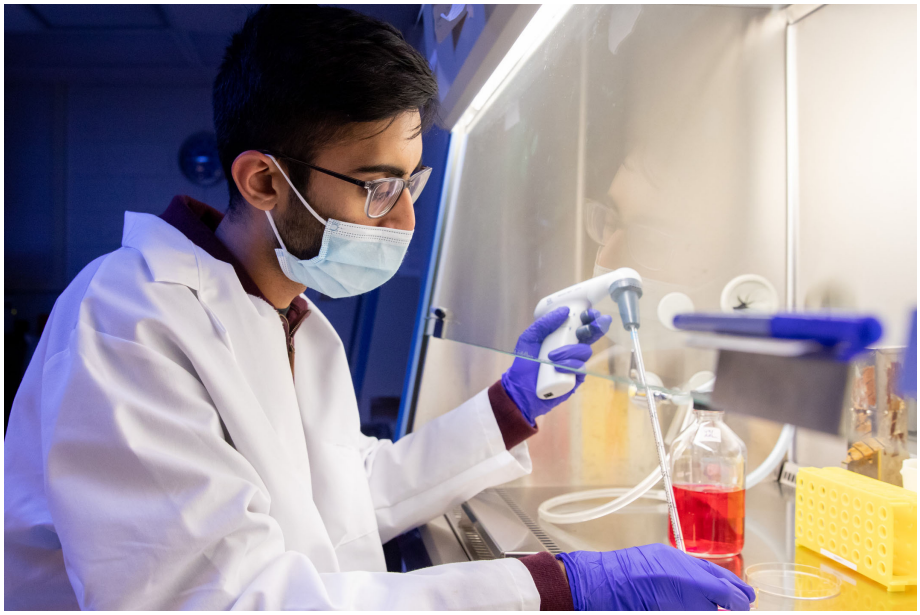
SCHOOL OF MOLECULAR & CELLULAR BIOLOGY

Instructional Program

(217) 333-6774 | advising@Illinois.edu | go.mcb.illinois.edu/undergradresearch Jan 2023

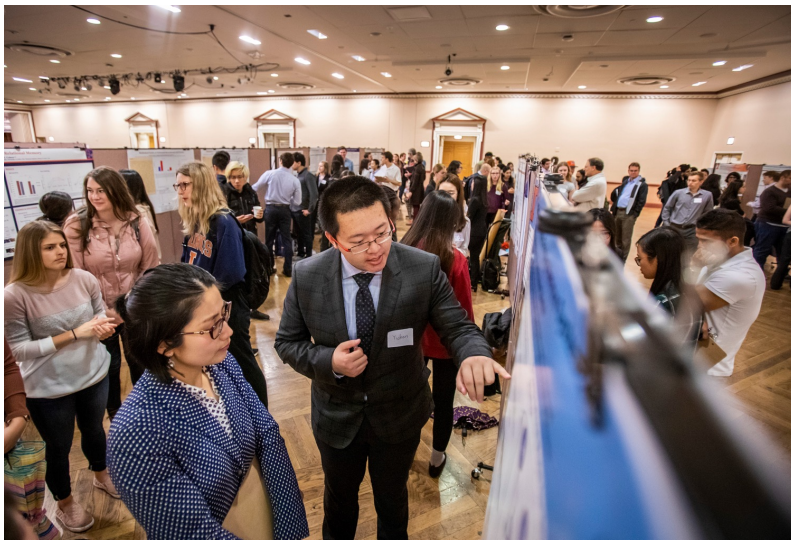


Enrich your undergraduate education by conducting research in a University of Illinois laboratory.

Undergraduate research is an original scholarly project conducted under the direction of faculty in an MCB or other approved UIUC lab, typically for MCB 290 course credit and a letter grade.

Benefits of research

- Participate in cutting-edge science.
- Develop skills in analytical thinking and communication using scientific concepts and language.
- Gain intensive practical knowledge using state-of-the-art technology.
- Determine whether graduate studies may be a viable postgraduate goal.
- Gain an understanding of how techniques and procedures discussed in class are used in a professional lab.



"As an undergraduate researcher, I have had the unique opportunity to pursue my own independent project in the lab and get to see my questions answered directly by my own research."

--MCB student Neha Arun is investigating HIV pathogenesis. She is a member of microbiology professor Collin Kieffer's lab and a former Mayo Clinic Summer Undergraduate Research Fellow.

Eligibility for MCB 290 credit

- Biology, MCB, MCB Honors, or Neuroscience major conducting research in an approved lab at UIUC.
- Good academic standing, with a recommended GPA of 2.50 or higher .
- Enroll by university deadline.
- Students cannot receive monetary payment or any other form of academic credit for the same research for which MCB 290 credit is earned.

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How to find a research position

Students are expected to take the initiative to contact faculty and apply for a position.

1. Meet with academic advisor and attend an Undergraduate Research Information Session to make sure you have a clear understanding of expectations.
2. Make list of faculty with whom you are interested in working.
3. Create online profile using the MCB 290 Student Profile Database.
4. Send individual emails to faculty introducing yourself and expressing your interest in working in their lab. Be professional in all correspondence.
5. Once you find a lab, fill out the appropriate form requesting credit for MCB 290 prior to the deadline.
6. Communicate with faculty to ensure you have a clear understanding of their expectations.
7. Renew research credit each semester.

Workload

- During a regular, 16-week semester, one credit hour of MCB 290 is earned for each five hours per week spent in the lab.
- During eight-week summer sessions, one hour of credit is earned for each 10 hours per week spent in the lab.
- Although a limit of 10 credit hours of MCB 290 can be applied toward the 120 hours needed for graduation, **students are encouraged to continue research for as many terms as they wish.** All MCB 290 semesters (even beyond 10 credit hours) and their assigned letter grades will appear on the academic record and count in the calculation of the GPA.

MCB 492 Senior Thesis and Graduation with Distinction

Completing at least two semesters of MCB 290 Undergraduate Research for two credit hours, or more, each semester under the guidance of the same professor will qualify students to enroll in MCB 492 Senior Thesis in their last semester before graduation. Not every student who conducts MCB 290 research chooses to culminate his or her research experience with a thesis. Eligible students may choose to submit a thesis for a grade and/or for distinction consideration. Discuss with your faculty advisor what is advisable and possible for your project.

Graduating seniors in the MCB major who have demonstrated excellence in research and academics may be considered for one of the following graduation awards, determined by the MCB Distinction Committee: Distinction, High Distinction, Highest Distinction.

More information on the senior thesis or graduating with distinction: https://go.illinois.edu/MCB-distinction