

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AWARDS
Period I (for research activities between January- June 2010)

Information and Application Form

I. General Information

Undergraduate Research Awards (UGRAs) provide support for original, independent research by Lawrence-campus undergraduates, under the general guidance of a member of the faculty. These awards are not intended to provide faculty members with assistants, but students may well be associated with faculty research projects as independent investigators. UGRAs are awarded on the merit of the applicant's proposal, the applicant's academic record, and recommendations from faculty members who are familiar with the applicant and the proposed project. For the purpose of this competition, 'research' should not be construed too narrowly. UGRAs are for the support of independent projects that constitute work that is original and substantive given the standards and objectives of the field. (The UGRAs are not intended, for example, to support trips to workshops or the like; something new has to be discovered or created.)

Approximately 25 UGRAs will be given to KU undergraduates during Period I. There are two award categories.

Regular grants up to \$2,000 - projects are usually (but not exclusively) conducted by students with prior research experience.

Small Grants up to \$750 - this category includes projects that require less funding, because they are narrower in scope or are start-up projects for students who are just beginning undergraduate research.

Students must use these funds to support their research.

To be eligible you must be an undergraduate studying on the Lawrence campus. You must be enrolled full-time Fall 2009 and must intend to be enrolled full-time during the spring semester. (Exceptions to this rule can be made, e.g., when the applicant is studying abroad during the spring or fall semester.) If you think an exception should be made for you, or if you have questions about your eligibility, contact Dr. Mark Daly, Associate Director of the Honors Program and Convener of the UGRA Committee: mdaly@ku.edu or 864-4235.

Each UGRA proposal must be sponsored by a member of the faculty who has read and approved the proposal and who agrees to oversee the conduct and completion of the project. Recipients will be selected by the UGRA Selection Committee, composed of faculty from the Lawrence campus. Decisions of the committee are final. Applicants will be informed of the committee's decisions before the end of the spring semester.

Note: Awards may be considered taxable income to parents or to students who have "independent" financial aid status. Special tax rules, which vary by country, may apply to international students.

II. The Application

A UGRA application consists of:

1. A completed application cover page (form attached).
2. A typewritten proposal *not to exceed four single-spaced pages* (following the guidelines in section IV, below). Use a 12-point font.
3. An ARTS form (available online or through your school).
4. Two supporting letters from members of the faculty (not graduate student instructors), one of whom is the project sponsor, and the other of whom is in the general area of your discipline.

Both letters must be accompanied by a signed letter of reference form (attached). **Applicants are responsible for collecting the reference letters and turning them in to the Honors Program by Sunday, November 1, 2009.** The letter must be in a sealed envelope and signed across the seal by the recommender.

In special cases, the application may also involve other items:

5. *If you are submitting a proposal in the visual arts or related fields you may submit slides of your previous work.*
6. *If you have previously received a UGRA you must provide a statement showing why you believe you should be awarded another grant. Summarize what was accomplished under the previous grant and explain how the current project differs from the earlier one.*

You should deliver ***four copies*** of the above items (the original plus three photocopies) to Nunemaker Center ***by 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 1, 2009.***

III. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by the following criteria, all of which should be addressed in the proposal:

1. the project's potential contribution to knowledge or the arts;
2. the likelihood of completion within the available time;
3. the student's qualifications, based on ability and experience, to complete the proposed research project successfully;
4. the project's educational value for the student;
5. the sponsor's willingness and availability to oversee the research and its completion.

IV. The Proposal

Make clear what will be discovered or created and why. Your proposal is the basis for evaluation of your project. An outstanding academic record and glowing recommendations cannot overcome the deficiencies of a poor proposal. Your proposal should be clearly written, substantive and detailed, ***and also understandable***

by an intelligent, literate non-specialist. (For example, science proposals will be read by faculty in the sciences, but they will not necessarily be in the particular department or sub-discipline of the project.) Avoid technical jargon, acronyms, etc. **The Committee strongly advises that you seek the advice of your faculty sponsor as you prepare the proposal and have her or him read your drafts and the final version submitted.** Your proposal should *be at least two, but no longer than 4 pages*, and it should be organized to include the following material:

- A. *Project description:* Identify the aim of your project and explain how you intend to accomplish that aim *giving special attention to what you will actually do* during the grant period. A typical project description will contain the following items: **1)** a 1-2 sentence summary of purpose of the project; **2)** Introduction/background/context (i.e, what is currently known? Why is it important to know more?); **3)** The question you are asking, the aim of your project; **4)** Significance to the field. Make clear what will be discovered or created and why. This is important, both to those who are in your field and to those who are outside it; **5)** Methods. How will you do the research? This is an important section. No matter how wonderful your aim, or how significant the possible results, the proposal will not be judged strong unless it is clear that you know what you will be doing. A time-line can be included. Also, if the project is part of a larger research program or a long-term interest, make clear what part of the larger whole is to be supported by the UGRA and completed during the term of the grant. **6)** If your project involves the use of human subjects, indicate how you will meet the requirements of the KU Human Subjects Committee (HSCL). Consult your sponsor for assistance with this. Some information is available at <http://www.research.ku.edu/kucr/forms/comp/hscl.shtml>. **7)** Do include references to the material you are citing.
- B. *Significance to the applicant:* Explain how the project will contribute to your education (honors thesis? preparation for graduate study or career?) and also what you propose to do with your results or final product. (Report to your advisor? Honors thesis? Presentation at a meeting or show?)
- C. *Applicant's qualifications:* Describe the background and preparation that qualify you for this project. You may wish to mention past research, independent study, courses taken in the area of the proposed research, bibliographic or other background research already done, related projects already completed, language or laboratory skills, etc. In short, show the Selection Committee how prepared you are to undertake the project.

These guidelines are intended to help you prepare a good proposal. They are not meant to confuse or constrain. Where they are not applicable to your project, consult with your faculty sponsor and use your best judgment. Feel free to consult with Mark Daly, Associate Director, Honors Program at mdaly@ku.edu or 864-4235.

V. Advice on Writing the Research Proposal for Fine Arts and Architecture Majors

The following advice is meant to supplement and is not meant to replace the suggested format and material outlined in Section IV.

Research topics in the fine arts and architecture are sometimes difficult to put into words for the written proposal in these applications. The special advice pointers below may help you to ‘write’ your application to ensure that you represent your proposal well and that you cover the necessary material that will allow a full and fair evaluation of it by a Review Committee. The advice pointers assume that you have a generalized **topic** that you are interested in such as, “Contemporary Painting” or “Musical Transcription” or “Architectural Lighting”. The advice pointers also assume that you have a specific task that can be called a research **proposal** within that topic, such as, “To Create a Series of Paintings” or “To Examine the Day-lighting in an Italian Piazza” etc. Use the advice pointers below to elaborate on this task. Remember that you should be trying to convince a review Committee of the value of your project. Some of the members of

that Committee will not know your field of study. They will understand that a good research proposal involves the undertaking actions that result in the making of new knowledge or a new understanding of old knowledge.

Advice Pointers:

Write sincerely about why you are interested in this topic.

- Briefly describe your personal history of interest in the topic. Say specifically what got you interested in it and what sustained your interest.
- Show, if you can, that this interest was related to experiences in your education at KU (such as class material, seminar discussion, a recommended text, a museum exhibition, a field trip).
- Write about the topic as you have observed it through your ‘life experiences’ so far.

Write plainly about what is you will actually do in your project.

- Say exactly what it is that you will do in this research proposal.
- A descriptive listing of your proposed activities is very useful.
- Sometimes this can be made more convincing by using a ‘timeline’.

Write about why this is a significant proposal.

- Tell the Committee why this is an important proposal for you at this time.
- Tell the Committee what is important about the proposal for the university community-- especially its scholarly or creative importance.
- Quotations or references to texts or other resources are very useful to inform the Committee of the scholarly or artistic value of your topic and proposal.

Write imaginatively about what results you expect and how you will draw generalized conclusions.

- Tell the Committee what *new knowledge* you personally expect to have about the topic after the research proposal is completed.
- What reactions would you expect from interested observers of the results of your proposal? Explain why you expect those reactions.
- An important part of the learning in research is the ‘reflection’ component. Tell the Committee how you would evaluate or judge the success of your proposal.
- Because this is a research-learning award, the Committee may be interested in how you will draw general learned conclusions about your topic when it is completed. Tell the Committee how you will determine generalized conclusions.

Add a Bibliography and a citation of relevant creative works from your discipline.

VI. Research Reports

Students who receive UGRAs during Period I are required to file a brief interim report on the progress of their research.

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AWARDS
Period I (January- June 2009)

Application Form

(Due by 4:00 p.m., Sunday, November 1, 2009, at Nunemaker Center)

Name: _____ Social Security # _____

Title of Proposed Project: _____

I am applying for a: Regular Grant up to \$2,000 Small Grant up to \$750

7 digit Student Number: _____ Local telephone number: _____

Mailing

Address: _____

(award check will go to this address-include zip code)

Permanent Home Address: _____

Residency Status: U.S. Citizen Permanent Resident (resident alien/green card holder)
 Nonresident Alien (Visa type _____ Country _____)

E-Mail Address: _____

Major(s): _____

School: _____ Expected Date of Graduation: _____

Faculty Sponsor's Name and Department or School: _____

Second Referee's name and Department or School:

Have you received a UGRA before? _____ If so, when? _____

On this and succeeding pages provide the following information:

1. Anticipated Spring 2010 classes.
2. Research Proposal. (**Be sure to read instructions and guidelines; Section IV**)
3. ARTS form.
4. Reference forms and letters from faculty sponsor and second referee.
5. If you have received a UGRA previously, explain how the proposed project relates to the one supported earlier and show why a second award is justified.

Note: Use this as the cover page for your proposal. Please do *not* put proposals in binders or folders.

Undergraduate Research Awards

Period I (January- June 2010)

Letter of Reference Form

Due by 4:00 p.m., Sunday, November 1, 2009, at Nunemaker Center

Name of Applicant: _____

Name and Department of Sponsor or Referee: _____

TO THE APPLICANT: *Be sure your sponsor has read, and your second reference has been provided with, a copy of your proposal.* Provide a signed copy of this form to your faculty sponsor and your second referee, filling in the information above. Be sure to *circle one* of the options below and sign. Letters not accompanied by this form, *duly signed*, will be returned to the referee unread.

I hereby *waive / do not waive* [circle one] my right of access to letters written on my behalf in connection with my application for an Undergraduate Research Award (UGRA).

Signed: _____ Date: _____

TO THE SPONSOR OR REFEREE: The student named above is applying for an Undergraduate Research Award (UGRA). These awards support independent research projects by Lawrence campus undergraduates. *Applicants must be sponsored and recommended by a member of the graduate faculty on the Lawrence campus who has read the proposal and agrees to oversee the progress and completion of the research project. A second reference is required from another faculty member who can speak to the merits of the proposed research, the qualifications of the student, or both. A copy of this form must accompany your letter.* In your letter, please address the following points if possible:

1. The potential significance and the feasibility of the proposed research. (Not all UGRA projects result in publication. Many do, however.)
2. The student's preparation for the proposed research. (Previous winners have often been students already engaged in research that has developed their skills and established their readiness.)
3. The educational value of the project for the student researcher.
4. The relationship of the project to the sponsor's research. (Spin-offs from faculty-directed research projects are appropriate. UGRAs are *not* intended to provide assistance for faculty research, however. The project should involve the student in independent research or his/her own project.)

For the purposes of this competition 'research' should not be construed too narrowly. UGRAs are for the support of independent projects that are original and substantive given the standards and objectives of the field.

A copy of this form, with one of the waiver options selected by the student, *must* accompany your letter.