**Research, Training, & Institutional Commitments Boilerplate**

**Center for Undergraduate Research Opportunities**

The Center for Undergraduate Research Opportunities (CURO) is open to all undergraduates at UGA. CURO allows students to pursue faculty-mentored research in any discipline as early as the first year of college. The program supports students in identifying and selecting opportunities, choosing a mentor, and presenting their work. Through this program, students can earn course credit for research in any department regardless of year, GPA, or major. Additionally, approximately 500 UGA undergraduates now participate in the CURO Symposium each semester.

In addition to $3,000 summer fellowship grants, students can apply for the CURO research assistantship, which has provided $1,000 stipends to 500 undergraduates each year since 2016. Students can also apply for the CURO Conference Participation Grant, which provides funding for undergraduate students to present their research at national conferences.

**Diversity at UGA**

The University of Georgia is strongly committed to enhancing and maintaining a diverse and inclusive environment for learning, teaching, research, and service. The Office of Institutional Diversity (OID) provides institutional leadership in this regard, with goals including: 1. Enhancing diversity awareness and education through training and learning opportunities for faculty, students, and staff throughout the university. 2. Promoting awareness of UGA’s diversity efforts by supporting diversity related events across the UGA campuses. 3. Establishing and defining strategic partnerships between the Office of Institutional Diversity and other units. 4. Identifying and obtaining additional resources that will enhance and support institutional diversity endeavors. The OID offers numerous classes in diversity and inclusion, and gives workshops and presentations to various groups, including faculty and graduate students. A Certificate in Diversity and Inclusion can also be earned upon the completion of six diversity courses. Safe space training is offered through the LGBT Office. The OID offers a variety of additional programs including membership in the National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity (NCFDD).

The University is currently undertaking a number of efforts to hire a more diverse faculty. UGA is a member of the second cohort of the **ASPIRE Alliance IChange Network**, a national comprehensive effort to increase faculty diversity and the use of inclusive teaching practices in STEM fields. At the institutional level, the university’s Office of Faculty Affairs administers training for search committees on implicit biases and the best practices for recruitment of a diverse hiring pool. The **Planning Committee on Diversity and Inclusive Excellence** convened by President Morehead recently completed a comprehensive five-year roadmap to advance diversity and inclusion at UGA. The plan includes 11 university-level goals including providing training for search committees and hiring authorities, increasing the enrollment of underrepresented students, increasing the number of underrepresented faculty and staff, and increasing institutional visibility in the educational pipeline of underserved communities. Each of the 11 goals in the plan includes key performance indicators to measure progress over time as well as institutional actions to be implemented immediately. President Morehead has also established a **Task Force on Race, Ethnicity, and Community** to develop initiatives to improve the campus culture and strengthen the learning environment at UGA. Sixteen initiatives developed by the task force already are moving forward, including a diversity educator position, a speaker series, a community read program, campus diversity awards, campus markers to recognize historically Black fraternities and sororities, and a student advisory board, among others.

**Experiential Learning**

The Office of University Experiential Learning (EL) ensures access to challenging and engaging experiential programs. All UGA undergraduates are required to engage in at least one approved Experiential Learning activity that enhances learning and positions them for success after graduation. To succeed, students in the 21st century must be able to tackle real-world problems and use critical thinking and problem-solving skills to solve multifaceted problems that do not have simple solutions. A growing body of research demonstrates that experiential learning enhances student learning, success in the classroom, on-time graduation, and transition to the workforce. EL gives students hands-on opportunities to connect their academic foundations to the world beyond the classroom through internships, study abroad, faculty-mentored research, service learning, and leadership opportunities.

**Graduate School Diversity Programs**

The Graduate School assists with the recruitment of trainees from underrepresented/underserved populations, including first-generation and rural college students. The **UGA Graduate FUSE (Facilitating Underrepresented Student Experiences) Program** is an educational bilateral pipeline partnership with six Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Albany State University, Florida A&M University, Fort Valley State University, Morehouse College, North Carolina A&T State University, and Spelman College. FUSE provides students from those institutions with an application fee waiver. If admitted to UGA, students are considered for a Graduate School assistantship that is complemented by monthly professional, academic, and social workshops.

Further, the Graduate School provides our **Graduate School 101** workshop to undergraduates (typically freshmen and sophomores) at these institutions and to other minority-serving institutions as well as McNair Scholars and Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation (LSAMP) programs. Each fall and spring, the Graduate School hosts the **Preparing Diverse Populations for Graduate Admissions**, a one-day interactive program that provides participants with the opportunity to explore the advantages of applying to graduate school, learn insider tips on how to score competitively on the GRE, speak with current students about their graduate school experience, and learn essential strategies to secure graduate school funding. Lastly, for underrepresented/underserved students who have been admitted and are now deciding whether to attend UGA, our **Future Scholars Visitation Program** allows them to visit the campus and their academic department of interest in the spring before the fall semester of matriculation.

For underrepresented/underserved students who have been admitted and intend to enroll, the Graduate School provides the **Gateway to Graduate School Bridge Program**, allowing these students to begin their graduate education at UGA in the summer semester rather than the fall to better assist with a smooth transition to graduate education. The program provides students with an intellectual, professional, and social introduction to UGA.

Finally, UGA has a student organization that supports the retention of underrepresented graduate students. **Graduate and Professional Scholars (GAPS)** provides a variety of professional development and networking opportunities for graduate students in all disciplines. The Graduate school will work with you to ensure that your trainees are aware of all of these activities.

**Pedagogy Training for Teaching Assistants**

Teaching excellence is at the forefront of the University of Georgia’s priorities.  UGA provides robust instructional development roles for graduate students, with the goal of preparing teaching and laboratory assistants for instructional duties at UGA, as well as supporting their development as instructors for future careers in the academy. The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) at UGA is tasked with providing this support, supplementing required TA training with regular workshops and enrichment programs to assist graduate students as they improve their instructional effectiveness.

UGA’s teaching assistant (TA) policy requires all graduate students with instructional roles to receive support and training prior to or concurrently with the start of their teaching activities.  Per UGA policy, anyone holding an assistantship with defined teaching duties – including all teaching and laboratory assistants – must complete a TA Orientation conducted by the CTL prior to or concurrently with their first assistantship. This interdisciplinary orientation provides general preparation for graduate students with instructional responsibilities, including an overview of policies and procedures pertinent to their role, an introduction to effective teaching strategies and practices, and exposure to services and resources available across campus that offer support for individuals engaged in teaching and learning at UGA. All graduate teaching assistants must also successfully complete GRSC 7770 (Intro to College Teaching) or an approved departmental equivalent prior to or concurrently with their first teaching assignment. GRSC 7770 is a credit-bearing course providing instructional assistants with knowledge of pedagogical approaches, relevant UGA policies, and available support systems.

In addition to the training required of TAs, the CTL also offers a range of enrichment activities available to all graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to support their instructional development. The CTL’s GradTeach programs focus on topics of particular interest to the developing teacher, including effective teaching presentation, facilitating discussion, lesson planning, intercultural communication, and preparing for the academic job market. GradTeach programming includes an annual workshop series open to all graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, advanced graduate pedagogy courses, book clubs, and *TA Cafés*, which provide opportunities for instructional assistants to come together and discuss issues relevant to their work. Teaching assistants are also encouraged to request teaching observations and mid-semester formative evaluations (MSFEs), and to connect with the CTL for consultations on teaching as well as teaching-related job market materials development (such as a teaching portfolio). Finally, the CTL and the Graduate School jointly sponsor the Future Faculty Fellows Program (3FP), a year-long professional development program that brings together 15 innovative and dedicated teaching assistants from across campus to talk about, reflect upon, and improve their teaching, while contributing to their preparation for the academic job market and the rigors of their first faculty positions.

**Research Commitments**

As the state’s most comprehensive research institution, the University of Georgia is a major driver of economic and workforce development, catalyzing effective public/private partnerships that support industry, create new businesses, generate new jobs, and train the college-educated workforce of tomorrow. Research strengths include glycobiology; plant sciences, including genomics; infectious diseases, including vaccine development and parasitology; biomedical research, including stem cell/regenerative medicine; and behavioral/social science research. The University of Georgia is classified at the Highest Research Activity level, according to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. UGA’s research expenditures totaled $546 million in FY2022, including NIH expenditures of $91 million and NSF expenditures of $39 million. UGA’s estimated $7.6 billion annual impact on the economy of Georgia includes a $531 million economic impact from research-based startup companies.

**Reserve Officer Training Corps**

The Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC) provides a leadership program for University of Georgia students interested in earning a commission and entering the active-duty Air Force as an officer after completing a bachelor’s degree. AFROTC instructs students in military heritage, the development of air and space power, military ethics, drill and ceremonies, communication, human relations, and leadership theory and techniques. The Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) offers students an opportunity to diversify their college curriculum by providing military science courses that prepare them with tools, training, and experience to help them succeed in any competitive environment. During classes and field training, students learn first-hand what it takes to lead others, motivate groups, and conduct missions as an officer in the Army.

**Service-Learning**

UGA’s Office of Service-Learning supports academic service-learning and community engagement initiatives designed to enhance students’ civic and academic learning, promote engaged research that is responsive to community needs, and contribute to the public good through mutually beneficial community-university partnerships. During the last academic year, 514 service-learning course sections were taught at UGA. These courses represented 9,277 student enrollments, reaching 6,800 unique students at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional level in all 18 of UGA’s schools and colleges, extended campuses, online courses, and through study abroad. Students in these classes provided over 340,000 hours of service last year; as a value of volunteer time, this represents $10 million in direct benefit to communities across Georgia.

**The State Botanical Garden of Georgia**

The State Botanical Garden of Georgia at the University of Georgia aims to acquire and disseminate botanical knowledge and to foster appreciation, understanding and stewardship of plants and nature through collections and displays, horticultural gardens, research, educational programs, exhibitions, and special events. The garden is a 313-acre preserve set aside by UGA in 1968 for the study and enjoyment of plants and nature. Located three miles south of campus, it is a living laboratory serving educational, research, recreational and public service roles for the university and the citizens of Georgia. It contains a number of specialized theme gardens and collections, more than five miles of nature trails, and four major facilities including a tropical conservatory.