

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. How do I get started?

Approach a faculty member who is doing research that is interesting to you. Each faculty member has a web page which outlines their research interests, usually under their school's main website. Most faculty will be glad to discuss undergraduate projects in their area.

## 2. Will there be many projects in my major?

Every faculty member does research in his or her field of specialty. There are also over 100 interdisciplinary research centers that do research in teams, cutting across traditional majors. Find a list of all research units at <http://www.gatech.edu/colleges-schools/centers-institutes.php>.

## 3. Can freshmen do undergraduate research ?

It is up to each faculty member. They may require that you have certain skills or course work before starting research so that you will be safe and successful in your research endeavor. Freshmen are allowed to do undergraduate research and some do, but many wait until later.

## 4. How do I actually sign up?

Once you and a faculty member have agreed upon a project, you may choose to do the research for course credit or for pay. Typically, students start out doing research for course credit and then work up to pay.

## 5. How do I sign up for undergraduate research courses?

Each school/major has special courses for undergraduate research with variable credit hours. There are courses that denote research for credit or research for pay. Each credit hour equals 3 hours of research per week during a semester. Registration for these courses are by permit only. The school that the faculty member resides in will give you the "electronic permit" you need to register for this course. See your academic advisor for more details.

## 6. How does the course credit count?

Most schools/majors allow the undergraduate research course hours (XX2699 or XX4699) for credit to be counted as either technical or free electives toward your degree. Only one or two of the majors have no free elective hours, due to the large number of classes required for their degree. See your academic advisor or the undergraduate website of your school/major.

## 7. How do I sign up for research for pay?

There are several ways to secure funding. The faculty member can pay you out of their research funding, if available. You may also apply for funding through the President's Undergraduate Research Award (PURA) or apply to other "funding agencies" on campus. Some schools/departments have their own scholarship programs, as well as run full-time research programs for undergraduates in the summer. Georgia Tech has a set of audit, nonbillable undergraduate research assistantship courses (XX2698, XX4698) that students should enroll in when pursuing research for pay.

## 8. Will I be doing research full time or part time?

Your class work comes first. Be sure you have the time and motivation needed to do a good job on your research project. Students do research part time in the fall and spring semesters. In the summer, you could do research full time or part time. Discuss this with your faculty mentor.

## **9. How long do I do undergraduate research?**

The process of creating new knowledge in your field can be very exciting, but may not happen all in one semester. Discuss this with your faculty mentor. Commonly, many faculty want more than a one-semester commitment from you. Some students do undergraduate research for 1-2 years.

## **10. What's in it for me?**

Undergraduate research is a great way to investigate possible career paths or see whether you may consider doing graduate work later. It is also a good way to get to know a professor who is an expert in your major in a setting other than a classroom. It's the perfect on-campus job!

## **11. What is the Research Option ?**

To learn more about the Research Option, please visit [http://www.undergradresearch.gatech.edu/research\\_option/index.php](http://www.undergradresearch.gatech.edu/research_option/index.php)

## **12. Can non-Georgia Tech students or students studying at international universities participate in research at Georgia Tech ?**

Most research opportunities on campus are for currently enrolled Georgia Tech undergraduate students. A few opportunities for non-Georgia Tech students who are U.S. citizens are available through the National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) sites at Georgia Tech (see the research opportunities page for more information). The Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI) also has a few summer opportunities for undergraduate researchers <http://www.gtri.gatech.edu>. Most schools on campus do not host international students on research internships during the summer.

## **14. How can I get credit for external research opportunities?**

To learn more about obtaining credit for external research opportunities, please visit <http://www.undergradresearch.gatech.edu/documents/UROP-external-research-info-june2009.pdf>.