expense (e.g., supplies, materials, travel) supports student learning, engagement, and research productivity. If expenses will occur after June 30, specify anticipated dates. Indicate which items are essential for project completion and which are optional or may be funded through other sources.

**Part 2)** Upload the provided CURS SSP Materials Budget Form. Provide an itemized list of all project-related expenses.