

A photograph of a campus scene featuring a paved walkway lined with tall pine trees. The sun filters through the branches, creating dappled shadows on the path and the surrounding green lawn. In the distance, a person is walking on the path, and a building is visible under a clear blue sky.

# HUMANITIES

## UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANT PROGRAM



Center for  
Student Research

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO  
**COLORADO SPRINGS**

*May 2020*

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# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Based on the nature of Humanities research, these projects are often large in scope and scale. Recent research suggests that student research assistants (RAs), with support from their institution's libraries, can have an important impact on faculty's research projects while, at the same time, develop useful skills that benefit the student in their academic and professional pursuits (Aenasoaie, L., Joque, J., Peters, A., & Broek, J., 2019). The goal of this pilot program is to offer UCCS Humanities faculty support for their research agenda in the form of a trained student research assistant. The student RA is an unpaid undergraduate student who typically signs up for credit (e.g., independent study) but can also volunteer. This RA can help with a multitude of research tasks including:

- Completing online searches for primary sources
- Compiling annotated bibliographies
- Conduct digital humanities work
- Do technological work (charts, PowerPoints, website updates)
- Transcription of interviews

## **What would this program do?**

The Humanities Undergraduate Research Assistant Program would provide skills training to the student RAs through the Kraemer Family Library and access to resources and community through the Center for Student Research (housed within the Office of Research). The skills training for the RA can be tailored to the faculty mentor's research agenda to help reduce the training burden on the faculty member and enhance the efficiency of the research carried out by the RA.

## **Why is it valuable?**

The direct benefit to faculty mentors working with an undergraduate research assistant is their productivity is increased as a result and their projects are able to move forward at a steady rate. The student research assistant also benefits by gaining hands-on experience in humanities work, marketable skills that translate to careers and/or graduate school, and typically receive high-quality letters of reference from their faculty mentors. Students also gain access to a community of other student researchers which is shown to increase persistence in a degree path.

## **What is included in this packet?**

The Office of Research, the Center for Student Research, and the Kraemer Family Library are committed to supporting research partnerships in the Humanities. We understand that RAs in the Humanities are not yet commonplace at UCCS and with that in mind, we have created this guide to help make these partnerships useful for both parties. In this packet you will find:

- A Faculty and Student "checklist" to keep you, your RA, and your research on track
- A Library resource guide for Humanities RAs that you and your student can review as you identify areas for skills training
- A mentorship agreement to help you and your student lay out research expectations for the duration of the proposed project.

# GETTING STARTED

## FACULTY CHECKLIST

Contact the CSR to indicate your interest in the Program	
Identify potential student research assistants	
Decide the appropriate participation model (independent study, volunteer, etc.)	
Complete CSR Humanities RA Program Entrance Survey	
Review Library resources guide with student and establish expectations	
Review and sign mentoring agreement with student and establish expectations	
Develop a timeline for deliverables and consider an appropriate start date (e.g., start of semester)	
Periodically review project milestones and mentoring agreement expectations	
Complete CSR Humanities RA Program Exit Survey	

# GETTING STARTED

## STUDENT CHECKLIST

Join the Center for Student Research and review faculty profiles	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complete CSR Humanities RA Program Entrance Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>
Review Library resources guide with faculty to identify needed skills	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complete and track skills training with the Kraemer Family Library	<input type="checkbox"/>
Review and sign mentoring agreement with faculty and establish expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work on project with monthly meeting with CSR to track progress	<input type="checkbox"/>
Periodically review project milestones and mentoring agreement expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complete CSR Humanities RA Program Exit Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>



# LIBRARY RESOURCES

## **For basic humanities research skills (e.g. locating primary sources, building a bibliography)**

- Start with your subject librarian who will be most familiar with the resources and databases in your subject area. You can find your subject librarian and set up an appointment here:  
<https://www.uccs.edu/library/help/subject-librarians>
- Look for upcoming workshops here: <https://www.uccs.edu/library/help/workshops>. If you are interested in a workshop but are unable to attend, contact the organizing librarian to find out if you could make an appointment to learn more.

## **Online Resources for Specialized Skills:**

- Grant finding: A basic online guide to grant finding and grant finding resources, along with librarian contact information. <http://libguides.uccs.edu/grantfinding>
- Using RefWorks: Video tutorials on the basics of using RefWorks to store and organize research and create bibliographies. For more help, contact Susan Vandagriff ([svandagr@uccs.edu](mailto:svandagr@uccs.edu)).  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/ProQuestRefWorks>
- Building a Website: O'Reilly Library's guides to content management systems for basic website design in Squarespace, Wordpress, and more. Users will need to create a free account with their UCCS email to use. (Select Not Listed? Click Here on the initial page.)  
<https://www.safaribooksonline.com/library/view/temporary-access/?orpq>.

## **Other campus resources for professional development:**

- Lynda/LinkedIn Learning: If you haven't already, create a LinkedIn Learning profile:
  - Log on to your student portal
  - Click Training, in the lower right navigation
  - Click LinkedIn Learning.

**If you don't see the skill you need covered by one of these resources or you want additional training, please contact librarian Susan Vandagriff ([svandagr@uccs.edu](mailto:svandagr@uccs.edu)), and we can discuss more options and resources.**

# MENTORING AGREEMENT

## Purpose

This Mentoring Agreement was created to ensure mentees and mentors develop a mutual understanding of expectations from the beginning of this research partnership. Additionally, it creates a series of identifiable benchmarks and goals to work towards and evaluate progress. This plan will help each mentee/mentor pair:

- Establish communication expectations
- Identify goals for this mentoring relationship
- Outline skill areas to be enhanced or developed through this partnership

## As a mentee, I agree to do the following:

- Meet regularly with my mentor and maintain frequent communication.
- Look for multiple opportunities and experiences to enhance my learning.
- Review my progress and adjust my contract as I work towards my identified goals.
- Maintain respect in our relationship

## As a mentor, I agree to do the following:

- Serve as a mentor for \_\_\_\_\_ and provide guidance, oversight, and encouragement.
- Provide feedback regarding their mentorship contract, progress, and experience
- Meet in person or communicate regularly with my mentee to review their progress and help them work toward identified goals.
- Maintain respect in our relationship

## If conflict arises, our plan will be:

Name of Mentee: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentee's Signature (may be electronic): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor's Signature (may be electronic): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# BASIC INFORMATION

## Mentee Information

First, Last MI

Rank

Department

College

Preferred Email

Student ID

## Mentor Information

First, Last MI

Rank

Department

College

Preferred Email

Preferred Phone

## Mentoring Plan Meeting and Contact Schedule

Mentor-mentee meeting frequency (ex. weekly, bi-monthly, etc.):

Plan for meeting format (in-person, tele-conference, TEAMS):

The mentee will work at least \_\_\_\_ hours per week on the project during the academic year.

- The mentee will propose their weekly schedule to mentor by the \_\_\_\_ week of the semester.
- If the mentee must deviate from this schedule (e.g. to study for an upcoming exam), then they will communicate this to the mentor at least \_\_\_\_ (weeks/days/hours) before the change occurs.



# SKILL ACQUISITION PLAN

An important piece of the mentoring plan is to understand what skills the undergraduate researcher needs to develop in order to effectively contribute to the current project. The Kraemer Family Library is happy to support mentees in the acquisition of these skills through research services and workshops they provide or by helping students to identify additional resources and training. As the project develops, it may become necessary for the mentee to gain additional skills, so this table should be reviewed once per month.

Skill Needed	Acquisition Plan and Date	Complete (Y/N)

Last update: \_\_\_\_\_

## List of Library Resources Available to Support Mentee:

- Data visualization
- Primary source searches
- Building bibliographies
- Using RefWorks
- Grant finding
- Building websites

Need a different skill? Contact Susan Vandagriff at  
[svandagr@uccs.edu](mailto:svandagr@uccs.edu)

# PROJECT PLAN YEAR

**Benchmarks/Tasks (examples):**

Here you can outline major tasks and sub-tasks associated with the project and keep track of the progress for each. Below are possible examples of tasks. The mentor should modify the listed tasks as needed for the current project.

**Possible Tasks:**

- Annotated bibliography creation
  - Collecting Oral histories
  - Website design
- Compiling primary sources
  - Transcription/translations
  - Data visualization

	Proposed Date	Completed Date

	Proposed Date	Completed Date

	Proposed Date	Completed Date

# PROJECT PLAN YEAR

	Proposed Date	Completed Date
	Proposed Date	Completed Date
	Proposed Date	Completed Date
<b>Publications/Presentations</b>		
Publication Title and Publication Outlet	Proposed Date	Completed Date