Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) in Integrated Environmental Sciences

Funded by the National Science Foundation

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

Are you thinking of a career in research? Are you interested in how our environment functions and how people interact with the environment? If so, read on or visit us on the web at:

http://www.esi.utexas.edu/research/reu/

Beginning in the summer of 2006, the University of Texas at Austin Environmental Science Institute (ESI) will begin a new program to get undergraduates involved in integrated environmental science research. Our program is designed to give undergraduate students the opportunity to participate in environmental research that cuts across disciplinary boundaries. The program accepts students from across the country, and is funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation called "Research Experience for Undergraduates" (or REU).

If you are accepted into the program you will spend the summer learning how to do research, participating in group research projects, designing your own short research project, and presenting your work in an end-of-summer student symposium. The program also includes seminars on environmental science topics, career development workshops, social outings, and four outstanding field experiences that will trace the path of water through a watershed and aquifer from recharge in central Texas to discharge into Gulf coast estuaries.

Our program will stress the connections between scientific and policy fields related to the environment. Why is this important? Think about trying to manage a river ecosystem without considering the influence of human society on water quality. Our program will tackle difficult issues like this by bringing together researchers from a variety of disciplines, and letting you hear how their work relates to the bigger picture.

The University of Texas is home to top faculty and researchers in the area of watershed research. Students in the program will work in a research group headed by a faculty mentor, but come together regularly to participate in group projects and field outings. There will be opportunities to explore research in the fields of ecology, geology, hydrogeology, civil engineering, urban planning, GIS, and coastal ecology, and maybe even research that cuts across the boundary of two or more disciplines. There will also be opportunities to visit with professionals in environmental consulting firms and government agencies.

Its more than just research – there will be a variety of social activities throughout the summer, and everyone participating in the program will be part of a short, student-produced documentary film that capture the activities of the experience.

SCHEDULE AND SUPPORT

The ten week program runs from the first week of June to the first week of August, 2006. All students will be housed in a UT dormitory, and the costs of the dormitory and meal plan are included in the program. Each student will be awarded a salary of $4,000 for the summer, and some travel funds will be available to help defray the cost of traveling to Austin.
WHO SHOULD APPLY?

Students in their sophomore or junior years of college, with strong credentials and majoring in biology, ecology, geological sciences, civil engineering, marine science, chemistry, or any other environmentally-related discipline, are encouraged to apply. Participants must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents. We are also accepting applications for one communications student to help shoot and edit a documentary film about the project.

APPLICATIONS

The application deadline is March 1, 2006. Applications may be downloaded at:
http://www.esi.utexas.edu/research/reu/#applications

The application for the summer program requires submission of an application form, an undergraduate transcript, two letters of recommendation from faculty at the undergraduate institution, and a one page (double-spaced) personal essay stating the applicant’s career goals and academic interests. These items should be sent electronically to:

Kathleen Sebenoler
ksebenoler@mail.utexas.edu

Phone: 512.471.4974
Geology Building 5.226C
MC: C1100

Inquiries may be directed to Dr. Jay Banner, Environmental Science Institute, University of Texas at Austin, banner@mail.utexas.edu.

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