

**Course Information:**

Title: Undergraduate Research and Creative Scholarship I

CRN Number: 34152

**Instructor:** Trent Sutton, PhD

**Contact Information:** [tmsutton@alaska.edu](mailto:tmsutton@alaska.edu); 474-7285

**Office Location:** URSA Office 301 Bunnell

**Office Hours for Students:** by appointment

**Course Readings/Materials:**

*How to Mentor Undergraduate Researchers* Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR)

<http://www.cur.org>

**Course Description:**

Undergraduate research refers to collaboration in original research and/or creative activity between an undergraduate student and a faculty member, leading to work which is presentable to scholars in the field. Projects may be an element of the faculty member's work or could be initiated by the student. Undergraduate Research and Creative Scholarship I offers opportunities for student project work in advanced topics beyond typical undergraduate course offerings. Students must meet with the course instructor in the previous semester to identify a mentor. Enrolled students will write a project proposal for further work by the end of the semester and make a poster presentation of their proposal and any preliminary findings. Research areas range across all disciplines. A substantial level of discipline-specific background, a level commensurate with having achieved junior or senior standing, is assumed.

**Course Goals:**

Involvement in research can be an important ingredient in a successful and satisfying undergraduate program. Undergraduate Research gives students a chance to discuss research projects with faculty members, participate in ongoing projects in research laboratories, write a research report and present a research poster. As a research university, UAF strives to communicate to undergraduate students how research and scholarly activity is conducted. Accordingly, the course goals of URSA 388 are that students learn, through direct research experience, how discipline-specific knowledge is created and how to communicate research results in oral, written and performance formats.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

The intended outcomes of URSA 388 are that students learn, through direct research experience, how discipline-specific knowledge is created and how to communicate research results in oral, written and performance formats. Specifically students will learn:

1. tools, skills and techniques specific to the discipline that encompasses their project
2. critical thinking skills leading to ability to engage in research, to interpret results and to formulate future questions and directions
3. to communicate research motivations and proposed work in oral, written, poster and performance formats.

**Instructional Methods & Course Activities:**

**Course Meetings** Meetings with the instructor will be held on an ad hoc basis throughout the semester. At the start of the semester, the URSA course instructor will establish contact with the student and the

mentor to determine the need for safety and other training. This contact will be maintained throughout the semester so the URSA instructor can provide resources and ensure progress.

**Course Projects** The course project should be envisioned as a proposal for work that could lead to a publication in a peer-reviewed journal or public performance. The proposal should define a project for the student's participation in URSA 488, one that stands a reasonable chance of completion in the available time. Work done during the semester will include a substantial component of experiential learning so the student has the opportunity to develop and apply an understanding of in-depth concepts grounded in the primary scholarly literature. Most students will complete proof of concept work or gather preliminary data to include in their proposals.

**Finding a Project** First-time 388 students, or returning students working with a different mentor, must write a brief description outlining the subject area of the proposed project, including 1-3 key references that define the scope of the project (see Project Identification Form at the end of this syllabus). The Project Identification Form must be submitted by 5 PM of the 2nd Friday of the semester. The project description should be written in consultation with the mentor. For information about faculty and their research areas, visit the faculty web pages at <http://www.uaf.edu/>.

**Number of credits** Credits are assigned at the beginning of the semester when students enroll, but may be subject to change as the result of consultation between the student and professor. Two credits of URSA 388 are reserved generally for literature research or small computational projects. In general, 3 credits provide an absolute minimum amount of time to accomplish a studio-, laboratory- or field-based project; 4 credits may be appropriate if the student has a large ongoing project with plenty of available time. Six credits of URSA 388 are acquired by students who enroll in 388 for multiple semesters. Each credit of 388 corresponds to an average weekly minimum of 3 hours working productively in the laboratory/field/studio, plus 1-2 hours additional work on the project (planning, interpretation, notebook writing and background reading).

**Project Proposal** A main assignment of the course is a project proposal written according to the format of a discipline-specific review panel or funding agency. Early in the semester the student and mentor should decide on an appropriate format. Throughout the semester the student writes the proposal while engaging in proof-of-concept work or preliminary experiments. The results of this preliminary work should be included in the proposal. Copies of the proposal are to be submitted to both the project mentor and the URSA course instructor no later than 5 PM on the last day of final exams for the semester. Reports must be well-written, comprehensive and contain appropriate citations.

**Public Presentation** Students must prepare a poster presentation of their project proposal. The usual size is 36" x 48", but other sizes may be appropriate if the student will be presenting a poster at another venue. A template and rubric for poster presentations are included at the end of this syllabus. The template will be provided by email, the image in this syllabus is for your reference only.

**Course Calendar:**

<b>Course week</b>	<b>Course Topic</b>	<b>Course Assignment</b>
1	Research at UAF: opportunities and requirements for participation	
2	Identify your research project	Project Identification Form
3	How to prepare a Project Proposal and Poster	
4	Individual research	
5	Individual research	
6	Individual research	
7	Individual research	
8	Individual research	
9	Individual research	
10	Individual research	
11	Individual research	
12	Individual research	
13	Individual research	
14	Individual research, poster preparation	
15	Project Proposal finishing touches	Poster Project Proposal
Finals week		Written Project Proposal

**Course Policies:**

**Safety** All research students must complete safety training. This may involve several online training presentations (with quizzes that you must pass). Contact your department's Safety Coordinator to arrange for training before beginning your project.

**Safety Tips** While Safety Coordinators will provide a thorough review of safety issues, and you will hopefully have gained safety knowledge in previous courses, here we emphasize several important points. Project work must be carried out with all due caution. Do not work alone. Wear safety gear as suggested. Do not rush. Do not attempt a procedure without the necessary training. Familiarize yourself with the potential hazards of materials you are using. Use common sense. This is a learning experience, so do not be bashful about asking for assistance.

**Attendance** In consultation with your mentor, establish a regular schedule of attendance in the mentor's work area (studio, laboratory, etc.). You may also be asked to attend a regular research meetings with your mentor and other students held weekly or periodically during the semester. Regular attendance is required. You are expected to attend all classes. Classes will be held during the first two weeks of the semester. The purpose of these classes is to assist students in identifying research mentors and insure each student completes any training required for research participation in their chosen discipline.

If you are required to participate in: military; UAF-sponsored activities; or documented, necessary participation in cultural activities that will cause you to miss a class, you must notify me as soon as possible. You must notify me of all scheduled UAF-required absences for the semester (e.g. athletic events) during the first week of classes.

**Research Hours** The total number of hours spent working on the project (both time in and away from your mentor's workplace, doing background reading, data production and analysis, creation, practice, performance or poster and report preparation will vary between students and projects. Spend all the time necessary to complete the proposed project and facilitate the poster and report presentation required at the end of the semester. The number of credits assigned for each student's URSA 388 course is determined by the project. As a rough guide, students should spend an average minimum of 3 hours per week per credit.

**Student Conduct** As a UAF student, you are subject to the Student Code of Conduct (<http://www.uaf.edu/ses/student-resources/conduct/#condu>). In accordance with Board of Regents' Policy 09.02.01, UAF will maintain an academic environment in which the freedom to teach, conduct research, learn, and administer the university is protected. Students will enjoy maximum benefit from this environment by accepting responsibilities commensurate with their role in the academic community. The principles of the Code are designed to facilitate communication, foster academic integrity, and defend freedoms of inquiry, discussion, and expression among members of the university community. You should become familiar with campus policies and regulations as published in the student handbook.

UAF requires students to conduct themselves honestly and responsibly, and to respect the rights of others. Conduct that unreasonably interferes with the learning environment or that violates the rights of others is prohibited. Students and student organizations will be responsible for ensuring that they and their guests comply with the Code while on property owned or controlled by the university or at activities authorized by the university.

Disciplinary action may be initiated by the university and disciplinary sanctions imposed against any

student or student organization found responsible for committing, attempting to commit, or intentionally assisting in the commission of any of the following prohibited forms of conduct:

- A. cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty;
- B. forgery, falsification, alteration, or misuse of documents, funds, or property;
- C. damage or destruction of property;
- D. theft of property or services;
- E. harassment;
- F. endangerment, assault, or infliction of physical harm;
- G. disruptive or obstructive actions;
- H. misuse of firearms, explosives, weapons, dangerous devices, or dangerous chemicals;
- I. failure to comply with university directives;
- J. misuse of alcohol or other intoxicants or drugs;
- K. violation of published university policies, regulations, rules, or procedures; or
- L. any other actions that result in unreasonable interference with the learning environment or the rights of others.

This list is not intended to define prohibited conduct in exhaustive terms, but rather to set forth examples to serve as guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

Honesty is a primary responsibility of you and every other UAF student. The following are common guidelines regarding academic integrity:

1. Students will not collaborate on any quizzes or exams that will contribute to their grade in a course, unless permission is granted by the instructor of the course. Only those materials permitted by the instructor may be used to assist in quizzes and exams.
2. Students will not represent the work of others as their own. A student will attribute the source of information not original with himself or herself (direct quotes or paraphrases) in compositions, theses and other reports.
3. No work submitted for one course may be submitted for credit in another course without the explicit approval of both instructors.

Alleged violations of the Code of Conduct will be reviewed in accordance with procedures specified in regent's policy, university regulations and UAF rules and procedures. For additional information and details about the Student Code of Conduct, contact the Dean of Student Services or web [www.alaska.edu/bor/](http://www.alaska.edu/bor/) or refer to the student handbook that is printed in the back of the class schedule for each semester. Students are encouraged to review the entire code.

**A Few Words on Plagiarism:** In general, DO NOT present someone else's ideas or data as your own: you are expected and required to give credit where credit is due. Plagiarism is a violation of the law and may lead to serious repercussions! Please follow the following guidelines: for any written assignments, if you use someone else's ideas, data, or other information, write it in your own words and include the reference in parentheses directly following that information. Avoid copying someone else's text. If, however, you feel you have to include an exact copy of that text, put it in quotation marks followed by the reference in parentheses. Of course, include all cited references in the Literature Cited section. During oral presentations, please acknowledge the sources by mentioning

their name(s) and year of publication or by printing them on overheads, slides, or handouts. Also be aware that you need to cite earlier work by yourself. Any substantial use of any written or other materials that was used for another course or that was generated in any other circumstances will not be accepted for credit in this course. Only minor contributions from earlier work with appropriate citation(s) will be accepted.

**Withdrawal** Students are expected to formally withdraw from the class if they cannot complete the course; they will not be automatically withdrawn by the instructor or their research mentor if they do not attend or fall behind. Students who do not successfully complete the class and do not withdraw will receive a grade of “F”.

**Student Responsibility** As students, you must accept the responsibility of ensuring your own success. It is your responsibility to know what you need to do and when you need to do it. This requires a great deal of initiative on your part. Always ask if you don’t know what is expected of you. Never wait for someone to tell you. “I didn’t know,” and “no one told me,” are not acceptable reasons for failure to fulfill your student obligations. I am here to help and support students who take the initiative to help themselves.

**Evaluation:**

Students will receive a letter grade based on their performance on course assignments.

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Percentage Contribution to Final Grade</b>
Project Identification Form	5
Blog Participation	15
Poster Project Proposal	40
Written Project Proposal	40

Students will be graded on a straight percentage basis: 90-100% is an A, 80-89.9% is a B, 70-79.9% is a C, 60-69.9% is a D, and < 60% is an F. Students will not be graded on a curve. This means that, in principle, it will be possible for everyone to get an A in this course.

**Support Services:**

Students in need of support are encouraged to contact me via telephone. I have posted office hours and am available for group and private face to face meetings during the specified times. All college classes require strong reading and communication skills. There may be a student support program in your area. **If you feel that you may be falling behind, contact me immediately.** I want you to be successful. Never be afraid to ask for help.

**Disabilities Services:**

The Office of Disability Services (208 WHIT, 474-5655) implements the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and insures that UAF students have equal access to the campus and course materials. I will work with the Office of Disabilities Services to provide reasonable accommodation to rural students with disabilities. Please contact me or The Office of Disability Services is you require special assistance.



**URSA 388 Undergraduate Research and Creative Scholarship I  
Project Identification Form**

**Complete this form and email to Trent Sutton, URSA Director at [tmsutton@alaska.edu](mailto:tmsutton@alaska.edu).**

**Student name:**

**Student UAF email address:**

**Student UA ID Number:**

**Mentor Name:**

**Mentor UAF email address:**

**Number of Credit hours:**

**The primary deliverable of the URSA 388 course is the production of a project proposal, which will be presented in poster and written format.**

**Working title for the project is:**

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**Brief description of proposed project (Including identification of subject area and overview of planned techniques and/or procedures and materials, with descriptions of potentially hazardous procedures or materials):**

**Lead-in literature reference(s):**



URSA 388 Undergraduate Research and Creative Scholarship I  
 Poster Template also available at [www.uaf.edu/ursa](http://www.uaf.edu/ursa)

**QUICK DESIGN GUIDE**  
 --THIS SECTION DOES NOT PRINT--

PowerPoint 2007 template problems & 30 "x40" standard poster. It will save you valuable time by saving, adjusting, text, and graphics. It is create your presentation.

Online tutorials at:  
[http://libby.uaf.edu/ursa388\\_ppt](http://libby.uaf.edu/ursa388_ppt)  
 and paste the link into your web browser.

**Object Placholders**

The placholders provided below to add new items to your poster. Drag a placholder onto poster area, size it, and click it to edit.

**Logo Placholder**

If this preformatted section header placholder in poster area to add another section header. Section headers to separate topics or concepts in your presentation.

**Section Header Placholders**

If this preformatted text placholder to the or to add a new body of text.


**Text Placholders**

If this graphic placholder onto your poster, size to fit, and click it to edit.


**Picture Placholder**

Picture resources are available on our Blackboard. Go to Blackboard course site and click on **9999** icon.

**Click here to add the poster title**  
 Click here to add authors  
 Click here to add authors

  
 LOGO  
 (click to edit)

(click to edit) PRESENTATION WORDS  
 Type in or paste your text here

  
 LOGO  
 (click to edit)

(click to edit) INTRODUCTION or BACKGROUND  
 Type in or paste your text here

(click to edit) TECHNICAL METHODS  
 Type in or paste your text here

(click to edit) ACKNOWLEDGMENTS or CONTACT  
 Type in or paste your text here

(click to edit) CONCLUDED OUTCOMES  
 Type in or paste your text here

(click to edit) APPROPRIATES  
 Type in or paste your text here

(click to edit) ACKNOWLEDGMENTS or CONTACT  
 Type in or paste your text here

**QUICK TIPS**  
 (--THIS SECTION DOES NOT PRINT--)


The PowerPoint template requires basic PowerPoint (Version 2007 or newer) skills. Below is a list of commonly asked questions, specific to this template. If you are using an older version of PowerPoint, some template features may not work properly.

**Using the template**

**Verifying the quality of your graphics**

Go to the VIEW menu and click on ZOOM to set your preferred magnification. This template is at 100% the size of the final poster. All text and graphics will be printed at 100% their size. To see what your poster will look like when printed, set the zoom to 100% and evaluate the quality of all your graphics before you submit your poster for printing.

**Using the placholders**

To add text to this template, click inside a placholder and type in or paste your text. To move a placholder, click on it (hold the select (I) place your cursor on its frame and your cursor will change to this symbol: ). Then, click drag and drag it to its new location where you can resize it as needed. Additional placholders can be found on the left side of this template.

**Modifying the layout**

This template has four different column layouts. Standardized your mouse on the background and click on "Layout" to see the layout options.

The columns in the provided layouts are fixed and cannot be moved but advanced users can modify any layout by going to VIEW and then FULL SCREEN.

**Importing text and graphics from external sources**

TEXT: Paste or type your text into a pre-existing placholder or drag in a new placholder from the left side of the template. Move it anywhere as needed.

PICTURES: Drag in a picture placholder, size it (drag, click in it, and insert a photo from the menu, CTRL+V). You can copy and paste a table from an external document onto this poster template. To adjust the way the text fits within the cells of a table that has been pasted, click on the table, click "FORMAT" and then click on "TEXT BOX" and change the INTERNAL MARGIN values to 0.25.

**Modifying the color scheme**

To change the color scheme of this template, go to the "Design" menu and click on "Colors". You can choose from the provided color combinations or you can create your own.

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URSA 388 Undergraduate Research and Creative Scholarship I  
**Poster Rubric**

Poster Rubric

	<b>Yes</b> (excellent)	<b>Somewhat</b> (adequate)	<b>No</b> (inadequate)
<b>Audience</b> Can someone outside the field understand the findings? (e.g. language, diagrams, etc.)			
<b>Audience</b> Will the poster hold the attention of people in the field?			
<b>Purpose</b> Does the poster present the significance behind the research inquiry?			
<b>Purpose</b> Does the poster provide relevance of the topic presented?			
<b>Purpose</b> Does the poster present the topic and findings in a clear, concise, and succinct manner?			
<b>Conventions</b> Is sufficient information presented and in the appropriate format of the specific discipline? (e.g. references, headings, methods, images, etc.)			
<b>General Features</b> Is the poster engaging and professional? (e.g., pulls you in, visible from a distance, invites you to read more, free of punctuation, grammar, and spelling errors, etc.)			
<b>General Features</b> Do the figures/graphics support and enhance the content of the poster?			
<b>Your presentation of your poster will not be graded but these are evaluation criteria:</b>			
<b>Presentation</b> Is the poster presenter comfortable and engaged when interacting with viewers and answering questions?			
<b>Presentation</b> Does the poster presenter convey enthusiasm and confidence?			