

**Anxiety, Mood, and Addiction Research Collaborative**  
**Undergraduate Research Assistant (URA) Eligibility Requirements and Expectations**

**Eligibility**

- First-year students, sophomores or juniors enrolled at UIC (exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis for seniors).
- A two-year commitment is required.
- The student should be in good academic standing with a strong GPA (3.0 or above) and have an interest in mental health, medicine, psychology, psychiatry or related field.
- Preference may be given to students in the Honors College and/or students who have completed courses in research methods or statistics.
- Student should be self-motivated and display a high attention to detail.

**Onboarding Requirements and Expectations for URA**

- Work with research coordinator/assistant to plan work schedule each semester that meets the minimum of 10 hours per week with a two-year commitment. The student's first semester in the lab will not include any direct interaction with research participants.
- Complete all Department of Psychiatry paperwork including a background check.
- Provide a photo for inclusion on the AMARC website.
- Complete online HIPPA and CITI (IRB) training (renew every two years).

**General Requirements and Expectations for URA**

- Display professional dress and conduct at all times when acting as a representative of the AMARC.
  - Use polite and professional verbal and written communication.
  - Dress can be casual but should be appropriate for an outpatient clinic (no sweatpants, workout clothes, graphic t-shirts, ripped jeans, excessively short or low-cut, etc.). Be yourself while still looking professional.
- Read and respond (as necessary) to all emails within 24 hours.
- Adhere to all instructions provided when conducting any clinical research or data entry activities. Communicate with immediate supervisor if something needs more clarification.
- Participation in bi-monthly AMARC Journal Club (as schedule allows).
- Complete end of shift reports documenting activities performed in the lab.
- Notify supervisor in writing at least one week prior to any planned time-off needed. Notify supervisor as soon as possible for absences related to emergency/illness. Plan any necessary make-up shifts and find replacement when planning an absence.

**Expectations of Lab Supervisor(s)**

*The student will be supervised by research staff in conjunction with a faculty member.*

- Review expectations and train URA on all assigned tasks.
- Supervise all URA research activities and be available for support as needed.
- Provide descriptive and constructive feedback on URA performance.
- Assist the URA in professional, academic and/or research development, both broadly and specific to individual URA's goals and interests.
- Ensure that URA is receiving the education and training experiences that they desire from their participation in AMARC activities.
- Inform URA of research-related opportunities (e.g. lectures and seminars, scholarship opportunities, course credit options) and assist with any application or enrollment requirements.
- Assist URA in receiving Letters of Recommendation and/or course credit when student complies with all stated expectations and timelines.

### **URA Activities**

- During their first semester volunteering with the AMARC, URAs will:
  - Familiarize themselves with ongoing research studies and conduct background reading on recommended topics;
  - Complete online and in-person trainings as required for the project;
  - Assist with data entry and database management;
  - Shadow or observe more senior URAs or research staff in their conduct of research activities and participant interactions.
- After the first semester, and subject to supervisor approval, URAs will assist in conducting IRB approved human subjects research activities including:
  - Recruiting participants and determining eligibility;
  - Collecting research data through the use of questionnaires and surveys, electroencephalography, functional magnetic resonance imaging, psychophysiology recordings;
  - Verifying and scoring collected data and working in databases;
  - Completing pre-processing data analysis of research data.
- URAs may also perform supportive tasks for research activities including:
  - Conducting literature reviews on designated topics;
  - Assisting with IRB documentation and submissions.
- More senior URAs may be given supervisory or leadership roles for specific projects and/or be asked to conduct more complex tasks.

### **Requesting Letters of Recommendation (LOR)**

- URAs may request a LOR after they have been with the AMARC for one semester.
- URA should set-up a time to discuss the request in-person with their immediate supervisor.
- 4 weeks' notice should be given to ensure ample time for writing and submitting the LOR. Requests made with less than 4 weeks' notice may be written at the discretion of the immediate supervisor.

### **Receiving Course Credit**

- After their first semester, URAs are encouraged to use their time in the AMARC to

satisfy [course requirements](#).

- Students should schedule a meeting with their immediate supervisor to review the appropriate course, prerequisites (if any), required work hours per credit hours, required activities and final products expected.

### **Capstone Projects or Independent Research**

- After their first semester, URAs may request consideration to complete a Capstone or Independent Research project in the AMARC.
- Project details, timeline, and due dates will be discussed and agreed upon by both the student and the mentor. Please note, Capstone projects **require at least two semesters for planning, execution and completion**.
- Refer to the appropriate College website for detailed requirements.

### **Disciplinary Procedures**

The URA is expected to follow all guidelines and deadlines both put forth in this document and established in future meetings. The URA will be expected to behave professionally during their tenure as a URA. If there are repeated failures to adhere to these expectations and the supervisor feels that there is a need for disciplinary action, the following procedures will apply:

- The URA will be asked to attend a meeting with their supervisor(s) to discuss the issue(s).
- The URA will be provided a document outlining the issues with his/her performance along with guidelines on how the URA can remedy the problem(s) and expected timeline of completion.

If there is a continuation of the problems that were addressed in the aforementioned initial meeting **or** the URA fails to adhere to other expectations, the following procedures will apply:

- The URA will be asked to attend a second meeting with their supervisor(s) and/or faculty member to discuss the issue(s).
- The URA will be provided a document outlining the issues with his/her performance along with the necessary steps needed and expected timeline of completion.

If there are further disciplinary issues, the agreement with the URA will be terminated.