UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

Independent study and research provides an opportunity for students to work one-on-one with a faculty member through directed reading or supervised research. Normally independent study is reserved for students at an advanced level within their majors. Students should consult with their respective major or departmental advisors about requirements and limits for independent study, which vary from department to department.

Independent Study

Students are advised to approach faculty members about independent study as early as possible, since many instructors limit the number of students they will supervise in a given semester or year. Some departments require that the Director of Undergraduate Studies approve the independent study. As part of the proposal and approval process, students must specify, in consultation with the faculty supervisor, the number of points to be earned for the independent study. Students must designate the number of points to be earned when registering for independent study.

Students may count no more than 12 points of independent study toward the degree, and may register for no more than one independent study per term. If a student wishes to undertake an independent study program involving more points than the number permitted, he or she must have the approval of the Director of Undergraduate Studies and the GS Committee on Academic Affairs.

Research

Research allows students to build relationships with faculty; explore areas of interest; prepare for a senior thesis or graduate school; gain new knowledge in a topic of interest; and engage in exciting projects during the summer and/or academic year.

Opportunities exist for all undergraduates, so it is never too early to explore your options! Visit Columbia’s Undergraduate and Fellowships website to search for opportunities.

Funding for Individual Academic Research

The GS Office of Academic Affairs may provide a one-time stipend of up to $250 to students partaking in academic endeavors that are often not covered by traditional financial aid. These opportunities may include academic conferences, unique research opportunities, and visits to museums and other cultural institutions of interest and relevance.

In order to apply for funding, students are requested to submit the following documentation:

2. Supplementary statement: Students must provide a supplementary statement explaining the nature of the event or initiative, and how their participation or attendance will enhance their undergraduate experience. Statements should not exceed one page in length.
3. Event/initiative-related documentation: Invoices, receipts, flyers, proof of payment, and brochures that provide the cost of participation and logistical details (date and location of the event, etc.).

Completed applications and supplementary documentation may be submitted electronically to gsacademicaffairs@columbia.edu.