GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

For Reference Only

STUDENT SUMMER SCHOLAR (S3) APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

An undergraduate student may propose a research, scholarly, or creative project to a faculty member, or a faculty member may actively recruit an undergraduate student for full-time collaboration during the Spring/Summer session. The applicants must use the Application Requirements format provided in this document. Completed applications for the 2026 Spring/Summer semester, submitted electronically, are due **Friday, February 6, 2026**.

Application Requirements

The required components for a complete S3 application are listed below. All required components are submitted online as one complete document. **The application must be written in language accessible to a faculty member from *any* discipline.** Proposals **must** be written in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins. Proposals **must** have a cover sheet featuring a title. Proposals must be written anonymously to enable double-blind review. It is acceptable to use pronouns, "the student", "the faculty member", or pseudonyms. Proposals **must** include section headers and page numbers.

1. Project Goals/Scope: (This section should be written collaboratively, recognizing that the background of the student and the discipline will affect who is the primary author and how much the student contributes. Please indicate who is the primary author of the section, though this information will not impact application score. Limited to 2 pages.) This section should be written for a **non-specialist**. Technical jargon must be minimized, and where such terms are necessary, they should be clearly explained so that a faculty member from *any* discipline could understand the purpose and goals of the project. This should include the following:
    a. Background – How does the proposed project fit into the discipline in a broad sense? What specific research problem or creative process is being addressed?
    b. Big picture – Explain the significance or interest of the proposed project. What are the discipline-specific goals of the project? What is the ideal outcome of this project?
    c. References – List references cited. Use a format appropriate for the discipline. References are not included in the final page count for this section.

2. Student Preparation and Motivation: (This section must be authored by the student and is limited to 3 pages *exclusive of résumé*).
    a. Preparation – Describe how you understand the project, its goals and methods, and your role within the project. Describe how you came to be involved with this project. Indicate any preparation or training that you currently have, or will seek, that will assist you in completing the project goals and objectives.
    b. Scholar Development - Describe your academic journey and your academic and professional goals. How does this research project support and/or enhance your progression or understanding of those goals.

c. Learning Goals - What are your expectations of this mentored research/ scholarly experience? In what type of learning environment do you excel and/ or struggle? What proactive actions will you take to leverage your strengths and mitigate areas of growth?
d. Supplemental sections (note: the following are not counted in the three-page limit for this section):
    1) Required: One page résumé listing major GPA, overall GPA, work, volunteer, and educational experiences that will help you complete the project. Please redact your name on the resume to support double-blind review. If needed, consult the Writing Center or Career Services for help in preparing your résumé.
    2) If your major or overall GPA is below a 3.0 or if there are any other special circumstances concerning your past course work, you **must** address how you are preparing to successfully complete the proposed project.

3. Mentorship/Apprenticeship Plan: (This section must be authored by the faculty mentor and is limited to 3 pages). The Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship has an expectation of inclusive mentoring practices for all faculty/student collaborations. It is desirable to provide evidence of inclusive, culturally responsive mentoring plans and/or training. OURS defines inclusive mentoring as the active practice of mentoring that cultivates a sense of belonging for the student, creates a supportive learning environment that is asset-based, and sustains clear and transparent communication centered on student learning and growth. Culturally responsive mentoring validates students' various identities and helps them navigate invalidating experiences they encounter while simultaneously reinforcing their self-efficacy in their field (National Academies of Sciences, 2019)
    a. Mentorship - What are the faculty mentor's goals for the student's learning and development during this project? How will these goals aid in the student's progression from receivers of information to self-directed learners who can conduct research? What pedagogical techniques will the faculty mentor use to help the student achieve those goals?
    b. Preparation – Detail ways in which the student and the mentor have prepared for the project (*e.g.* courses, independent study, research, etc.) Discuss the qualifications of the student and any special circumstances surrounding the student's situation. How have the faculty mentor's past experiences influenced his/her/their mentoring approach and philosophy?
    c. Collaboration – Explain why this project lends itself to active collaboration with a student. Which aspects of this project are accessible to your student?
    d. Agency - Describe how this plan will facilitate greater self-direction in learning of the student over the course of the project.

e. Supplemental section: If the student's major or overall GPA is below a 3.0, the faculty mentor must address how the student's strengths can be used to accomplish the proposed project goals *(note: this section is not counted in the three-page limit for this section).*

4. Project Feasibility: (This section should be written collaboratively, recognizing that the background of the student and the discipline will affect who is the primary author and how much the student contributes. Please indicate who is the primary author of the section, though this information will not impact application score. Limited to 4 pages.) This section may be written in a slightly more technical way, but a faculty member in *any* discipline must be able to follow most of steps and understand your reasoning. Applicant note: Provide enough detail to demonstrate to the reviewers that the project is feasible for an undergraduate and can be completed in the time frame of the grant.
    a. Define the goals (discipline-specific project-specific goals, or specific aims) for the project and explain the steps necessary to accomplish those goals/aims. How will these goals advance the scholar's understanding of the scholarly/creative process in the discipline, including how to handle the challenges and difficulties that arise when conducting a project? What strategies will be used to accomplish the goals/aims of the project? Describe the roles and tasks of the scholar and the faculty mentor. What contributions will the student make toward the project beyond simply assisting the faculty mentor(s) in their research?
    b. Address why and how this project is in your area of expertise, both content expertise and methodological expertise. While proposals need to be written anonymously, the faculty can still describe their scholarly expertise area. *Applicant note: If the project is within your methodological expertise, but not your content area, please explain how you will mentor the scholar through the inquiry process (and vice versa).*
    c. Include a projected timeline of the project detailing the phases of the project including the responsibilities of the scholar and mentor at each stage. *Applicant note: The timeline is expected to be compatible with the events scheduled for the Student Summer Scholars program as noted on the web site, unless the project involves travel for data collection. Any program events that will be missed by either the scholar or mentor should be clearly indicated in the timeline.*
    d. Supplemental sections (note: the following are not counted in the four-page limit for this section):
        1) Required: Itemize the budget for the proposal using the budget template in Appendix 1. *Applicant note: the budget itself must be included within the proposal PDF file that is submitted. There will not be an opportunity to upload a separate budget document during the on-line submission process.*
        2) If appropriate, provide a statement concerning the responsible conduct of research procedures that will be used for use, care, and disposal of

hazardous materials, potentially infectious microorganisms, and animals. Include a statement regarding any necessary approval from the Human Subjects Review Committee. Indicate if HRRC or IACUC approval is required.

3) If appropriate, include letters of support (or other evidence) from outside agencies directly impacted by the proposed project, involved in the project or whose cooperation is necessary to the success of the project. These can be combined with your PDF proposal (submitted as one complete document with your name redacted from any emails) or emailed to the Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship, ours@gvsu.edu.

5. Commitment to Project: (This section is co-authored by the faculty member and the student. Limited to 1 page).
    a. Describe all projects, tasks, and obligations of the faculty mentor over the S3 period. How will this project be situated within these commitments? *Applicant note: all anticipated obligations need to be included in this section as well. This includes, but is not limited to, administrative appointments, summer orientation, summer teaching obligations, and other undergraduate research programs. The S3 program MUST be a primary focus of the faculty mentor, but the URC recognizes the complexities of faculty schedules during the summer. In this section, faculty applicants must demonstrate that they will have the time and ability to support an S3 scholar.*
    b. The student should describe all coursework, travel, and additional employment over the S3 period. It is expected that the student will treat this project as his/her primary responsibility for the entire contract period and will spend 35- 40 hours a week (400 hours in total) on the project. In general, the only other commitments of the student during the Spring/Summer semester should be taking, at most, one 3 credit class (in either 6-week session) or (but not both) working less than 15 hours a week.
    c. Supplemental Section (note: the following is not counted in the one-page limit for this section):
        1) If the faculty mentor will be unavailable or off site at any point during the research process, the faculty mentor must explain how this will not interfere with providing the student scholar with an exemplary mentoring experience.

6. Dissemination Plan (limited to 1 page).
    a. Describe plans for disseminating the outcomes of the project **beyond** the required events (S3 Showcase and SSD). Describe why these venues were selected and how the venues support the scholar's development and learning. Dissemination may include scholarly presentations, publications, exhibits, performances, and/ or publicly accessible products. Please note that the CUSE

office recognizes and values public dissemination of project results just as much as scholarly dissemination.

For Reference Only

APPENDIX I – BUDGET WORKSHEET

Title of Project:	
Student name:	
Faculty mentor(s) name:	

STIPENDS

Student stipend[1]	$5000
Faculty stipend	

PROJECT COSTS (please list items/services and estimated costs)[2]

TOTAL	

FUNDING FROM OTHER SOURCES (list amount and source)[3]

[1] The entire student stipend is expected to be used as summer pay for the student scholar. Additional funds needed beyond the S[3] budget for travel or equipment should be obtained through other sources.

[2] Justify the purchase of any services, materials, and/or supplies necessary to the project.

[3] Indicate other sources of funding for this project applied for and/or obtained, and describe how those funds support this proposed project.

For Reference Only

APPENDIX II – FACULTY MENTOR & STUDENT SCHOLAR RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of Faculty Mentor
The faculty mentor is required to participate in orientation, Summer Scholar Showcase, Student Scholars Day, writing retreat (at a bare minimum the lunches each day), any assessment completed by OURS, and all mentor workshops (approximately 3). These requirements hold even if the faculty member is only mentoring an MS3 that is part of term (i.e. first 6 weeks or second 6 weeks). Faculty mentors are also expected to discuss with the student scholar their IDP draft and provide feedback.

Each faculty mentor shares the responsibility, with their student scholar, for creating a quality learning experience and ensuring students have appropriate training for the work. The faculty mentor must make sure students complete and submit their final report to the institutional repository in a timely manner. They must make certain these reports meet disciplinary expectations as to the writing quality, presentation, and contribution to the field. Faculty mentors are also required to make sure student scholars complete and submit all final documentation, namely the student scholar's reflection, dissemination plan and budget, and student scholar's professional bio.

Responsibilities of Student Scholar
Each student scholar shares the responsibility, with their faculty mentor, for the quality of their learning experience. They need to be self-directed in their research, be an active participant in the program, and provide meaningful feedback to the faculty mentor, and the Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship (OURS) Program Director and the Undergraduate Research Council (URC) Chair when needed.

The scholars also need to work with their faculty mentor to ensure that they have received appropriate training, including CITI training and other project/discipline specific training. If required, this includes submitting the appropriate forms for work involving human subjects, live vertebrate animals, radioisotopes or other hazardous materials.

Each student scholar must fulfill the requirements of the program. These include:

a. participating in the summer activities:
    a. orientation
    b. development and submission of Individualized Development Plan (IDP)
    c. submitting bi-weekly journals
    d. attending all scholar seminars (even if the student is only completing an MS3 in the first or second 6 weeks)
    e. attending writing retreat

   f. attending any other workshops / presentations and completing appropriate release forms
b. designing and presenting a poster or oral presentation at the Summer Scholar Showcase and Student Scholars Day
c. completing the reflection paper by the designated deadline and submitting it to OURS
d. completing an abstract and final paper by the designated deadline, and submitting the paper to the GVSU institutional repository
e. providing constructive feedback to the OURS Program Director and URC Chair

APPENDIX III - HOW OURS DEFINES EXEMPLARY MS3 MENTORSHIP

An exemplary Modified Student Summer Scholars mentoring experience:

- Develops students' intellectual independence
- Recognizes that the scholarship/research/creative activity is very different from the typical classroom experience
- Understands that independent scholarship requires a level of intellectual independence that is new to most students
- Acknowledges that the independent scholarship and mentoring experience might be one of the biggest challenges students have undertaken thus far, and can be daunting
- Helps students progress from being receivers of information to being contributors:
    1. It is the faculty mentor's responsibility to provide an environment in which the students can make this transition
    2. The faculty mentors serve as leaders at the outset of the investigation – assigning reading, other tasks, and generally setting the tone for the entire program
    3. Students learn that their subject/project is not as complete and finished as they might have thought – there are new questions to ask and answer, and known results to extend
    4. In the latter stages of the program, students should be able to work with more independence on original work
    5. By the end, the student should have more control of the direction of the program, and faculty mentors and students can work together like colleagues
- Exposes students to the tools and/or methodologies of the discipline or interdisciplinary endeavor, for example: problem selection, literature searches, background reading, experiments, creative practice, etc.
- Provides effective and meaningful student-faculty interaction:
    1. Students should maintain a thorough understanding of their specific responsibilities, and the tools and resources available to successfully fulfill those responsibilities
    2. Faculty mentors participate fully in all aspects of the summer experience of the students
    3. Faculty mentors hold frequent and regularly scheduled meetings with the students and are available as often as needed
- Provides a cooperative and non-competitive environment in which the students can learn and engage in active scholarship
- Provides experiences and information that can help students make decisions about their futures in their field or interest area

- Provides direction to enhance and reinforce the students' discipline-specific or interdisciplinary methodology and skills
- Enhances students' communication skills:
    1. Provides opportunities for students to share their work in oral and written forms - building their confidence and independence
    2. Provides plenty of feedback - evaluation of progress, comments/suggestions on writing and oral presentations, discussion of the potential or future aspects of the project
    3. Teaches students that almost as important as the research itself is the ability to explain and present it clearly and effectively
- Helps students establish collaborations with others interested in or involved with their research/topic/creative project
- Learns and respects students' personalities and styles of work, understands their expectations, and is transparent with them about what the work is going to be like
- Remembers that one of the most valuable lessons the students can learn is uncertainty. While students may be very interested in discovering and knowing an answer, faculty understand that discovering answers often leads to more questions
- Requires patience