MCNAIR SUMMER RESEARCH INTERNSHIP

A major component of the McNair program is the Summer Research Internship, which takes place during the summer (late May through early August) between the junior and senior year. Scholars, who receive a stipend of $3,000, are required to participate in this aspect of the program, as it is crucial to developing their knowledge and research skills in preparation for graduate study. McNair research interns are encouraged to pursue, with the help of their mentors, the possibility of publishing their research papers in an academic (peer-reviewed) journal. The McNair program also publishes abstracts of Scholars’ research in the UTA McNair Research Journal, which appears during the spring after the research takes place.

The foundation for a successful summer of mentored research must be laid during the spring semester prior to the summer internship. As this is often a student's first semester in the program, McNair staff work closely with new Scholars to help them identify faculty research mentors and appropriate research topics (although the actual research thesis and project design are jointly formulated by Scholars and mentors). Program staff meet with potential mentors and Scholars to ascertain a good fit in the projected mentoring relationship.

In the spring, research interns meet several times with program staff to help them start the research process and to review the requirements of the summer internship. The McNair program provides research interns with a general research guide, and binder of summer internship policies and procedures to help them prepare for this experience.

The UTA Library staff also present an annual seminar each spring to offer McNair interns guidance on using library resources, evaluating potential sources and publishing in academia, in addition to meeting subject librarians in their fields.

The McNair program holds a mentor orientation luncheon in April to ensure that faculty mentors understand the nature of the summer research internship. Finally, McNair staff make every effort to inform Scholars (and their mentors) planning to conduct research on human or animal subjects of the need to meet the requirements of the UTA Office of Research's institutional review board, which approves all forms before interns may begin their work.

RESEARCH INSTITUTE

During the third week of Maymester, summer interns attend a 15-hour (five-morning) institute designed to strengthen their understanding of research-related issues. Each year faculty and former Scholars make guest presentations related to institute goals. Toward the end of the week, interns present their research proposals.
INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENTS

McNair Summer Research Interns are expected to make a full-time (35-40 hours per week) commitment to the internship. Research activity, GRE preparation classes, McNair seminars and mentor meetings may be counted in the total number of hours. Summer Research Interns are required to meet with their mentors on a regular basis over the summer to benefit from their expertise and guidance. The program recommends weekly face-to-face meetings supplemented by e-mail communication. Mentors are required to review and approve the abstract and paper by the beginning of August. Mentors should also assist interns with the development of PowerPoint presentations and preview their oral presentations before the group rehearsal.

Interns must attend various seminars in June and July focusing on various research-related topics. All interns participate in a recorded rehearsal of their PowerPoint presentation and are asked to attend all presentations in early August. The summer concludes with a banquet, at which the accomplishments of interns and mentors are recognized.

SUMMER SCHOLARSHIP

McNair research interns are awarded a scholarship for three credit hours of independent study (4000 level) in their major for the eleven-week summer session. Grades will be awarded by the faculty mentors based on commitment and performance during the internship.

CONFERENCES

Once Scholars have participated in the McNair Summer Research Internship, they are encouraged to attend one off-campus conference their senior year. This may be a McNair (or other) undergraduate research conference or a professional conference. Limited travel funds are available through the McNair program for conference participation.

RESEARCH TOPICS

Topics for the summer research internship will be determined by Scholars and their mentors.