



University of Colorado
Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus

EURēCA! Student Assistant ProgramMentor Handbook

A program of the Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities with support from the Office of the Provost and involving collaboration with the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office, Experiential Learning Center, and Career Center

Note: This EURēCA! Student Assistant Program Handbook is intended to provide an overview of this program and to summarize policies described in detail in the [University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Student Employment Handbook](#), published annually by the Student Employment Office. All on-campus University employers should read, be familiar with, and adhere to policies described in detail in the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Student Employment Handbook in addition to this program overview document. Every student should also be familiar with the Student Employment Handbook, in particular, the sections on Student Employee Information and Policy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Welcome Students and Faculty! | 3 |
| What is the Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities? | 4 |
| About the EURēCA! Student Assistants Program | 5 |
| What Does it Mean to be a Mentor? | 6 |
| Who is Eligible to be a EURēCA! Mentor? | 7 |
| Who is Eligible to be a EURēCA! Mentee? | 8 |
| Recruiting and Hiring a EURēCA! Student Assistant | 9 |
| 1. Write a Good Job Description | 9 |
| 2. Register for Handshake | 11 |
| 3. Advertise Your Position and Recruit Students | 11 |
| 4. Hire Your Student Assistant Researcher | 11 |
| Application Process: Make it EURēCA! | 12 |
| General Employer Responsibilities | 13 |
| Employee Training..... | 13 |
| Timesheets..... | 13 |
| Evaluating Students..... | 14 |
| Additional Information | 15 |
| Federal Work-Study and FAFSA Information | 15 |
| Appendix A: Tips for Writing a Job Description | 16 |
| 1. Example EURēCA! Student Assistant in Anatomical Digital Media | 17 |
| 2. Example EURēCA! Student Assistant in Photography | 18 |
| 3. Example EURēCA! Student Assistant in Sociology..... | 19 |
| Appendix B: Tips for a Quality Mentoring Plan | 20 |
| 1. Example Faculty Mentoring Plans | 20 |
| 2. Example Co-Written Physics Mentoring Contract | 22 |
| 3. Example Biology Lab Mentoring Contract..... | 25 |
| Appendix C: Student Guides for EURēCA! | 27 |
| 1. Applying for EURēCA! on Handshake (Click for PDF Link)..... | 27 |
| 2. Make it EURēCA! Application Process (Click for PDF Link)..... | 28 |
| 3. EURēCA! Solidify and Hire Steps (Click for PDF Link) | 29 |

Welcome Students and Faculty!

Thank you for your interest in the EURēCA! Program. The **Education through Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities (EURēCA!)** programs run by the **Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities** are designed to provide CU Denver students an opportunity to engage in educational collaborations with faculty mentors. The **EURēCA! Student Assistant Program** facilitates the use of Federal Work-study and University-provided funds to support qualified undergraduates to pursue professionally relevant paid research opportunities at CU Denver | Anschutz, either not-for-credit or for academic internship credit

Students, we are excited that CU Denver is able to offer you a variety of exciting opportunities to engage in mentored learning outside of the classroom. Take this time to learn to conduct original scholarship in your field, develop a professional relationship with a faculty mentor, immerse yourself in your discipline, explore academic and career options, follow your passion, and have fun!

Faculty, help us to introduce students to scholarship in your discipline, challenge our students by engaging them in professionally relevant and meaningful scholarly activities, and support them as they disseminate their findings to broader audiences. Ideally, participating in one or more of our EURēCA! Programs will advance your scholarship as well, as it has for many faculty members across our schools and colleges.

We are here to provide support as you navigate the process of joining our community of scholars and mentors. Please do not hesitate to contact our office with questions about this or other EURēCA! Programs. We are here to support you!

Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Team

<https://www.ucdenver.edu/lynxconnect/undergraduate-research>
undergrad.research@ucdenver.edu



What is the Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities?

The Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities (URCA) provides CU Denver | Anschutz students the opportunity to connect with the research and creative mission of the University. Our Education through Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities (EURēCA!) programs facilitate collaboration between students and faculty to incorporate inquiry, design, investigation, and discovery into learning experiences outside of the classroom.

In addition to the [EURēCA! Student Assistant Program](#), URCA also runs the [EURēCA! Summer Fellows Program](#), [EURēCA! Grants Program](#), and organizes the annual [Research and Creative Activities Symposium \(RaCAS\)](#). Our office also provides seminars, workshops, and student advising services to CU Denver undergraduates interested in accessing mentored learning opportunities across the CU Denver | Anschutz campuses.

The EURēCA! Team:



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About the EURēCA! Student Assistants Program

Recognizing that CU Denver is a research institution, the EURēCA! Programs have been designed to advance faculty scholarship while helping students connect with our university's vibrant research and creative community. From posting job descriptions and recruiting students, through hiring and payroll management, the EURēCA! Program removes administrative and financial burdens so that you, the faculty mentor, can focus on the hands-on training of your EURēCA! student.

EURēCA! Student Assistants is an early-career training program that leverages federal-work study dollars and grant funds to provide salary support to undergraduates new to the research and creative enterprise. Mentors have two options 1) propose a new entry-level student position to recruit a new mentee, or 2) co-apply with a currently unpaid student to make their position EURēCA!.

To facilitate student/faculty collaborations, the EURēCA! program leverages federal work-study and University-provided funds to offset student salary costs. Typically, students utilizing a work-study award can work up to ~135 hours/semester at no cost to their faculty mentor. Students without work-study can request matching funds from the URCA Office on a first-come first-served basis to minimize salary costs for their mentor.

Why work-study? Expanding work-study jobs to include research-based activities increases the opportunity for students who might not otherwise be able to engage in this type of scholarship due to their academic and economic backgrounds. Furthermore, a recent study at CU Denver showed that work-study eligible students who take advantage of their awards are twice as likely to graduate within six years as those who do not!

You may be eligible to sponsor a EURēCA! Student Assistant (EURēCA! Mentee) if you are affiliated with the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz as a faculty member or affiliate faculty, including tenure track, IRC, or librarian. Post-docs, graduate students, professional research assistants, and others working under the guidance of a faculty member should include a letter of support from that person when submitting an application to become a EURēCA! Mentor.

What Does it Mean to be a Mentor?

Across studies, students report that the most important aspect of the undergraduate research experience is their relationship with a mentor¹

An essential aspect and expectation of the EURēCA! Programs is **mentorship**. The intention of this program is to support faculty that will take an active role in nurturing the intellectual and scholarly development of their student(s) by involving them in all aspects of their research. This program should not be viewed as a source for free labor or “hands”, instead it is an opportunity to foster student learning outside of the classroom – an often exciting and personally fulfilling experience!

As you prepare to enter a new mentor/mentee relationship please keep in mind:

- Mentors are essential in ensuring the success of a student’s scholarly experience. For some students, their EURēCA! Mentor will be the first individual to intellectually engage them outside of the classroom.
- Through this program students should gain both discipline-specific and universal career skills. Mentors play an essential role in teaching students the techniques and methodologies that will prepare them to address relevant questions in their field, as well as general professional skills. These include creativity, judgement, communication, organization, and persistence, among others.²
- Mentors provide opportunities for students to participate in research, creative, and other scholarly activities. They also facilitate dissemination of the outcomes from these activities, encouraging students to present at group meetings, attend conferences, and contribute to publications or other professional works.
- Mentors provide guidance to students as they plan their training trajectories by elucidating what is needed to become a professional in their discipline and by helping to set goals and milestones. In doing so, mentors train a new generation of scholars and practitioners.
- Mentors should gain personal satisfaction from working with students. Watching students gain new skills, mature intellectually, and begin contributing original ideas to their discipline are all part of the joys of mentoring.

[Read more on the importance of mentorship in undergraduate research.](#)

¹ Temple, L., Sibley, T.Q., & Orr, A.J. (2010). How to mentor undergraduate researchers. Washington: Council on Undergraduate Research

² Showman, A., et al. (2013). Five essential skills for every undergraduate researcher. Council on Undergraduate Research Quarterly

Who is Eligible to be a EURēCA! Mentor?

To be eligible to mentor a EURēCA! student, the primary mentor must:

- be a CU Denver | Anschutz faculty member, affiliate faculty member, or employee working under the mentorship of a faculty member (e.g., post-doctoral scholar, professional research associate, advanced graduate student; mentors who hold these positions must attach a letter of support from their affiliated faculty member or principal investigator);
- maintain an active scholarly program in any discipline at CU Denver | Anschutz or an affiliated organization (e.g. Children's Hospital, Denver Botanic Gardens, etc.);
- be committed to engaging EURēCA! students in their scholarship, to include providing University trainings, one-on-one mentoring meetings, and group meetings;
- complete pre- and post-activity assessment materials, as requested by the Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities;

EURēCA! mentors are encouraged to participate in the [Research and Creative Activities Symposium \(RaCAS\)](#) held the last Friday in April each spring. Note:

EURēCA! mentors may also be invited to serve on student grant and fellowship review committees, join the EURēCA! Program advisory board, or help organize student-facing workshops and seminars on a voluntary basis;

Who is Eligible to be a EURēCA! Mentee?

To be eligible to hold a EURēCA! position, a student must:

- Hold degree-seeking CU Denver undergraduate status.
- Submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and apply for a work-study award as part of their financial aid package.
- Complete a University of Colorado Background Request Form, pursuant to the CU Denver | Anschutz Background Investigations Policy.
- Be enrolled part-time or full-time (at least 6 credit hours) throughout the semester ([see CU Denver | Anschutz Student Employment Handbook for details](#)).
- Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress assessed at the end of each semester based upon grade point average, completion rate, and overall attempted credit hour limit.
- Commit to attending two URCA events each semester and to presenting outcomes of scholarly activity at the [CU Denver Research and Creative Activities Symposium \(RaCAS\)](#), held each spring.

Note #1: It is highly recommended that undergraduates interested in applying meet briefly with an advisor or counselor in [LynxConnect](#) to answer questions about the program and to ensure that their application materials (i.e., resume, cover letter, transcript, work-study award letter) are appropriate for these positions.

Note #2: Students also may choose to use their research toward academic credit in addition to receiving financial compensation as part of their work-study award.

Undergraduate Research advising appointments can be scheduled in Handshake: <https://ucdenver.joinhandshake.com/appointments/new>

Recruiting and Hiring a EURēCA! Student Assistant

CU Denver undergraduates are eager to learn, interact with faculty, and put the knowledge and skills they are learning in the classroom to work in the real world. Strategically tap into the talented workforce awaiting you here! Mentors, ask yourself, what activities will benefit a student while also advancing your own scholarship? Of these activities, which can be accomplished by undergraduates? And what qualifications are most important to successfully complete them? How many hours are needed to accomplish this work? How flexible can you be in scheduling student hours?

1. Write a Good Job Description

In order to initiate a EURēCA! Student Assistant job posting, primary faculty mentors are required to complete an online application that addresses all of the elements of a job description and that, if approved, will be used to compose a job posting on the University's student employment platform.

The EURēCA! Mentor application is accessible from our [website](#).

Each EURēCA! Student Assistant job must provide the undergraduate employee direct experience with scholarship in your discipline at a level that is compatible with the student's interests, knowledge, skills, and professional goals. EURēCA! Student Assistant jobs are **not** administrative support positions that limit student involvement to the role of “gopher,” data entry clerk, dishwasher, or any other menial work unrelated to a collegiate program (although such activities may be part of a research student's responsibility). As such, we expect that mentors will treat their EURēCA! Student Assistant(s) as a full member of their scholarly team. Above all, undergraduates participating in this program must maintain satisfactory progress toward the completion of their degree.

Tips and examples for EURēCA! Student Assistant job postings can be found in [Appendices A and B](#). The Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities staff are happy to assist you in completing your Mentor application – contact undergrad.research@ucdenver.edu with any questions.

EURēCA! Mentor Application Components

1. Name of the position (e.g., Research Assistant in Bioinformatics) Note: This is not the job classification.
2. Name and address of the faculty mentor.
3. Department/unit in which student will be employed.
4. Location at which the student will perform their duties.
5. Name of student's direct supervisor and their relationship to the primary mentor
6. Position description 2-5 sentences long describing the nature of the position in reasonably nontechnical language geared toward undergraduates. Include project goals and a lab or team website where possible.
7. Purpose/role of the position within the group.
8. Duties and responsibilities associated with the position and how they relate to the purpose/role.
9. Specific skills that students can expect to gain as a result of working with you.
10. Description of your mentoring plan, including how you will provide a structured learning environment for the student. Note: this is replaced by a co-written, signed mentoring plan in the 'Make it EURēCA!' option.
11. Minimum and preferred qualifications required for the position. Specific knowledge, skills, or other abilities required to complete the work as well as those desired but not required for the position.
12. Coursework and/or minimum GPA required for the position.
13. A list of any required trainings (University mandated or otherwise) that the student will need to complete for this position.
14. Number of hours per week the student should commit to working on the project.
15. Preferred work times (Note: Federal guidelines dictate that the work schedule must not conflict with student assistant's class schedule or academic progress).
16. Materials beyond a CV/Resume, Cover Letter, and Transcript, that students should submit when applying.

2. Register for Handshake

CU Denver's career platform, [Handshake](#), is where students can search and apply for research positions, internships, and other opportunities. Once your mentor application is accepted, URCA staff will use the information provided to post your position in Handshake. You may register as an employer to edit the job post, review application materials, and update hiring status, but this is not required; application materials will be sent directly to your inbox. It is your responsibility to manage the process of interviewing and candidate selection, although the Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities is happy to communicate with you about your applications.

[You can find more information about creating your Handshake Account here.](#)

3. Advertise Your Position and Recruit Students

Successful recruiting is a critical step to ensuring a positive and productive student-mentor relationship.

Any student with a Handshake account can search for EURēCA! job postings. However, only those undergraduates who have completed the online EURēCA! Student Assistant presentation, and passed the accompanying quizzes, will be able to apply. Students who are unsure if they have completed this requirement should look for a "eurecaok" label on their Handshake account.

The Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities and LynxConnect will advertise and recruit students to the EURēCA! Student Assistant Program; however, undergraduates most often hear about opportunities directly from the faculty members themselves. As such, we highly recommend that you share your job posting within your networks. Announce that you are hiring and promote the EURēCA! Student Assistant Program in your classes. Provide promotional materials to your colleagues and undergraduate major advisors. Distribute the job description through your department's student listserv. Share information at faculty and committee meetings. The more people that know about the EURēCA! Student Assistant Program, the more candidates you will have to choose from!

4. Hire Your Student Assistant Researcher

It is the responsibility of the EURēCA! Mentor to track and review applications, interview candidates, and choose their student mentee. The Handshake student employment platform will accept and manage all student applications and will send notifications directly to the email address provided in your Mentor application. URCA Office staff will also monitor incoming applications.

You may decide to interview all, some, or none of the candidates that apply to your position. These applicants will submit proof of submitting a work-study request form (if eligible). Any other requirements are completely up to you. Please note that even if a faculty member has a student in mind for posted Handshake positions, that student must apply and be hired through Handshake to qualify for the EURēCA! Student Assistant Program. It should also be noted that faculty can hire student hourly and Work-Study employees outside of the EURēCA! program.

Once faculty have interviewed students and chosen a EURēCA! Mentee for their position, they should notify the Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities. Liz Evans will work with the selected candidate to complete the final steps in the hiring process, including meeting with URCA staff and completing the Student Experience Learning Agreement. This can take up to several weeks depending on students' responsiveness. **Note that Students cannot begin working until this Learning Agreement is completed and approved by all parties. An employer/faculty member who has a student start working before they are hired is in violation of federal labor laws.**

Students with an already established university employee ID number will not need a background check or I-9 verification process typically. All students who do not have a university employee ID number will need to go through a background check and provide I-9 verification to work in the United States. URCA HR support will work directly with EURēCA! program students to finalize their employment status and hiring.

Application Process: Make it EURēCA!

CU Denver faculty member develops a co-written proposal with a current research assistant, an undergraduate mentee interested in the EURēCA! program, or to continue for an additional year with a current EURēCA! Student Assistant. The faculty member submits a proposal to the URCA Office outlining the proposed EURēCA! Student Assistant position, including student details, a statement of interest from the student, and a co-written, signed mentoring plan. If approved, students will begin the hiring process without applying through Handshake.

[View example mentoring plan template here.](#)

[View example job descriptions here.](#)

Application and details can be found on the [URCA website](#).

General Employer Responsibilities

All on-campus University employers must read, be familiar with, and adhere to policies described in detail in the [University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Student Employment Handbook](#), which is abstracted here. Additionally, employers should ensure that every student researcher is familiar with the Student Employment Handbook and has read and understands the Student Employee Information and Policy sections of the handbook. Student researchers are considered employees; therefore, faculty mentors are employers and must adhere to employer guidelines.

Employee Training

All employers must ensure that **all** student employees complete the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz mandatory Skillsoft trainings listed below:

- CU: Discrimination and Harassment
- CU: Information Security and Privacy Awareness training

Additional HR and departmental trainings associated with the student researcher position (e.g., FERPA, HIPAA, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, Lab Safety Training) may also be required. If employers have questions regarding the specific training(s) student employees should complete, they should contact Student Employment and/or their home department.

Timesheets

Time reports are submitted and verified through the online system MyLeave. Daily time in and out is required on the time report. A mandatory 30-minute break is required when a student works six consecutive hours. This must be shown on the time report as time in and out.

It is ultimately the student's and supervisor's responsibility to keep track of work-study earnings and awards throughout the semester. Furthermore, it is the sole responsibility of the student to be aware of possible funding and status changes, along with any work-study award reductions to their Financial Aid during the semester. It is also the sole responsibility of the student to immediately inform their supervisor of any changes that can affect their work-study award and employment eligibility. With a starting salary of \$18.81/hour, normal awards of \$2,500 allow for 135 hours across the semester or about 8 hrs/week. Students are eligible to request additional work-study funds from the Financial Aid office, but this must be done before their original award is exhausted. Students who do not have a work-study award are still eligible for these positions but are limited to 100 hours of paid work per semester.

Any earnings over a student's allotted Work-Study award will be paid at 100% by the employing department/unit, not the EURēCA! Program.

Evaluating Students

Faculty will be asked to assess the student's skills and performance each academic semester. A mid-semester check-in is more informal, while the end of semester feedback link must be completed by the end of each academic semester. This completed evaluation from faculty is required for students using their student assistant position as a For-Credit Academic Internship. Students will also complete an evaluation about their experience in the research position.

Additional Information

Contact the following for detailed information about EURēCA! Programs:

- **Jeff Knight:** Faculty Director
Phone: 303-315-4000
Email: jefferson.knight@ucdenver.edu
Location: LynxConnect, Tivoli 439
- **Liz Evans:** Senior Program Coordinator
Phone: 303-315-4000
Email: elizabeth.evans@ucdenver.edu
Location: LynxConnect, Tivoli 439
- **Financial Aid and Scholarships Office:** Work-study awards and hiring
Phone: 303-315-5969
Email: Financialaid@ucdenver.edu
Location: CU Student Commons Building, Suite 1107
- **LynxConnect:** Resume and cover letter assistance, trainings, and workshops
Phone: 303-315-4000
Email: LynxConnect@ucdenver.edu
Location: LynxConnect, Tivoli 439

Federal Work-Study and FAFSA Information

The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships at CU Denver offers opportunities for Student employment on campus. To learn more and apply for positions begin by logging into [UCDAccess](#), clicking the **Financial Aid** tab then **Student Employment** which will link to the **Handshake Job Board**. More information about Handshake can be found within this [student guide](#).

To be considered for a Federal Work-Study Award at the University of Colorado Denver, you should complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) through the [FAFSA website](#). **Priority Deadline is April 1st and online applications must be submitted by June 30th!** If you are initially not awarded Federal Work-Study as part of your aid package, reach out to the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships, and complete a Work Study Request Form. If you are subsequently awarded a Federal Work-Study award, you will receive a revised award notification.

Questions? Visit the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships in LynxCentral Suite #1107 in the Student Commons Building between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Monday-Friday. Contact: 303-315-5969 or email Financialaid@ucdenver.edu.

Appendix A: Tips for Writing a Job Description

The job description serves as the framework for the student's work experience.

Job Description

1. Determine the actual tasks and responsibilities prior to determining any special qualifications required for the position.
2. Describe the position and responsibilities in a way that will entice the student to want to learn more about your research.
3. Include duties that peak student interests and demonstrate that you intend to assign meaningful and significant projects.
4. Include "Reports to" and "Consults with" information so the student understands with whom they will be interfacing.
5. A well-written job description is more than a list of tasks. It reflects a sense of priorities and opportunities for learning.
6. Ideally, word the job description in such a way that student's performance can be measured.
7. For virtual/remote research, identify the technology platforms to be used and a plan for training and supervision of the student.

What skills will the student learn?

Consider these questions:

1. What can students learn that will advance their understanding of prior University coursework?
2. What industry-specific skills will the student gain to enter better prepared for a career in this field?
3. Are there any special training programs that will occur during this intensive experience?
4. What professional skills will the student acquire during this experience?

Qualifications

This section defines the specific minimum skills, attributes or credentials required to start in the position. Following are some examples:

| Too General | Be Specific |
|------------------------------|--|
| Computer literate | Proficient with Microsoft Word, Excel, ARCsoft |
| Good Communication skills | Ability to communicate technical information to nontechnical audiences |
| Handles administrative tasks | Receives and processes monthly human resource action reports |

1. Example EURēCA! Student Assistant in Anatomical Digital Media

Purpose:

The intersection of human anatomy, arts, and digital media is a rapidly growing, unique, interdisciplinary field. The student assistant will work with a small team of faculty & staff on the curation and dissemination of 3D assets, including animations, videos, and 3D printed models. These unique 3D assets blend classical human anatomy with cutting-edge 3D modeling technology.

Position Description:

1. Curation of a 3D anatomy library. The student assistant will help in the design and maintenance of a digital anatomy repository that includes 3D assets created within the Modern Human Anatomy Program (MHA). The student assistant will also help in the curation of a physical display of anatomy artwork and 3D printed models in the MHA suite.
2. Dissemination of anatomy & art. The student assistant will share the innovative work by creating photos, blogs, and videos for the MHA website and social media outlets, as well as via SketchFab, an online repository for 3D digital assets. The assistant will also help students and staff share MHA assets at local symposia and fairs, as well as educational outreach events.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Organization and maintenance of digital asset database and online repository, assistance in the MHA 3D print lab, artistic design and display of the 3D printed organ model gallery, marketing and social media promotion, and presentation of work at local events throughout the year. The student may also assist in some minor office duties and literature searches in the field of anatomical sciences education.

Skills and Knowledge Gained:

Human anatomy, 3D surface scanning, 3D modeling and 3D printing, database management, web design, gallery display design, written communication, oral communication, and community engagement. Software programs that the student may learn include Artec Spider Scanner software, Polycam, Blender, and/or Maya. Finally, the student will be exposed to and learn about the various professional healthcare and biomedical research careers.

Minimum Qualifications:

Reliability and resourcefulness, strong work ethic, organizational skills, teamwork, proficiency with social media, eagerness to learn new technology, and effective oral and written communication.

Preferred Qualifications:

Experience with data management and/or 3D modeling/printing software.

Preferred courses: Basic Biology, Human Anatomy or Human Physiology (or any equivalent course covering basic organ systems)

Trainings to be Completed:

FERPA training. Note: the student assistant will NOT work with student files/grades. However, the student assistant will be working with 3D assets and data, and it will be important for the student assistant to understand privacy issues as related to FERPA.

Position Commitment:

10 - 15 hrs/week

2. Example EURēCA! Student Assistant in Photography

Purpose:

This position involves performing duties as a photographic assistant to a professional artist in a variety of intricate and time-consuming creative projects. The artist creates large-scale, staged photographs out of complex sets. His elaborate constructions involve a variety of media including photography, painting and sculpture. The student will assist in the shooting of photographic sets, as well as in preparing work for exhibitions and presentations.

Position Description:

The research assistant will employ experimental analog techniques in the black and white darkroom, assist with the production of exhibition quality prints, and prepare photographic materials for exhibitions.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Duties may include shooting with medium and large format cameras, selecting props for still life photographs, developing black and white film, printing black and white photographs in the darkroom, experimenting with light-sensitive photographic materials, creating editions of final prints, preparing prints for exhibitions, creating print inventories, maintaining a clean studio space, preparing digital files for publicity materials, crating and shipping framed photographs, and participating in the business practices of a professional artist.

Skills and Knowledge Gained:

Creative and conceptual skills related to the production of contemporary art, technical skills in analog image production, understanding fine art business practices, ability to prepare artwork for an exhibition, confidence in conducting creative research, and communication skills. Specific skills include:

- 8"x10" and 4"x5" view camera operations
- Complex strobe lighting techniques
- Applications for instant, positive and negative films
- Applications for digital Imaging software such as Photoshop, Lightroom and Bridge
- Translation of theoretical and philosophical ideas into visual form
- Preparation for exhibitions and artist presentations
- The use of soft pastels and pastel pencils to create photorealistic "books"

Minimum Qualifications:

Experience developing black and white film and printing black and white negatives. Strong work ethic, organizational skills, communication skills, and ability to work independently.

Preferred Qualifications:

Experience shooting medium and large format cameras, experience with mat cutting, framing and presentation of artwork, working knowledge of Photoshop and Lightroom.

Position Commitment:

10 hrs./week

Trainings to be Completed:

Information Security and Privacy Awareness Training and Discrimination and Harassment Training. Will also receive training on equipment in the studio as needed.

3. Example EURēCA! Student Assistant in Sociology

Purpose:

This project will examine current issues with water quality and reliability in Colorado's manufactured home communities (MHCs). The 2023 Colorado Legislature enacted House Bill 23-1257 to create a statewide water testing program in MHCs, where water quality and reliability is often poor. This research will be done in parallel to that program to document issues faced by MHC residents, concerns with water testing, experiences of water pollution and service disruptions, and interactions with the state water quality testing program. The project will use existing data, which catalogues complaints from MHC residents. The project also aims to collect new qualitative interview data on water quality and reliability from residents living in MHCs.

Position Description:

The undergraduate researcher will join the primary investigator to assist with study design, outreach, recruiting of participants, and data collection. This student assistant will be involved in all aspects of research; including study design; literature review; qualitative data collection, management, and analyses; and writing up results.

Duties and Responsibilities:

The main responsibilities of the undergraduate researcher will be to perform a literature review of existing research on socio-demographics and water quality research; undergo IRB research ethics training; assist with outreach and qualitative data collection among residents in Colorado manufactured home communities (in person and via Zoom); perform data management and data analysis on secondary data from the Colorado Dept. of Local Affairs; produce a short piece of writing describing the key results; and contribute to grant writing for additional project funding.

Skills and Knowledge Gained:

Critical thinking; problem solving; state of the field technical skills; research design; COMBIRB submission; data management; qualitative data collection skills and experience; confidence conducting research; communication skills; grant writing exposure.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Strong work ethic
- Good academic standing
- Excellent communication skills
- Ability to use Microsoft Excel for data management
- Course experience with qualitative methods
- Comfort contacting professional staff and others for outreach
- Ability to use Zoom for scheduling and conducting meetings

Preferred Qualifications:

- Spanish language skills

Position Commitment:

5-10 hours/week with flexible schedule

Appendix B: Tips for a Quality Mentoring Plan

A research mentor is someone who can provide feedback, support, and structured goal-setting to move students forward as researchers. Mentors can help student researchers engage in research and scholarly activity, grow in an understanding of their field, and provide experience relevant for future professional goals. With guidance from their mentors, students can engage in key elements of research and scholarship, learning to distinguish between personal beliefs and evidence, as well as to situate the concepts, practices, and results of their work within a broader context.

[Read publications on the importance of mentorship in undergraduate research.](#)

A quality mentoring plan is key to encourage structure and growth for emerging scholars. Below are some examples of previous EURēCA! mentoring plans and co-written mentoring contracts.

[View example mentoring contract template here.](#)

1. Example Faculty Mentoring Plans

1. It will be the faculty mentor's responsibility to keep the project on track and moving forward. Many of the things we do in laboratory-based research do not work initially, requiring troubleshooting. While this is a completely normal part of the process, many students get frustrated if things don't work the first time. A big part of the faculty mentor's role is to help students overcome this mental barrier and learn to troubleshoot for themselves. This is accomplished by having the student understand all the aspects of their experiment, and why certain conditions are used. With this basic knowledge, they can now begin to adjust and optimize conditions that will eventually lead to success.
2. The Mentor and mentee will meet once a week to discuss the progress of the project. If problems arise or any step of the project hasn't been working, we will troubleshoot together to figure out how to go forward. Success will be measured by whether the milestones of the specific plan described in the project proposal are being met. The preferred method for communicating will be in person for daily meetings and updates. A PRA can also help if the main faculty mentor is unavailable. And if necessary, email is a perfectly good means of communication.
3. Trainees have individual one-on-one meetings with the faculty mentor to check in about research progress, timelines, and goals. Meetings are 15-20 min for undergraduate RAs. Undergraduate RAs and new MS RAs also meet with a PhD co-mentor weekly for 30 min. At the beginning of each semester, the faculty mentor has longer meetings with each trainee to discuss progress and upcoming goals. At the end of each semester, the faculty mentor will have another one-on-one extended meeting to discuss performance over the semester. In preparation for these meetings, students fill out a reflection assessing

their strengths, weaknesses, accomplishments, goals, and ideas for how they, the team, and the faculty mentor can improve. During the meeting, the trainee and mentor discuss the student's reflection and a progress report for them where the mentor assess their performance including in general, disseminating work (e.g. presentations and writing), understanding of the science, ability to work independently and in a team, and using technology. Additionally, the team connects virtually through email and slack to answer questions and keep projects moving in between meetings.

4. The faculty mentor and co-mentor will provide oversight and guidance to the mentee in the lab. The student will be onsite 10-12 hours per week and will submit a bi-weekly activity report via e-mail or Microsoft Teams chat. The mentor and co-mentor will provide feedback regularly so that the student may adjust their performance and grow professionally. The faculty mentor and co-mentor will encourage professional and academic development of the mentee as an aspiring scientist. The student will learn technical skills essential for immunology research as well as general good laboratory practices and research ethics. The co-mentor will work alongside the student, teaching skills and scientific concepts, and helping the student gain independence at the bench. The faculty mentor will meet at least once weekly to review project progress, troubleshoot, and guide intellectual development. She will also review written and oral reports, providing verbal and written feedback.

2. Example Co-Written Physics Mentoring Contract

1. **What are the main responsibilities of the undergraduate researcher in this project (including hours)?** The main responsibilities of the undergraduate researchers will be to perform a literature review, generate input data, perform tests calculations, perform full production calculations, data collection, data analysis, creating high-quality graphs, and produce a short piece of technical writing describing the results they have generated, and the process they used to generate them.
2. **What are the responsibilities of the mentor in this research project? What skills will the mentor teach the mentee?** The main responsibilities of the mentor will be to oversee the work of the undergraduate researcher, and provide them with access to the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in their research project, and in their future career. This could include, but is not limited to, guidance on how to conduct literature reviews, suggestions on how to optimize calculations, coding advice, tutorials on creating scientific visualizations and scientific writing, and identifying the cross-over between these skills and potential future careers where they would be useful. The undergraduate researcher would like to pursue a future career involving quantum physics, and so the mentor will help them identify opportunities in this field.
3. **What are the expectations for the project? What is the timeline for completing the key components of the research project? How will you measure progress?** The timeline and key components of the research project are outlined in the Gantt chart below. Progress will be measured by the completion of each of the major components, along with the relevant description, figures, and / or files to be included in the final technical write-up. The mentor and mentee will aim to work to this timeline, but both understand that research often does not happen according to schedule, and are committed to adapting to any required schedule changes.
3. **In what form and how often will the undergraduate researcher document and report their research work to the mentor?** The undergraduate researcher will prepare a small set of slides, to be presented at the weekly meeting, to document their progress. These will contain important text descriptions of how to perform calculations, diagram, and graphs. At the end of each major milestone the researcher will create a formal write-up of their progress, and collate any important files and figures, to be included in their technical write-up. They will also provide verbal progress updates at the ad-hoc informal meetings.
4. **Describe the measurable final product(s) that will serve as the goal(s) for this project (data set, research paper, presentation, article, etc.)?** Measurable outcomes include a Literature Review, which will include references to the most current literature on our research topic and adequate summaries of each paper, a set of input data and calculation parameters which can be used to reproduce these calculations, results files from the production-run calculations, data analysis scripts and final processed data, and

graphs generated from the latter. Most of these will be contained within a final technical report, which can then form the basis of conference presentations or research articles to be completed in the academic year 23-24.

5. **What expectations does the mentee have of the mentor?** Replying to emails or messages promptly, being available for meetings, providing career advice, building a support system.
6. **What expectations does the mentor have of the mentee?** Replying to emails or messages promptly, being willing to ask questions / ask for clarification, being available for meetings.
7. **What type of assistance does the mentee want from the mentor in achieving their career goals during their time working together? Where does the mentee hope their career will have taken them in five years?** The mentee hopes to be employed in a position that frequently uses their physics knowledge and research skills, but is not necessarily a “physics” job. This could be in the fields of health, or computer science. The main assistance the mentee has requested is to set up a network, i.e. make them aware of and put them in touch with people who have physics degrees but work in other fields.
8. **How often will you meet? When and where? For how long?** We will have regularly scheduled weekly meetings, one hour in duration. These will be held in the mentor’s office. We will also meet on an informal basis 2-3 times per week to give each other progress reports, and as needed depending on the current stage of the project (e.g. to improve programming skills).
9. **Who will be responsible for scheduling the meetings?** The mentor will schedule all regular meetings, but the mentee can schedule meetings as needed. Informal meetings will occur several times per week.
10. **What will meeting topics include?** Meeting topics will include acquiring the fundamental physics knowledge necessary for this research, research tools such as conducting literature reviews and performing data analysis, computational skills including python programming and high-performance computing, soft skills such as presenting research and technical writing, and job-seeking skills focusing on setting up professional networks and finding job opportunities.
11. **What will be the ground rules for discussions? (E.g., confidentiality, openness, truthfulness, etc.)** Discussions between the mentor and mentee should be honest and generous, seeking to find common understanding and a collaborative approach to any identified issues. They should have a positive tone where possible, and extend grace towards each other, by assuming that all questions and comments are sincere, with the desire of increasing both participants’ knowledge. While the research topic is unlikely to

generate any confidential material, in relation to personal matters (job seeking) both will communicate what they would wish to remain confidential, and whether that request can be accommodated.

- 12. In what form and how often will the mentor provide constructive feedback to the mentee?** The mentor will provide regular casual constructive feedback verbally, during informal meetings. During the formal weekly meetings, at the appropriate milestones, the instructor will provide written constructive feedback, in the form of comments on pieces of writing or graphs, comments in pieces of computer code, and also written comments preserved via email in relation to current progress or suggested directions of research. The mentor will always strive to deliver feedback in the most positive way possible.
- 13. If problems arise, how will they be resolved?** Problems will be resolved with open and honest dialogue from both parties, with a focus on listening to each other, and an “us vs the problem” attitude. If a situation arises where either party feels uncomfortable participating in such a dialogue, the Chair of the Physics department will act as a mediator.
- 14. Any concerns the mentee wants discussed and resolved?** None – the mentor and mentee have worked together for the past 6 months, and have a good working relationship.
- 15. Any concerns the mentors want discussed and resolved?** None – the mentor and mentee have worked together for the past 6 months, and have a good working relationship.
- 16. We have agreed that our initial meetings will focus on these three topics:**
- a. Review of this contract and “ground rules” for research.
 - b. Performing a Literature Review – where to find relevant research articles?
 - c. Initial exploration of local physics-related employers
- 17. Any additional areas/issues you want to discuss and agree to?** None.

3. Example Biology Lab Mentoring Contract

Welcome to the lab. Here, we study (focus of biology research). We work in a collaborative setting with people from a variety of backgrounds and education levels. We are always learning, improving, and pushing ourselves and others to be our best. In doing so, we produce first-class research for the broader community. This document lays out the **Lab expectations** and your **mentoring plan**. Please read it carefully, let me know if you have any questions, and when everything is clear send me a signed copy of this file.

Lab Expectations

Mentor's Responsibilities.

- I will do my best to help you become an exceptional researcher and to help you achieve your goals whether they be in academia or industry or other.
- I will provide honest and constructive feedback and thoughtful advice.
- I will do my best to provide a supportive, productive, and collaborative work environment.
- I will strive to set high and achievable research goals pushing the team to always improve.

Team Expectations.

- Take care of your mental and physical health
- Commit to first-class rigorous and reproducible research
- Respect yourself and others
- Show up on time
- Be organized. Pay close attention to the protocols we follow, and procedures for collecting, processing, and archiving data. I expect you to record data in our lab's Team's account (see details below) and clearly label experiments and data files according to the research protocols. I also expect you to notify me when supplies are low
- Ask questions! Asking questions is an important part of the research process. You can ask me questions in person or through email. It is always better to ask questions than it is to move forward without knowing the answers and running the risk of making mistakes
- Report any issues or mistakes. Also, we can all make mistakes (including me!) and it helps the team knowing when they happen so we can quickly mitigate consequences
- Communicate early and often about any personal or professional concerns you have about the research or research team. Early detection of problems is always preferable, as it can save a lot of time, energy, and money.
- Be a contributing and collaborative member of the team
 - Work through issues or conflicts with other team members should they arise
 - Communicate with me and others in the team
 - Respond to emails in a timely manner (e.g. ~24 hours) unless on vacation or emergencies; expected responses include confirmation of receiving the email. I expect all members of the research team to respond to all emails in a professional manner

- Help make our group inclusive and welcoming to all people (e.g. all races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientation, age, background, religion)

Lab Meetings. Lab meetings will be weekly. It is the expectation that research assistants attend each lab meeting. During lab meetings, we will connect as a team, set goals and timelines, practice communicating our research, and discuss primary literature. You will be expected to deliver a progress report (a short presentation on the work you have completed). Please contact me if you have a conflict and will be unable to make a meeting or 1to1; at least 24 hours' notice is expected when possible.

Expected Time Commitment. A sufficient and regular time commitment to the research in the lab is necessary both to move forward the science and for the research assistant to have a beneficial research experience. As such, unless otherwise discussed with mentor, research assistants are expected to schedule 10-15 in person hours/week to work on the project.

Lab Microsoft Teams account: You will be given access to our Teams account, where all information regarding protocols, experiments, and lab meeting is stored. You are expected to record your work in Teams on a weekly basis and update the lab calendar with the hours you worked. It is expected that you will be working on the project during your scheduled times. If you need to work on something else (e.g. homework), please update your schedule.

Weekly check-ins. Research assistants will attend weekly or bi-weekly check ins with mentor. Assistants will come to these check-ins prepared with an update (in writing) on what they did the previous week, what the plans are for the upcoming week, and questions. It is expected that assistants will have at least one question. It is also expected that assistants will learn to lead their one-to-ones guiding the flow of the meeting.

Work time. It is expected that research assistants will write their GOAL and UPDATES on Teams at the beginning and end of their work time respectively. This helps to coordinate between people working and make sure that people are not unknowingly working on the same task. It is expected that assistants will check Teams to see what others are working on and will communicate often with others.

Health and Wellbeing. Health and wellbeing are absolutely essential to a productive team and, most importantly, researcher. Health and wellbeing includes physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Remember that sufficient sleep is necessary too! It is my expectation that research assistants will seek help and resources as needed including talking with me, and others in the team as comfortable. CU Denver has free counseling and other resources (http://www.ucdenver.edu/life/services/counseling-center/about/Pages/default.aspx?qclid=CjwKCAjwqZPrBRBnEiwAmNJsNv60cgOz09d3OdftzaH734eldMLvSxpVmYAfcBgmNKEDp8DX-uV2-RoCrglQAvD_BwE). I and the rest of the team are committed to supporting the health and wellbeing of our team members. We will identify the best way forward to accommodate people.

I have read, understand, and agree to the Lab Expectations written above.
Sign Below

Appendix C: Student Guides for EURēCA!

1. Applying for EURēCA! on Handshake ([Click for PDF Link](#))

Applying for EURēCA! on Handshake

Looking for Paid Research Opportunities as an Undergraduate?

The Office of Undergraduate Research & Creative Activities (URCA) is here to support as you step into the world of investigation and creative inquiry.
Take your learning outside the classroom with EURēCA!



1. LEARN ABOUT EURēCA!

Take EURēCA! workshop in Canvas or book advising appointment

- [Complete EURēCA! Workshop in Canvas](#)
- Attend upcoming info sessions
- Schedule advising through [Handshake](#)
- Call LynxConnect: 303-315-4000



3. REQUEST WORK-STUDY AWARD

Financial Aid will update Award Package

- Check CU Denver Student Portal
- Once Financial Aid package received, submit brief **Work-Study Request Form**
- **Work-Study Request Form** (scroll down)
- Requests expedited if *Intent to Hire Letter* is attached.
- Take screenshot of work-study amount & email to URCA/ upload with application.

Tips: [How to check your work-study](#)



5. PREPARE APPLICATION

Use LynxConnect resources to prepare resume & cover-letter.

- Book resume review or interview prep assistance in [Handshake Appointments](#)
- [View research resume & cover letter tips](#)
- Email URCA with questions before applying, we're here to help!

QUESTIONS?

CALL 303-315-4000 OR EMAIL UNDERGRAD.RESEARCH@UCDENVER.EDU



2. FAFSA REQUIRED FOR ALL STUDENTS



Complete Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Colorado Application for State Financial Aid (CAFSA)

Must be done annually & can take several weeks to process, start early!

- [CU Denver FAFSA instructions](#)
- [Learn More: What is work-study](#)



4. SEARCH FOR EURēCA! POSITIONS



Find open positions in Handshake Jobs searching 'eureca'. Check minimum requirements- GPA, year, major etc.

- **Excited about applying?** Reach out directly to faculty supervisor with questions/introduction!
- **Not able to apply?** Check you have required *eurekaok* label (see Step 1).
- [View Handshake Jobs](#)



6. APPLY & INTERVIEW!



Apply early faculty conduct rolling interviews - don't miss your chance.

- Include screenshot of work-study award or an explanation of steps (FAFSA processing, request sent, etc).
- Work-study award is not required for EURēCA!, it increases available work hours.

Once offered a position, URCA will guide you through Solidify and Hire process. Keep an eye out for emails!

2. Make it EURēCA! Application Process ([Click for PDF Link](#))

Make it EURēCA! Application Process

Working in a research, creative position, or needing support for an independent project?

'Make it EURēCA!' is a way for students to jointly apply with their mentor for the EURēCA! Student Assistant Program. This program uses federal-work study and direct funds to provide salary support to undergraduate scholars. Applying to the program does not guarantee acceptance, so reach out to the Office of Undergraduate Research & Creative Activities (URCA) with questions!



1. MEET WITH URCA OFFICE

Learn about program details & expectations before applying.

- Schedule in [Handshake](#), select: URCA: 'Undergraduate Research- Advising'
- Call LynxConnect: 303-315-4000



3. FAFSA REQUIRED FOR ALL STUDENTS

Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Colorado Application for State Financial Aid (CAFSA)

Must be done annually & can take several weeks to process, so start early!

- [CU Denver FAFSA instructions](#)
- [Learn More: What is work-study](#)



5. DEVELOP PROPOSAL & MENTORING PLAN

Work with mentor to develop proposal, job description, & co-written mentoring plan.

Include scope of proposed project, overview of daily tasks, goals for semester, & detailed mentoring plan.

- [Example proposals](#)
- [Example mentoring plans](#)
- [Mentoring contract template](#)

Application Tips: Apply by priority deadlines, but applications still accepted until program full. Can apply before work-study confirmed, but submit work-study request first.



2. TALK TO YOUR FACULTY MENTOR



Talk to your mentor about EURēCA!

- [EURēCA! Program Details](#)
- [Faculty Info Sheet](#)

Still looking for a mentor?

- [Tips to Get Started](#)

Mentor have questions? They can contact URCA.



4. REQUEST WORK-STUDY AWARD



Financial Aid will update Award Package

- Check CU Denver Student Portal
- Once Financial Aid package received, **submit brief Work-Study Request Form**
- [Work-Study Request Form](#) (scroll down)
- Requests expedited if Intent to Hire Letter is attached.
- Take screenshot of work-study amount & email to URCA/ upload with application.

Tips: [How to check your work-study](#)



6. COORDINATE & APPLY



Mentor will upload proposal and mentoring plan through 'Make it EURēCA!' option of application. They will need student ID, graduation information, work-study status, & statement of interest to fully submit.

- Application at [bottom of website here](#)

Once offered a position, follow steps for Solidify & Hire process. Check you emails!

QUESTIONS?
CALL 303-315-4000 OR EMAIL
UNDERGRAD.RESEARCH@UCDENVER.EDU

3. EURēCA! Solidify and Hire Steps ([Click for PDF Link](#))

EURēCA! Solidify and Hire

Offer Letter

The EURēCA! Solidify process starts when you receive an **offer letter** from your faculty mentor and an intro email from the URCA office. **Reply to these emails with your signed offer letter** to accept the position. Your employment is contingent on successfully passing a background check and completing the following hiring steps.



Work-Study Confirmation

Email a screenshot of your **work-study award** to URCA. If you do not have a work-study award, **submit a 'Request for Work-study' form** through the Financial Aid website and include your offer letter.

Note: If you still do not receive a work-study award after requesting, URCA will work with you to find other support.



Solidify Appointment

Book your required **Solidify appointment** in Handshake with the URCA Advisor. Before your appointment, draft a learning agreement **Experience** in Handshake outlining position details and goals. **Note:** If eligible, you may use your EURēCA! position to enroll in a for-credit internship - ask the URCA Advisor.



Experience Approval

During your **Solidify appointment**, you will discuss program details and requirements, for-credit steps (if applicable), and cover any lingering questions. Once finalized, **your Experience will be approved by your mentor**. You will then receive an email from URCA kicking-off your hiring with the HR Business Partner (HRBP).



Initiate HR Process

The HRBP will contact you with **process details**. Expect an email from HireRight, a third-party company working with CU to conduct background checks and identification verification. Please check your junk or spam folder. **Note:** This process can take up to two weeks. If already an employee in the CU system, you may have fewer steps.



Background Check:

You will receive **email confirmation of background check** and will be asked to provide personal data and sign an electronic background consent form through HireRight before the background check is conducted.

Note: HR will occasionally request you provide last 4-digit of SSN as part of verification process.



Required Documents:



Required Documents:

The HRBP will reach out after receiving employee background results to detail next steps in the hiring process and to request a personal data info sheet. Identification documents will be requested and used for the University's I-9 process.



Note: HR will occasionally request you provide last 4-digit of SSN as part of verification process.

I-9 Verification

Employees will get an email from HireRight with instructions to **complete Section 1 of Federal Form I-9** online to verify eligibility for employment. In accordance with federal law, **all employees must present verification document(s)** to the HRBP.



System Entry Onboarding

After completion of section 2 of the I-9, HRBP will enter personal and job-specific data into HR online system. Once hired, **new employees will receive an ID #, detailed information on next steps, current employee handbook, payroll calendar, and onboarding instructions.**



Employee Profile Setup

Once hired in the system (after up to 3 business days), access your newly created CU Resources (Employee) tab in your online Student Portal to:

- ☐ Set up MyLeave preferences
- ☐ View paystubs
- ☐ Verify personal info
- ☐ Update emergency contact info
- ☐ Record taxes taken out (W-4)
- ☐ Set up direct deposit (after start-date)



Training Compliance

New employees have 2 weeks from start date to complete the 2 CU Denver required Skillsoft training courses. These are online, self-paced, and accessed in the CU Employee portal. Score 80% or higher for completion.

- ☐ Discrimination & Sexual Misconduct
- ☐ Info Security & Privacy Awareness

Note: Your mentor may have additional training requirements as well.



Input & Submit Time in MyLeave

Once you set up your MyLeave preferences, **be sure to input your hours after every shift worked.** To get paid on time, use the bi-weekly payroll calendar to schedule reminders every two weeks to submit your timesheets for approval by your mentor/supervisor.



Remember:

- Track work-study or hourly usage
- Stay within time limits (50 hrs bi-weekly or work-study/hourly caps)
- Submit timesheet every two weeks

Questions? Email URCA Advisor
elizabeth.evans@ucdenver.edu