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Salesi Engages in Research to Achieve Educational Goals

Pooya Salesi, a biochemistry major at Kennesaw State University, acquires knowledge of chemistry by conducting medicinal bioinorganic research with Janet Shaw, PhD. Salesi excels academically and partakes in research to achieve his goal of attending medical school. On a typical day, Salesi reviews literature and discusses with Dr. Shaw the synthesis which must be completed in the lab. "I work with chemicals, like sulfuric acid, which is very toxic and dangerous," explains Salesi.

Although professors are required to be on campus while students are conducting research, the students work independently. With seven courses related to the research, Salesi knows what reactions to expect when various chemicals are mixed together. With the addition to the science building that will provide more lab rooms, professor will be accepting more undergraduate research students. Salesi encourages undergraduate students to take advantage of the chance to expand their education. "I would say to students that this is the best opportunity to not just do research but get hands on experience," states Salesi.

Salesi advises students interested in taking part in research to pay close attention to lab courses and to talk to professors. He searched other research projects before finding a good match with the experiments Dr. Shaw was leading. "Professors aren't going to come find you," states Salesi, "you have to find the research professor you are most interested in."

Dr. Hudson Believes Research More Than Training Experience

"I want to give opportunities to people who may want to be scientists," states Martin Hudson, PhD, assistant professor of biology at Kennesaw State University. Aside from teaching genetics as well as cellular and molecular biology, Dr. Hudson is passionate about working with undergraduate research students. Dr. Hudson's required 18-month minimum commitment permits students to gain training in the competitive field of science. He believes this experience will aid students in their future plans of continuing their education or securing a job after graduation. "This is one piece of career structure that no one can take away from you," explains Dr. Hudson about the research work students conduct.

Experience is not the only appealing factor of research. Professors and students build long lasting relationships with one another. "A student is for life- not just Christmas," said Dr. Hudson. Undergraduate research provides the opportunity to interact on a one-on-one basis.

Dr. Hudson's research focuses on developmental neurobiology, with an emphasis on understanding the role of cell migration during nervous system development. Research students are involved in all aspects of the projects. "Enthusiasm, commitment, talent, good grades," answers Dr. Hudson when asked the factors he looks for in research students, "enthusiasm – that is the most important thing."
The Undergraduate Research Club (URC) is a new registered student organization whose mission is to promote undergraduate research on campus, provide members with opportunities for professional socialization into research, and foster relationships among like-minded peers who are also interested in research. We meet on the second Tuesday of every month (Sept. 11, Oct. 9, and Nov. 13) from 12:30 p.m. - 1:45 p.m in the Burruss Building Room 381. All KSU students are welcome to attend, and free food is provided. If you are already doing research, or if you want to learn more about how to get started, come join us for our first meeting on September 11. We look forward to meeting you! For more information, find us on Facebook or contact us at cetl4ur@kennesaw.edu.

Editor’s Corner

Newsletter Submissions
Is there research you believe should be highlighted, do you have a story to share, or advice to offer regarding undergraduate research? Your submission could be featured in an upcoming issue of the Undergraduate Research Newsletter. This newsletter is published twice per semester. All inquiries should be made as soon as possible. Email cetl4ur@kennesaw.edu or call CETL at (770)423-6410 to submit ideas.

Editor-in-Chief: Dr. Amy Buddie
Editor: Daniela Medina
Photo Credit: Daniela Medina

Five Tips on Getting Started in Undergraduate Research

1. Get good grades and show enthusiasm for learning while in class. Most faculty members have their choice of students with whom they can work, so they are likely to choose the top students who show intellectual curiosity.

2. Approach a faculty member who inspires you and whose research interests you. You will need a faculty mentor to supervise your undergraduate research; try to find someone with whom you connect.

3. Get started early. Research suggests that the earlier you get started doing research, the better the learning outcomes. Don’t wait until you’re a senior; you may not have enough time to finish the project.

4. Learn about how research/creative activity is conducted in your discipline. Are there research methodology courses in your major? What classes in your major will help you better understand the research process? Find out and take those courses as soon as you can so you are ready for research as soon as possible.

5. Learn more about the resources that Kennesaw State University provides to support undergraduate research. For example, you can join the Undergraduate Research Club, attend the annual Symposium of Student Scholars in April, read the Kennesaw Journal of Undergraduate Research, and check out the funding provided by CETL for undergraduate research. If you would like more information about any of these resources, contact us at cetl4ur@kennesaw.edu.