

5 Step Guide on “how to get started with undergraduate research”

When to start inquiring about undergraduate research

- The sooner the better. It may take a while (1 or 2 semesters) to get a position in someone’s research lab.
- Freshmen are welcome to do undergraduate research so start your search early.

Stop and think

- What are your expectations of the UGR experience?
- What are you passionate about?
- What would you like to learn?
- List these thoughts on a notepad or your phone. This will help focus your thoughts and achieve your goals.

1. Identify the field of study you are most passionate about:

- Marine biology; marine science; maritime business administration etc. [keep in mind that you can conduct research outside your major or minor but some mentors may want you to have taken specific classes so it may be easier to find a position within your major]
- Use the link below to look at the academic departments on campus and what their main fields of research are:

[Academic Departments \(tamug.edu\)](http://tamug.edu)

2. Do you want to learn more about lab-based; field-based research or build, design or develop something?

- Think about what are you most interested in
- Select only faculty who do the type of research you would like to learn more about

3. Narrow your search – select a few faculty members whom you would like to work with:

- Look up faculty profiles in the main field you are passionate about.
- Use the link below to look up departments on campus:

[Academic Departments \(tamug.edu\)](http://tamug.edu)

Website search:

- *After you have selected a department -> Click on “faculty and staff” and -> click on each faculty member’s name.* This takes you to their research website.
- All faculty list what they study so read their website and read a few of the faculty’s published papers

Class in-person approach

- You may also take or have taken a class that you are really interested in learning more about or found a particular subject in a class really interesting -> talk to the professor after class (see 4.).

4. Time to reach out to faculty mentors

Send an email –

- Introduce yourself (they may know you from class but it is good to re-introduce yourself)
- List why you are contacting them - say that you are looking for a position in their lab/office as an undergraduate researcher
- List your main research interests (make sure they align with the faculty member’s –do your homework on each person you contact so you can target their specific research)
- Write that you are willing to work hard and can spend several hours a week (even weekends) on undergraduate research

- e. Ask if you can set up a time to meet with them.
- f. Tell them you can meet with them either via zoom or in-person
- g. Thank them for their time and sign off
- h. Proof read and then send

Don't write a long email. Be to-the-point; concise and most importantly courteous.

You can also talk to faculty after class

- a. Talk to your professor in the classroom either before or after class
- b. Follow up with an email (see suggested email above)

5. Follow up on your initial inquiries

- Send a follow up email a week later.
- Always be courteous when corresponding.
- If you have sent several emails and still not received a reply
 - You can catch them after class
 - You can go to their office
 - You can talk to their graduate students
 - Contact other faculty members

Scan QR code to go to TAMUG UGR Website:



<https://tamug.edu/undergraduateresearch/index.html>

Additional ideas on how to get started:

- Talk to friends, classmates
- Check flyers on campus bulletin boards
- Get on emails lists from your department or the career center
- Attend research symposia on campus
- Follow TAMUG/TAMU social media
- **Check TAMUG UGR's website:**
<https://tamug.edu/undergraduateresearch/index.html>
- **Check TAMU LAUNCH's website:**
<https://launch.tamu.edu/Undergraduate-Research/News-Events-Resources/Resources/Research-Opportunities-Database>
- **Check the TAMU LAUNCH UGR Events site:**
<https://launch.tamu.edu/Undergraduate-Research/News-Events-Resources/Events>
- **Check the TAMU LAUNCH UGR site:**
<https://launch.tamu.edu/Undergraduate-Research/About>

Need help – Have questions?

Contact the chair of undergraduate research, Dr. Petersen
undergraduateresearch@tamug.edu

We can help with:

- Proof reading emails
- Suggesting faculty mentors
- Funding and scholarships for undergraduate researchers
- ...and anything else related to undergraduate research.

We wish you all the best as you start your undergraduate research experience at TAMUG