

## SEEDS-CCB Mentorship Program Description

Fall 2023

### 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 2023

- [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

## **Contact Information**

Clara Woodie

Program Committee Chair

[cwood020@ucr.edu](mailto:cwood020@ucr.edu)

→ *Please contact me with any questions, issues or concerns about the program or your mentor/mentee.*

## **Program Committee**

*CCB graduate students*

Clara Woodie

Elena Kaminskaia

*SEEDS undergraduate students*

Gabrielle Shen

Joanna Fuerte

## Fall 2023 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 21 – Mentor and mentee sign up forms open	
Week 1	Friday, October 6 – Deadline to sign up as a mentee or mentor	
Week 2	Monday, October 9 – Mentor selection form opens, due Thursday October 12 Friday, October 13 – Pairings sent out	
Week 3	<b>Initial connection and Relevant literature</b>	Initial meeting should be geared towards establishing a connection: <i>Mentee should come with questions prepared to facilitate discussion.</i> Discuss how to read scientific papers and/or brief literature review; read and discuss a seminal paper.
Week 4	<b>Introduction to graduate student’s research</b>	Tour of lab or field site (or for virtual work, an overview of the software used); review of techniques and methodology.
Week 5	<b>Project Proposals</b>	Discuss how to propose and plan a project, experimental design, and how to identify research questions.
Week 6	<b>Data Analysis &amp; Visualization</b>	Review the workflow/process of data analysis such as where to start, best practices for making figures, etc.
Week 7	<b>Career Paths</b>	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).
Week 8	<b>Shadowing</b>	Mentee will shadow graduate student mentor during a “typical day in the life of a graduate student” (no longer than a couple hours).
Week 9	<b>Making the most of your undergraduate experience</b>	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 10	<b>Ask Me Anything</b>	Optional meeting – up to discretion of pairs.
Finals Week	No meeting	No meeting.