

Faculty Member Contact Information

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Description of the URCA Assistant Position


This posting includes one funded position. In addition, the faculty member may be willing to mentor additional, unfunded students.


How many unfunded students is this professor taking in addition to his/her one funded student? 3

(Students, if the faculty member will have both funded and unfunded students, he or she is free to select which student receives the funding. Funding cannot be split up between multiple students; only one student will receive it.)

Which of the following apply to this position?

This position is **only** open to students who have declared a major in this discipline. **M**

This project deals with social justice issues. 

This project deals with sustainability (green) issues. 

This project deals with human health and wellness issues. 

How many hours per week will your student(s) be required to work in this position? 9

(Minimum is 6 hours per week; typical is 9.)

Will it be possible for your student(s) to earn course credit? Yes No

If yes, in which course? Senior Assignment or Independent Study

If yes, for how many credit hours? 3

Location of research/creative activities: SIUE Campus

Brief description of the nature of the research/creative activity:

The students working as URCA assistants will assist with a box turtle population study. They will help to build and set traps within a natural habitat area on SIUE campus. Once in place, these traps must be checked DAILY for captured animals. All captured turtles will be brought into the lab where they will be marked, measured and weighed before being returned to the point of capture.

Brief description of student responsibilities:

These students will be responsible for checking the traps daily (approximately 45 minutes/day or 5.25 hours/week), bringing captured turtles into the lab for processing, and returning the turtles to the point of capture. In addition, each student must maintain data sheets and photographs for each individual turtle caught (2 hours/week). Additional responsibilities will be to assist with turtles recovering in the lab so that the students will gain confidence in learning turtle characteristics, and safe handling, feeding, and cleaning techniques.

URCA Assistant positions are designed to provide students with *research or creative activities* experience. As such, there should be measurable, appropriate outcome goals. What exactly should your student(s) have learned by the end of this experience?

At the end of the semester, students will be proficient in using a global position system (GPS) unit, trapping wildlife, and being able to weigh, measure and mark turtles for a population analysis. In addition, the students will understand habitat preferences of box turtles in the study area and develop a greater appreciation for spatial analysis of box turtle home range and distances traveled. These students will learn the basics of research and the importance of consistent data collection methods and keeping clear, accurate records that will be used by others conducting scientific research in the future. In addition, this is valuable field experience that will add strength to the students' ability to secure a position that requires fieldwork, scientific research, or other work that requires a dedicated work ethic.

Requirements of Students

If the position(s) require students to be available at certain times each week (as opposed to them being able to set their own hours), please indicate all required days and times:

Students may set their own hours to check the traps on a daily basis and to work in the lab.

If the location of the research/creative activities involves off campus work, must students provide their own transportation?

The research sites are on SIUE campus. Students will need their own transportation to and from the sites, and must be able to transport captured turtles to the Turtle Research and Rescue Lab in Alumni Hall.

Must students have taken any prerequisite classes? Please list classes and preferred grades:

Students who have taken a Cartography or Intro to GIS course are preferred. At a minimum, students must be familiar with GPS technology.

Other requirements or notes to applicants:

Students applying for this position must be comfortable working in an outdoor setting where temperatures will vary and where they may be exposed to insect bites, toxic plants, and native reptiles and mammals found in a natural setting.