

# **SoE Student Research Experience Program - Orientation & Info**

Program Website: <https://goto.unm.edu/sre>

## **INTRODUCTIONS**

1. Brief Program description
  - a. Program runs every fall and spring since Spring 2020
  - b. Approximately a one semester commitment; options after to stay - either with the current research or a new project.
  - c. Most positions are unpaid or unpaid and transition to paid.
  - d. A match does not guarantee a position in the lab, the final say is up to the Primary Investigator.
2. **Connecting:** Name, Major, Year; Describe what you think it means to do student research. And, what motivated you to join the program?

## **WHAT ARE THE MAIN COMPONENTS TO RESEARCH?**

Discuss as a group.

- Lab hierarchy:
  - High School - basic exposure to what a lab is like. Performs routine tasks.
  - Undergrad (early) - same as HS, with the addition of some autonomy or responsibilities, possibly a small side-project.
  - Undergrad (later) - same as early UG, and additional subset research projects or responsibilities depends on when they join the lab and what specific related knowledge they have. May need to acquire some specific knowledge before being assigned a specific subset project.
  - Graduate - has their own independent research related to their faculty advisor, but requires guidance and support from their advisor and other lab mates.
  - Post-Doc - works on research projects related to the faculty support, but works very autonomously
  - Faculty/Lead Researcher - engages in independent and unique research while managing their lab.
- Independent vs collaborative
- Lab/group meetings
- Levels of engagement:
  - Performing supportive tasks while learning about the research being conducted.
  - Foundational information/knowledge through discussing papers and literature review/search.
  - Collecting information (theoretical or through experimentation)
  - Inception of a unique research question - either for basic or applied.
    - Basic Research: expands knowledge through theoretical or experimental work
    - Applied Research: find a solution to an existing problem.
  - Writing/reporting findings through journal articles and conference presentations (oral or poster).

## BE A TEAM PLAYER

- STEM fields inherently have group work, especially with research. What are some of the potential challenges with that? It can be in your class for an assignment, in a research lab, with a job.
- What you can do to help with this:
  - Identify your strengths
  - Acknowledge your challenges
  - Be open minded and willing to learn
  - Determine roles: at the very start.
  - Establish a goal
  - Methods – How will you attain these goals? What is the best approach? Are there more than one way? How do you deal with that?
  - Speak up! - If you disagree with something, whether it's the question, the approach, the interpretation, the roles, anything, it's important to say so, but do so in a tactful manner. If somebody isn't carrying their wait, let them know and work out a solution.
  - Time management!!! – 3x longer than you THINK it will take. Everything always takes longer than you think it should. Take the amount of time you think something will take and triple it. That's how much time you should really plan for. It's always better to have extra time than not enough. This is a good rule of thumb for most things in life.
- Additional key skills for success:
  - Communication
  - Problem solving
  - Conflict (resolution)
  - Individual goals vs group goals
  - Personal accountability
  - Self-confidence
  - Trust
  - Respect
  - Team commitment
  - Taking risks (mental, physical, emotional)

## SCIENTIFIC READY AND WRITING

- It takes practice.
- Understand the basic structure/components of a research article.
- Don't get bogged down in the details.
- Mark it up! Highlights or edits.
- Get feedback – discussions or revisions.

## PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS & TIPS FOR SUCCESS

1. **Your Roles and Responsibilities**
  - You are expected to maintain a high level of professionalism.
  - A commitment to working hard and a desire to learn will almost always be recognized and rewarded by mentors.
2. **Connecting with Your Lead Researcher**
  - a. Follow up to your initial match email with a bit about yourself and propose some meeting times.
  - b. At your first meeting:
    - i. Get a project overview and lay out expectations.
    - ii. Go over the bigger picture, as well as the role you will play in it.
    - iii. Set up regular meetings and work hours.
3. **Communication**
  - a. **Logistics:** Discuss how you will communicate with each other and how frequently you will communicate. Is email, phone calls, or texting best?

- b. **Practice professional communication + check your email and phone every day:** Respond to important emails/calls from your mentee, the Peer-Mentoring Program staff, your professors, your boss, etc. within two business days. You are encouraged to use your UNM email for all communication with your mentee as this is your professional account. You can link your UNM email to another client (e.g., Google) that responds from your UNM email. Add “away” messages to your UNM email account if you will not check it (e.g., Spring break, holidays, summer, family emergencies, etc.). See professional email handout on the program website for more details.
- c. **ASK QUESTIONS.** To the mentor, to the experienced students in the lab.

#### 4. Commitment

- a. **Keep your commitments:** Put your peer-mentoring meetings on your calendar. Attend meetings you say you will attend. Show up to meetings on time or early if possible. This sets a good example of professionalism to your mentee.
- b. **Being late, no shows, and cancellations:** People are coming to meetings *with you*. Please do not disrespect the other person by arriving late or letting them show up when you do not show up. Provide as much notice of running late or a cancellation as possible. Twenty-four hours is generally the minimum acceptable notice of a cancellation except in case of emergencies. Apologize when you must cancel, and send 2-3 times that you could reschedule your meeting for.
- c. **Let me know if you are leaving the program:** No hard feelings if you want to leave, but please let me know. This way I can find a new match for your mentee. I also worry about you if you stop communicating. I won't stop reaching out to you until I hear from you. You do not have to leave forever. You can return to the program when the timing is a better fit.
- d. **Support:** I will check in with you a few times throughout the semester to see how things are going. But, don't hesitate to reach out to me if you have questions, concerns, brags, or want more support. Yadéeh Sawyer, [yadeeh@unm.edu](mailto:yadeeh@unm.edu).
- e. **Expect respect:** Just as you are expected to show up on time, communicate, respect people's time, and be kind-- your mentees should do the same for you.
- f. **Discrimination and harassment is unacceptable** in all academic, professional, and personal settings and will not be tolerated from mentees or mentors. All people should feel valued and safe so that they can participate fully in school, a meeting, program, job, etc. UNM prohibits all forms of discrimination in relation to many protected identities, such as age, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender/sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, medical condition, physical or mental ability, pregnancy, etc. If you feel that you have experienced discrimination in relation to any of these identities, you are encouraged to report the incident to the UNM Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO). I am also happy to meet with you to discuss discrimination, but I am a mandatory reporter, which means I must tell OEO about discrimination. You can talk to staff at Lobo Respect, the Women's Resource Center, and the LGBTQ Resource Center without them needing to tell OEO. More information on filing discrimination claims with OEO at: [https://oeo.unm.edu/forms/pdf/-new\\_claims.pdf](https://oeo.unm.edu/forms/pdf/-new_claims.pdf)

#### 5. Need a Resource or Support?

There are many FREE resources on campus to support students. Look at the Survive & Thrive sheet on the program website, or visit <https://allaccess.unm.edu/index.html>.

If you are not sure where to go, please reach out to me so that I can connect you to the appropriate people/places. You can also reach out to your research group.

## **COMING UP**

All are optional, but remember, you get out of this program what you put in.

1. Introductions to your potential research opportunity or program update – No later than the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday after the program deadline (Feb 5 & Sept 5). *Didn't get matched this semester but you have an idea for a research project? Use the WHY Lab! More info [HERE](#). Or, find your own research opportunity [HERE](#).*
2. STEM Mixer – first Friday following the program deadline, typically 3:30 – 5:30 pm – Centennial Engineering Center - STAMM Room (1044). For specific details, visit [our events page](#) or check out our [succESS web-ap](#).

**THE ESS CENTER IS HERE TO HELP YOU! WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU.** No problem is too big or too small. If I cannot help you, I will find someone who can. Whatever the issue is, we can solve it together.