



Notre Dame Institute for **ADVANCED STUDY**

Undergraduate Research Assistantships at the NDIAS, 2017-2018 **Frequently Asked Questions**

How does this program complement other University undergraduate academic programs?

The NDIAS Undergraduate Research Assistantship Program builds on a tradition at the University of Notre Dame of enriching undergraduate curricula with significant research experiences. This program seeks the most promising undergraduate students at the University of Notre Dame who wish to develop their skills for the study of big ideas across disciplinary boundaries and to utilize their experience at the Institute as a model for their own training and scholarship.

What is the goal of this program?

This program is designed to maximize research experience for undergraduates, to develop their research skills, and to stimulate greater interest among undergraduates for pursuing a life of the mind and continuing education at the graduate level. It does this through a program of participation and experience within the academic community of the NDIAS. Students are offered a research assistantship designed to expand their understandings of how research is conducted, especially interdisciplinary research; provide insight and training into how research questions are developed into publications and other scholarship; and challenge them intellectually to think beyond their majors and personal interests.

What are the general features of the program?

Research assistants are assigned to work with scholars in residence at the NDIAS. Assistantships may be for one or two semesters during the 2017-2018 academic year. Assistants work up to 10 hours per week for fifteen weeks per semester at an hourly rate of \$10 per hour for an average total stipend, per student, of up to \$3,000 per year or up to \$1,500 per semester. Typical research assistant tasks include: retrieving on-campus research materials, conducting initial readings of primary and secondary sources, developing bibliographies and literature reviews, identifying additional and/or alternative sources, drafting notes and annotations, proofreading, copying, and editing.

Student research assistants are invited to participate in the academic life of the Institute and may attend seminars at the NDIAS, as their class schedules allow. Research assistants meet on Friday afternoons, as a group, for unique programming that includes small-group sessions with University researchers and research workshops. Students are aided during their assistantships by a Coordinator for Undergraduate Research and the NDIAS Associate Director.

Is this program open to students from any major?

Because of its interdisciplinary nature, students from all majors are invited to apply.

How will the program be evaluated?

During the assistantship, and again at its conclusion, students will be asked to evaluate their experience, reflecting on the improvement of pre-existing skills, new or innovative skills, techniques or methodologies learned, and how the experience has impacted their understanding of ideas, concepts, and research; how it has affected their future educational or career plans; and ways that it has caused them to reconceptualize their own undergraduate education experience. Faculty mentors, Directors of Undergraduate Studies, program advisors, and directors of honors and other academic programs may be consulted as part of the evaluation process.

Who will administer the program?

The program is administered by Donald L. Stelluto, Ph.D., Associate Director of the NDIAS. Questions about the program may be directed to Dr. Stelluto at dstellut@nd.edu.

What have Notre Dame students serving as research assistants had to say about the program?

As my work with my Fellow progresses, I have become increasingly excited to begin my own research. Learning how to better ask important research questions and frame research in context has made me more aware of possible topics I would like to pursue in my own research. In fact, it has inspired me to reach out to a professor in the field and discuss a broader topic of interest with him.

– Catherine Etchart, 2019

I am learning an incredible amount about time management, what it means to contribute to research, the academic process, and the environment of higher learning and study. It is exciting, stimulating, and it appeals greatly to me! It is convincing me more and more that this is the type of work I would like to engage in on a professional level. It is assuring me of my choice to apply to graduate school and engage in my own research!

– Nick Munsen, 2017

The research that I have been doing on this idea of causation...has affected my scientific lab work here at Notre Dame. ...I work with a specific type of bacteria that produces a complex metabolite. Thinking about causation and the philosophy of biology, I began to analyze my own research to see how it relates to these concepts...[and] how scientific research in laboratories are able to describe the real world. The concept of causation is one that causes me to rethink everything that I was able to take for granted prior to this experience. Now, I am forced to think beyond the scientific perspective. [My Fellow's] research of the theory of causation from a philosophical perspective of science has caused me to think about its purpose throughout my courses and lab work every day.

– Emily Zion, 2017

Working as a Templeton Undergraduate Research Assistant made me a better, more critical thinker, a more inquisitive student, and more confident in my abilities as a researcher. It has also given me an opportunity to explore, in depth, an issue (consciousness) that I have always been very interested in. Further, it has solidified my interest in pursuing a career in the academy, and humanized professors and researchers, making me think that these positions are tenable and desirable for me to one day take up.

– Sean Costello, 2016

How do I apply for a 2017-2018 NDIAS Undergraduate Research Assistantship?

The application for undergraduate research assistantships at the NDIAS will be available online, via the NDIAS website (<http://ndias.nd.edu>). Applicants will be asked (1) to upload a current copy of their resume of academic and work-related experience; (2) to identify and provide contact information for two academic/faculty references who could comment on their academic capabilities and performance; and (3) to respond to several questions about research as well as their experience with research activity. The deadline for completion and submission of all application materials online is **Wednesday, May 17, 2017**.

When will I know if I have been selected as a 2017-2018 Undergraduate Research Assistant?

The selection of research assistants is highly competitive. Applicants with completed files will be notified about their application between May 30 and June 15, 2017. Those selected as research assistants will receive information in June, 2017 about their respective Fellows and the research projects on which they will assist. Research assistants will meet with and begin working with their respective Fellows during the first week of instruction in August, 2017.