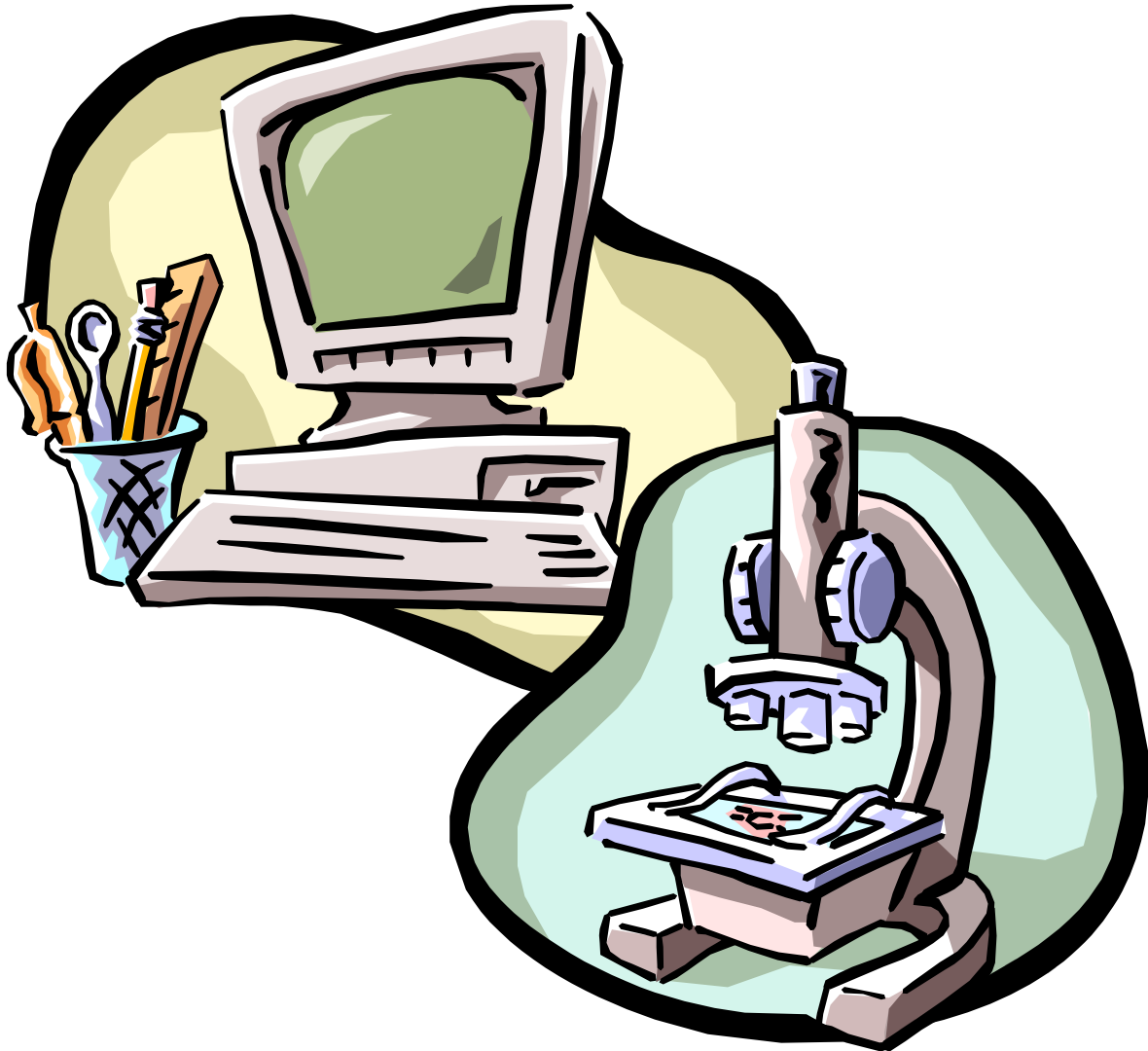


McNair Scholars Program University of Montevallo



Scholar Handbook

Program Requirements

To be eligible to participate in the Summer Research Internship, you must fully participate in the Academic Year programs and activities. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Monthly seminars
- Research seminars
- Cultural enrichment events
- Graduate school visits
- Professional site visits
- Graduate exam preparation
- Community service

You will receive a separate contract that specifies the minimum program requirements that you must fulfill each semester to be considered in “good standing.” If, after your first year in the program, you are not in “good standing” you will not be eligible to receive a research stipend. If, after your second year in the program, you are not in “good standing” you will not be eligible for a GRE fee waiver, admission fee waiver, or letters of recommendation.

The only excuses that will be accepted for missing program activities will be class/university conflicts, doctor’s excuses, and emergencies. A calendar of events will be distributed prior to the beginning of each semester to assist you in planning your schedule.

Absences

If you cannot attend a McNair Program function for which you have signed-up and that requires a ticket, you must give 48 hours notice to cancel or you will be held responsible for the cost of the ticket. Once tickets are purchased for cultural events, a refund cannot be received for unused tickets. Only cancellations for emergencies or unforeseen events will be considered acceptable. If you simply choose to not attend, you will still be held responsible for the cost of the ticket unless another Scholar wishes to attend in your place. If you miss 2 events that required the purchase of tickets without properly canceling, you will no longer have the privilege of signing up for events that require tickets. Not only does the McNair Program lose money on tickets that are not used, but often times, the cost of van rentals is more than what is necessary based on the number of passengers being lowered.

In addition to cultural events, at least 48 hours notice should be given for cancellation of other trips such as Graduate School visits. However, cancellations should be made only in the event of emergency or unforeseen events. If a trip has been scheduled to a Graduate School or Professional Site, those places have made *special arrangements* for our

visits and it reflects negatively on the Program for fewer Scholars to attend than what the site has planned for. Once you sign up for a trip, you should make *every effort* to attend.

The cost of unused tickets will be charged to you if the appropriate notice is not given directly to a McNair staff member. Notice of absence to any McNair event through another Scholar is not acceptable. A HOLD will be placed on your UM account until such fee is paid.

Research Internship

The Research Internship will be conducted during Summer I. However, preparation for your research project will begin during the fall semester and continue through the spring. The McNair Program will cover expenses directly associated with conducting research. Proposals to the University of Montevallo Council on Undergraduate Research (UMCUR) must be completed and approved during the spring semester. You will be required to log a minimum number of research hours, which will be provided prior to the beginning of the Summer Research Internship.

Because of the amount of time required for the research, you will not be allowed to take an additional class during Summer I. It is preferred that you not work during Summer I if at all possible. To help defer expenses during the Research Internship, a portion of your stipend will be released up front. If you must work, you will need to schedule your hours around McNair Program activities and any meetings scheduled with your Faculty Mentor.

All deadlines set by UMCUR, such as for turning in your proposal, are strictly adhered to. Research proposals will be due to the McNair Office approximately 3 weeks prior to the UMCUR deadline. Human and Animal Subjects Research Committee (HASRC) forms must be completed, if required, and turned in to the McNair Office along with the research proposal in order to allow time for HASRC approval for your research. HASRC approval must be obtained PRIOR to the proposal being submitted to UMCUR.

Research Participation

Each Scholar will complete a Research Log to be turned in weekly during the Summer Research Internship. The Research Logs will be distributed prior to the beginning of the Summer Research Internship.

It will be requested that each Faculty Mentor provide you and the McNair Program with a research checklist or syllabus to serve as a guide through the Summer Research Internship. The checklist or syllabus

will include what the final project will entail. Assignments might include daily journal entries, notecards, literature review, article summaries, etc. The final projects will vary greatly from Scholar to Scholar due to the nature of research projects in the various disciplines. It is mostly up to the discretion of the Faculty Mentor to determine what the final research project will be. However, something (paper, summary, brochure, booklet, etc. that represents your research project) must be turned in to the McNair Office by the final day of Summer I for the research stipend to be released. In addition, a 500 word abstract must be sent to the McNair Office via electronic means to be published on the program website.

Research is pointless if no one else knows of your findings. Therefore, please head into the Summer Research Internship planning to create a publishable paper and to present your research. Minimal requirements for presentation include a brief presentation at the conclusion of the research internship and at Undergraduate Research Day during the spring. An additional presentation is expected at the national, regional, or state level **if funding is available**. Please check with your major department for additional funding sources.

Any Scholar who has not completed his/her research project and has not received a satisfactory grade will be allowed to attend a conference at the expense of the McNair Program. The McNair staff reserves the right to decide who will/will not attend a conference.

Faculty Mentor

As a Scholar, you will work with a Faculty Mentor to conduct research. Scholars usually have a Professor to work with when they apply to the McNair Program. However, if you do not have someone to work with, notify the Director or Program Coordinator early in the Fall Semester so efforts can be made to match a Faculty Mentor to you.

You should identify a Faculty Mentor *early* in the fall semester to prepare for the Summer Research Internship.

You should schedule meetings with your Faculty Mentor throughout the fall and spring semesters to make certain you and your Faculty Mentor have a clear understanding of your requirements and responsibilities related to your research internship.

The Project Director will meet with the Faculty Mentors *at least* once during the academic year and once midway through the summer component. Additional meetings will/can be scheduled as needed.

Your Faculty Mentor should be viewed as an expert in your field and the one who guides your research. If you have an issue or conflict with your Faculty Mentor, address it in a professional manner or contact the Project Director. Do NOT wait until the end of the research component to address problematic issues.

Undergraduate Research Requirements

The forms for Undergraduate Research must be completed during the Spring Semester. The deadline for applications to Undergraduate Research will be posted by the McNair Program and can be found on the UM website as well. (See appendix)

During the Spring Semester, a date will be set by UMCUR for oral presentations of your research proposal. It is **mandatory** that you attend as well as your Faculty Mentor. The date for this meeting is usually posted by the Fall Semester so you need to make sure to get it on your calendar early!

A budget for your research project must be included with your research proposal that includes all research-related expenses. Expenses might include: copying, cassette tapes, mileage, books, videos, lab supplies, etc. To the extent possible, the McNair Program will provide basic supplies for each Scholar prior to the beginning of the summer research internship.

Research Stipend

At the beginning of the Summer Research Internship, a small portion of your stipend will be released to you to offset any expenses you may incur during the summer. At the conclusion of the Internship, if you have **successfully completed** the Research Project (Grade C or better, but a Grade B or better is expected), you will receive the remainder of the stipend assuming you have not incurred any stipend deductions. Stipends will be released in accordance with the Cashier's Office schedule. Stipends will NOT be released until a grade has been submitted.

Please note that if you owe funds to the University for any reason, they will be deducted from your stipend by the Cashier's Office prior to its release. Also, your stipend may be reduced if you have any program fines based on not meeting research requirements or other program penalties.

Although we have no way to regulate how you spend your stipend, the purpose of the stipend is to assist you with expenses you will incur as you prepare for graduate school such as graduate school visits, admission exams, admission fees, and moving expenses. Please resist the urge to

spend it on items such as clothes and CDs so you will have it for expenses you encounter as you prepare for graduate school.

Conference Presentations

As stated earlier, presenting your research is an expectation within the McNair Program. Be prepared to present your research at the conclusion of the Summer Research Internship, at Undergraduate Research Day, and at a national or regional conference as funds allow. We will likely attend a national McNair conference in the summer, but that may change depending on scheduling and/or availability of funding.

When presenting, you are expected to wear **professional** attire - particularly when presenting at the regional or national level. You are not only representing yourself, but the McNair Program and the University of Montevallo as well. Therefore, you should take pride in your self and your research by dressing professionally. In addition, it makes no difference what other students or presenters may be wearing - you are a McNair Scholar and you are held to a higher standard. If you need assistance in purchasing an appropriate outfit, please see the Project Director - seriously!

Please prepare ahead of time for any, and all, presentations you may perform. If you need assistance, please contact a McNair Program staff member. Also, be prepared to handle mishaps, as they often happen. If you are doing a poster session, you must get your poster layout into the McNair Office **at least one week prior** to the time needed. Posters can be printed and laminated through the Division of Student Affairs. If you are doing a PowerPoint presentation, please practice using the equipment, have a backup, and **DON'T** talk to the screen during your presentation. It doesn't hurt to glance at it or point something out periodically, but it is not professional to read from the screen.

When attending a conference, McNair or otherwise, McNair funds are paying for you to attend. Therefore, you **MUST** attend all events available and dress appropriately. We want to stand out because of our professionalism! Do not go into sessions late and do not leave early. Also, if you do not plan to present, you will not be allowed to attend the conference.

Publication

As stated earlier, please work toward producing a publishable paper as part of your research internship. You may need to seek out a student or organizational journal as opposed to an academic journal that may only cater to faculty. A publication would bolster your résumé significantly.

Tuition

The McNair Program will pay for 3 hours of credit for the Undergraduate Research during Summer I only. The McNair Program cannot pay for tuition during any other semester, session, or course.

It is at the discretion of your Faculty Mentor to allow additional credit hours above the 3 hours. However, research hours above and beyond your McNair allowance will be required to be negotiated and logged. Additionally, tuition expenses, *including UM fees*, will be your responsibility.

Residence Hall

You must let Housing and Residence Life know if you need summer housing during room sign-up days in the Spring Semester. If rooms are available in Peck Hall, you may request a double occupancy room in Peck. If rooms are not available in Peck, you will stay in the Residence Halls designated for the Summer Session by Housing and Residence Life.

The McNair Program will NOT pay for private rooms – double occupancy only.

Unless you are staying in the Residence Hall during Summer II, you must check out of your room at the end of Summer I during the designated time.

Housing allowances for off-campus housing will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and will be at the discretion of the Project Director. If you *choose* not to live on campus, you are not eligible for this allowance.

Meals

Prior to the end of the spring semester, you must designate which meal plan you prefer for Summer I: 5/70, 10/35, 15/20, 21/0, or no (0) meals/flex points per week.

Individual Educational Plan

You should meet with the Program Coordinator each semester to discuss your progress toward successfully entering and completing Graduate School. This is your opportunity to let us know how we can best assist you with your individual needs that may or may not be the same for other Scholars. This is also an opportunity for us to discuss with you your participation in the program as well as your undergraduate progress.

During the semester you graduate, you will be required to complete an Exit Interview with the Project Director.

Individual Graduate School Visits, Academic Presentations, or Conferences

If program funds are available, each Scholar who has completed the Summer Research Internship may request funds to help defray costs to visit a graduate school on your own. A proposal including detailed information about the visit and an itemized budget must be turned in to the McNair Office at least **two weeks** prior to the trip in order to allow time for funds to be requested from the Business Office. A waiver of liability and financial contract must be signed prior to receiving the funds.

Receipts **MUST** be kept for expenses approved for the trip such as hotel, meals, and transportation. Snacks, incidentals, and alcohol will **NOT** be reimbursed. Gas receipts will **NOT** be reimbursed – only approved mileage. If you are attending a conference with other students, expenses should be split evenly with the other students. The McNair Program **CANNOT** pay for expenses for other students including mileage.

Please remember, taxes cannot be reimbursed. Please check with the Project Director before purchasing any supplies/items for reimbursement.

Tracking

Expect to receive surveys and/or questionnaires after your graduation from UM. Due to Department of Education requirements, the McNair Program must report on you long after you graduate. We must gather information such as where you apply to graduate school, where you attend, what is your progress toward your degree, etc. Please respond and return these questionnaires to the McNair Office in a timely fashion.

Attitude

Being a McNair Scholar is a privilege and should be viewed as such. There are many other students who would love to have the opportunities you will be afforded as a McNair Scholar. Institutions across the state and country actively recruit McNair Scholars because of the higher standards they are held to. Therefore, you should take full advantage of every opportunity the program has to offer and remain in “good standing.” If you are serious about graduate school, then the McNair Staff is serious about getting you there and helping you to succeed.

Program Policy

Violation of Program policy or the Scholar Code of Conduct may lead to a reduction in research stipend and/or dismissal from the program.

If you have a problematic issue with a McNair staff member, instructor, or Faculty Mentor, please contact the Project Director. If you have a problematic issue with the McNair Project Director, please contact Dr. Glenda Isenhour, Vice-President for Student Affairs at 665-6020.

This Handbook does not, and cannot, cover each and every McNair Program Policy. If you have specific questions, please talk to a McNair Staff Member. Policies and requirements are subject to change with notice.

Important forms are attached for your convenience.

Please sign and return the last page of the handbook.

Please sign this page and return to the McNair Office.

I have read and understand each of the items presented in the McNair Scholar Handbook. I understand it is my responsibility to know this information, adhere to program policies, and to ask questions about anything I do not understand.

Scholar Signature

Date