

Office for Research's Call for Mentors: Xiangya Visiting Medical Student Research Program

We are pleased to announce the 2022-2024 cycle of the Xiangya Visiting Medical Student Research Program. Since the program's inception we have recruited seven cohorts, a total of 94 students, to the Long School of Medicine (LSOM) at UT Health San Antonio. The Xiangya Visiting Medical Student Research Program has become highly competitive in the US, as we are now competing with many other institutions across the country for high quality students from the same pool. These students have worked in our biomedical research laboratories and seen great success, evidenced by scientific publications and presentations.

Please review the following guidelines carefully, as we have revised our process in response to faculty and student participant feedback.

1. Each student is provided an annual stipend of \$23,600 by the Xiangya School of Medicine or their mentor during the two-year program. Each host laboratory will pay the student \$533.33 per month, in addition to the cost of health insurance (~ \$3,000 annually). The total stipend with home institution and UT Health mentor funding is \$30,000 annually per student. Faculty must demonstrate that they have sufficient funding through August 2024 to be eligible to host a Xiangya Visiting student.
2. Ordinarily, each mentor will host one student per cycle. A second student may be placed in a laboratory only under extenuating circumstances. The total number of Xiangya students in each laboratory must not exceed three at any given time. If you are unsure if you can participate, please contact the LSOM Office for Research at 210-567-0300 or SOMResearch@uthscsa.edu.
3. Mentor/student matching is a dual selection process. A list of participating mentors, including biosketches and project descriptions, is provided to the Xiangya School of Medicine. Students will contact mentors to set up an interview to establish interest and fit. Mentors may also contact students directly upon receipt of student information from Xiangya School of Medicine. Students and faculty will indicate their match preferences to the LSOM Office for Research. Final assignments will be based on these preferences and made by the LSOM Office for Research.
 - a. Xiangya School of Medicine requires medical students to publish a first author paper in order to graduate and many students have expectations for first authorship on a research paper resulting from participating in this program. Long School of Medicine mentors are under no obligation to provide this opportunity, but the possibility of obtaining a first author publication may influence a student's laboratory choice. In the spirit of transparency and to avoid confusion after matching, we encourage mentors to discuss the possibility of generating publications with students during the interviewing process. Xiangya School of Medicine and their administration are aware there is no guarantee of a first author publication
4. The mentor and their home department are responsible for completing all J-1 visa paperwork for the student to begin the program at UT Health San Antonio. The Office for Research and Office of International Services are available to provide guidance on these requirements to mentors and home departments. Visit the OIS website [here](#), for J-1 visa paperwork information.
 - a. Students must document English proficiency in accordance with federal regulatory requirements and guidelines established by the UT Health San Antonio Office of International Services for a J-1 visa.
5. University policy and J-1 federal regulations require international students to maintain medical insurance coverage. Students will not be able to start or continue their student position without documentation of medical insurance. Please note that the cost for this insurance is not covered by UT Health San Antonio. Given the ongoing health risk posed by COVID-19, it is required that faculty cover the cost of the UT Health Insurance Plan, or equivalent as it provides superior coverage. More details on this requirement will be made available to mentors selected to host a student.
6. Mentors should understand the primary purpose of the J-1 Exchange Visitor program is to promote cultural exchange. Therefore, mentors agree to make available to the student a variety of cross-cultural activities to give them broad exposure to American society, culture, and institutions. The mentor will encourage and allow the student to participate in these activities and to share the language, culture, or history of their home country with the campus and the community.
7. Upon the student's arrival at UT Health San Antonio, it is the responsibility of the mentor and their home department to ensure the student obtain adequate research training and provide updated visa documentation to the Office for International Services.
8. Prior to the student's departure to travel back to their home country, mentors must discuss next steps and best practices on how to use information and data collected over the course of their two-year program. It is important to set expectations and ensure the students are aware of security policies, intellectual property, and privacy/restriction guidelines before their last day of work.

To apply to host a visiting Xiangya student for the 2022-2024 class, upload your biosketch with funding information clearly identified to demonstrate the ability to support the stipends outlined above, a letter of support from your department chair, and a one-page description of the potential Xiangya student's project to SurveyMonkey, (<https://apply-uthscsa.smapply.io/>) no later than **March 30, 2022**. Visit the Office for Research site for a letter of support and one-page student project templates. In Spring 2022, faculty will receive information on Xiangya students, and will be notified of their eligibility to participate in interviews. Upon selection, eligible mentors and department contacts must attend a meeting with the Office for Research and the Office of International Services. Faculty should plan for a September 1, 2022 student arrival in San Antonio. Refer questions to SOMResearch@uthscsa.edu or 210-567-0300.