Want to Get Involved in Research?

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The first step to getting started in research is to **find a faculty mentor**. The role of a mentor is to:
- assist in the development and articulation of a project idea and plan.
- help you understand the methods and concepts of research and scholarship within your field.
- guide and train you in the skills and/or techniques needed to complete a project.

There is no pressure to come up with your own idea because most students work directly on a faculty project.

There are multiple ways to find a mentor:
- Talk to current or past professors
- Ask peers about their professors or mentors
- Take a professor out-to-lunch with the Student Success Center’s Out-To-Lunch Program

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Students engage in research in several ways such as volunteering, earning independent study credit, and receiving grant funding. Talk to your mentor about which is the best fit for you!

Once you have a mentor and a project, the first step is to **register your project** in the Research Registry (sc.edu/our/researchregistry/).

**Academic Credit**
Visit sc.edu/our → Student Resources → Academic Credit for Research and talk to your Academic Advisor and mentor

**Grants**
OUR has several funding opportunities for students. Visit our website or make an appointment to speak with one of our advisors.

No matter what path in research you choose, **Engage – Document – Reflect**
Learn more at sc.edu/CIEL

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With a project well underway, get ready to show off your accomplishments! Showcasing your research can help build your resume, enhance your communication skills and give you special networking, travel and other exciting opportunities.

**Opportunities to showcase at UofSC:**

- Present at Discover UofSC
  sc.edu/DiscoverUofSC
- Publish in Caravel
  Caravel.sc.edu/ or CarolinaCrosstalk
- Graduate with Leadership Distinction in Research
  sc.edu/GLD

Learn more at
sc.edu/our → Share your work
Finding a Mentor/Project Checklist

- Create list of areas of research or topics that interest you
- Create list of potential mentors
  - Explore the Faculty Database
  - Ask current or previous professors or advisors for suggestions (or if they have opportunities for you)
  - Get ideas and suggestions of good mentors from peers
- Read about the research of potential mentors
  - Faculty web pages
  - Publications online and through the library
- Email a BRIEF letter of introduction requesting a meeting
  - Formal business letter (Dear Dr. or Prof.)
  - Brief introduction (1-2 sentences) about yourself
  - Purpose of letter (looking to get or very interested in getting research experience—be specific!)
  - Request a meeting (I am interested in learning more about your research, would you have some time to meet with me so that I can learn more about it. I am available [list days/times] and am happy to meet at your convenience.)
  - Closing statement (Thank you for your time. Sincerely.)
  - Include your resume and/or academic transcripts (optional)
- Follow up
  - Give the mentor at least one week to respond to your email (do not expect immediate response)
- Be prepared for your initial meeting
  - Bring background information about yourself (e.g., resume, academic transcripts)
  - Determine how much time you can commit to a research project (bring course schedule)
  - Bring 2-3 questions to ask about the mentor’s research
  - Show your knowledge and interest in the mentor’s research as well as your motivation & excitement for pursuing a research project

To ensure you find a mentor that is the right fit for you and your research interests, we recommend you identify several faculty members. List their information below and decide who to contact first. Do not send emails to multiple faculty at once. Wait at least a week for a response before contacting them again or emailing the next faculty member on your list.

Faculty Name: ________________________________  Faculty Name: ________________________________
Email: ________________________________  Email: ________________________________
Research Interest: ________________________________  Research Interest: ________________________________

Faculty Name: ________________________________  Faculty Name: ________________________________
Email: ________________________________  Email: ________________________________
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