Research (and Teaching) Experiences for CALS Undergraduates

The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS) encourages students to invest in experiential learning-by-doing opportunities, that is, learning through Hands-On Research with leading scientists and/or through Teaching One's Peers under expert supervision.

DEPARTMENTAL 492 AND 493 CREDIT (FOR EXTERNAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND SPECIAL PROBLEMS):

Over 1,564 students were mentored or advised by CALS faculty in off-campus External Learning Experiences and on-campus Special Problems, the 492 and 493 courses offered by each department. These courses permit students to obtain college credit for meaningful learning experiences as volunteers or paid workers in corporate, government, hospital, and clinical settings (the 492 courses), and with campus researchers (the 493 courses). Students do not have to be recognized as CALS Honors Students (maintaining a 3.35 GPA) to take these courses. The CALS Career Services Office, one of two college-based career offices on campus, lists over 400 internship opportunities annually. Many students use their internships as 492 experiences.

CALS HONORS COURSES:

The College has over 225 faculty mentors who have volunteered to work in undergraduate honors research and innovative teaching settings. The CALS Honors student must be enrolled in one of CALS’ 4-year degree programs and must have satisfactorily completed ALS 398H, ALS 498H, ALS 499H as well as at least 6 hours of honors or scholars course work at the 300 level of higher (at least 3 hours in CALS). The student must maintain a 3.35 GPA to graduate with CALS Honors Program recognition. ALS 398H is a sophomore course that builds a firm basis for the ethics in a scientific society. It develops skills in teamwork leadership, the use of the library and computers, and it demands written and oral communication skills. ALS 498H and ALS 499H give juniors and seniors the opportunity to formulate and test hypotheses in fully equipped research settings, or to participate with master teachers in the development and presentation of high-tech laboratory exercises for undergraduates. One outcome of this enthusiastic interaction between CALS faculty and students is that the 2003 NCSU Undergraduate Research Symposium included 110 research poster presentations, 50 (45%) of which were CALS students! Also, in conjunction with the CALS Honor Program, students gave nine poster and two oral presentations at the 2003 CALS Undergraduate Teaching Symposium.

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAM:

The College offers an Undergraduate Research Program which provides students with opportunities to receive hands-on experience related to their majors. Faculty list vacant projects at http://ceres.cals.ncsu.edu/cfdocs/ugres/index.cfm Positions are posted between January and April. Students contact the faculty member directly to be considered for the research project. The research positions are non-paid, although students will receive academic credit by signing up for ALS 498 or 499 (CALS Honors Research) or 492 (External Learning Experience).

INTERN CENTER:

Internships are career-related work experiences. Usually occurring during the summer months, internships are designed to help students refine and clarify their career goals. CALS Career Services offers a searchable database on the Web to help students locate internships at: http://www.cals.ncsu.edu/career/

If you are interested in obtaining research and/or teaching experience as a CALS Undergraduate student, please contact a Departmental Undergraduate Coordinator from the list provided on this Web site:
http://www.cals.ncsu.edu/index.cfm?showpage=22
or visit the CALS Undergraduate Research and Teaching Web site:
http://ceres.cals.ncsu.edu/cfdocs/ugres/index.cfm