CCB-SEEDS Mentorship Program Description

Overall Goal

This program is a collaboration between the UC Riverside SEEDS club and the Center for Conservation Biology (CCB) graduate student club. Many incoming UCR undergraduate students are not exposed to the diversity of disciplines in biology and are unsure about how to find research opportunities. Therefore, the objective of this program is to introduce undergraduate students to research areas, lab/field methods, and the graduate student experience in ecology, evolutionary biology, and conservation biology fields through mentoring by graduate students. While the goal of this program is not to have mentees develop independent research projects with their mentors, this program will serve as an introduction to the diverse research experiences possible at UCR in these fields.

Signing up as a mentor or mentee

Please note: if you are recurring mentor or mentee please fill out the respective signup form again for Fall 2024

- Mentor signup form
- Mentee signup form

Testimonials

Our mentors and mentees wanted to share these testimonials with prospective mentors and mentees!

- Mentors
  - "It is really a good chance to share your experiences of grad school with prospective undergrads."
  - "Working with my SEEDS mentee has helped me approach my research and graduate school with a more positive perspective. Graduate school is exhausting and weekly meetings with an excited undergraduate can really brighten your day. This program has provided great mentoring experience and given me the opportunity to develop resources I can use for students in the future (example: intro to data visualization in R)."
- Mentees
  - "Use this opportunity to learn about graduate school, whether you are certain or not that you want to attend. It definitely helps you debunk the myths or facts about graduate school and the life of a grad student. Even if you decide you don't want to pursue it after the mentorship, you definitely gain skills and knowledge in a 1-to-1 environment that not many undergraduates get to have."
  - "Being a mentee in this program has been super fun so far, and it has opened my eyes to an entirely new world of possibilities regarding biology and ecology!"

Program Structure

The Program Committee will assist in matching mentees with mentors and provide resources for participants.

- Mentors will be current UC Riverside graduate students in ecology, evolution, and conservation biology fields
- Mentees will work with a mentor for one quarter
- Mentees can rotate mentors each quarter

Learning goals

Mentees will learn about:

- the host lab's research program and methods (lab/field techniques)
- important literature in the field
- life as a graduate student
- potential careers and research areas of interest
- how to begin undergraduate research and navigate the world of science

This program may be especially helpful for those undergraduates who have not yet joined a research lab but want to learn more about research. Any UCR undergraduate student is welcome to join.

Mentee Expectations

- time commitment of ~3 hours per week
- effective communication & professional conduct

Program Committee Contact Information

EEOB/CCB graduate students

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Fall 2024 Program Guideline

Note: This schedule is ***flexible***. Topics are suggested and can be changed and/or moved around, and new topics can be added, based on mentee goals/interests or mentor availability.

Week	Topic	Description of possible activities
Week 0	Monday, September 23 – Mentor and mentee sign up forms open	
Week 2	Friday, October 11 - Graduate student panel! 5pm in the Darwin room	
Week 3	Monday, October 14 – Deadline to sign up for mentorship program Tuesday, October 15 – Mentor selection form opens Thursday, October 17 - Mentor selection form closes Friday, October 18 – Pairings sent out	
Week 4	**Initial connection**	Get to know each other! What does the mentee want to get out of this program? What does the mentor research? How do mentor and mentee overlap?
Week 5	**Making the most of your undergrad experience**	Mentor will help the mentee identify activities to do in their undergraduate time such as research opportunities, classes to take, internships, professional development programs, awards/scholarships to apply for, etc..
Week 6	**The person behind the scientist**	Academia can be harsh. The mentor and mentee will discuss ways to reduce burnout, to set boundaries with yourself and others, and find peace outside of your academics.
Week 7	**Day in the life of a graduate student**	The mentor will show the mentee what the average day for a grad student looks like. You can do this in multiple ways: 1. Discuss what your day-to-day schedule, activities, and responsibilities are as a graduate student during your scheduled meeting time. Ex: work life balance, teaching, research, scientific writing, etc. 2. Mentee shadows mentor for no more than a couple of hours. This can include a tour of the mentor's lab or field site (or for virtual work, an overview of the software used); review of techniques and methodology used; sitting in on seminars; etc.
Week 8	**CV/Resume Review**	Mentors help mentees build a CV/resume. If mentees already have one, mentors will review and give feedback.
Week 9	**Building a professional identity**	The world of science comes with its own etiquette. How do you initiate and maintain professional

		connections? How do you get letters of recommendation? How do you get involved with professional societies? How do you brand yourself? Why are so many scientists on X? The mentor will help the mentee navigate these tricky norms.
Week 10	**Career paths**	Mentor and mentee will discuss careers in ecology/evolution/conservation that do and do not require graduate school, the process of applying for graduate school, and/or finding your area(s) of professional interest (depending on mentee goals).
🎉 End of Fall Quarter Mixer 🥳		
Finals Week	No meeting	No meeting.