

SURF Rubric for Proposals, Office for Undergraduate Research, UNC-CH

The SURF Selection Committee will use this rubric to assess proposals so this should be a guide for you as you develop your proposal. Please remember that a Level 1 proposal puts you in the running for funding but does not guarantee funding. As with most fellowships, the number of awards is determined by our funding.

Level 1 Proposal (high priority for funding):

- The proposal has a research question that is interesting, fresh, and significant for an undergraduate, and the student explains his or her ideas in an organized and compelling way.
- The research question is appropriate for this student. It is feasible in scope, and the student gives convincing evidence that she/he can carry out the project successfully: excellent grades in relevant courses, independent investigation and background knowledge and skills (including artistic skills or language skills when relevant), awareness of IRB issues, important contacts established, etc.
- The student describes “research methods” that are appropriate to the discipline and the project.
- The faculty research advisor support letter strongly indicates that the research project is significant and gives good evidence that the student has the qualifications to carry out the project successfully within the summer time period. The faculty expertise is a good match for the proposed project and the mentoring plan is appropriate.

Level 2 Proposal (acceptable for funding, but lower priority):

- The proposal has a research question that is interesting, but may or may not be particularly original or significant, and/or the student explains his or her ideas in an organized, but not particularly compelling way.
- The research question may or may not be appropriate for this student. It may or may not be feasible in scope, and the student may or may not provide enough evidence of her/his preparation to carry out the project.
- The student description of “research methods” may be incomplete.
- The faculty advisor support letter indicates that the research project is interesting and but may or may not give good evidence that the student has the qualifications to carry out the project successfully within the summer time period. The area of faculty expertise may be outside of the main focus of the project.

Level 3 Proposal (unacceptable for funding):

- The proposal does not have a research question or the question is one that has already been addressed. The ideas in the student’s proposal are difficult to follow.
- The research question is not appropriate for this student. It may not be feasible in scope and/or the student may give no evidence of having done preliminary planning or of being prepared to carry out the project successfully.
- The student does not identify a “research method” or describes a method that is not appropriate for research question.
- The faculty advisor support letter is general and gives little indication that the research project is important or that the student has the specific qualifications to carry out the project within the summer time period.