

2008 Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) Program Population Research Center and Department of Sociology, University of Texas at Austin

The Population Research Center of the University of Texas at Austin, in collaboration with the Department of Sociology and with funding from the National Science Foundation, is pleased to announce the 2008 Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) Program in Minority Group Social Demography. The REU program offers talented undergraduates an opportunity for classroom training and hands-on research experience during a 2-month session on the University of Texas-Austin campus.

What is the REU? The REU program hosts ten very select undergraduates from both UT-Austin and from around the United States for 2 months during the summer and introduces them to careers in social science through an intense academic program focusing on social demography—the scientific study of human populations from a sociological perspective. The program features a 5-week upper division sociology course, worth 3 credit hours, on the social demography of race and ethnicity. The course focuses on research dealing with minority group experiences in the United States and teaches students how to conduct social demographic research on such topics as racial/ethnic inequality, health disparities, fertility differentials, etc. using demographic research tools. In addition to the 5-week course, REU students will be introduced to statistical computing and research ethics at the UT Population Research Center (PRC). The PRC is the foremost research institute for population studies in the Southwestern United States. Over the summer, REU students will be expected to develop a research project and to produce a scholarly paper on a topic of his/her choosing, which will be later be presented at a regional demographic conference in the fall semester following the REU summer. **STUDENTS SELECTED INTO THIS PROGRAM WILL BE EXPECTED TO ATTEND, AND WILL BE REIMBURSED FOR, THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE FALL SOUTHERN DEMOGRAPHIC ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE, WHICH WILL BE HELD OCTOBER 30th to November 1st, 2008, IN GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA.**

REU summer program dates are June 4, 2008 through August 8, 2008. Orientation will be held on the morning of June 4th (Wednesday), so the students selected for the program should plan on arriving on campus on Tuesday, June 3rd. The first five weeks of the program include coursework in Sociology 369L, which meets daily for 90 minutes. Class sessions also include training in the use of the UT Population Research Center's computer network, major statistical packages, and other research resources available through the University of Texas. Since the REU program is so intense over the summer, students who are selected to participate in the REU program are very strongly discouraged from taking any other summer courses; any exceptions to this must be approved by the Program Director.

The second half of the REU summer will be dedicated to the production of a research paper for submission to the annual meeting of the Southern Demographic Association (SDA), which will be held October 30th to November 1st in Greenville, South Carolina. Students selected for the REU program will be provided with a travel allowance to send them from their home university to the SDA meeting in order to present their research and enjoy a post-summer reunion. The summer research work of students will be mentored by advanced graduate students who are conducting population-based research at the Population Research Center, as well as by the faculty co-sponsors (Robert Hummer and Arthur Sakamoto) of this program. Recent summers have seen REU students work on papers relating to health and health care for the Mexican-American elderly, the effect of immigration on health, adolescent sexual behavior differences by race and ethnicity, multi-racial identity as measured by the U.S. Census, racial/ethnic and socioeconomic differences in child development, health and fertility patterns on the U.S.-Mexico border, and much more. REU students have effectively used their papers as writing samples for graduate school entry and have even published papers from this experience. Many former REU students from this program are currently in U.S. graduate programs in the social sciences or are now in professional and academic careers throughout the country.

REU students live and dine together over the summer in an air-conditioned UT dormitory. Their registration will provide them with access to all UT sports and recreation facilities, shuttle bus and Capital Metro transportation, and a wide range of entertainment events in the Austin community. REU students will also be part of the UT Population Research Center and Sociology Department community, with a ready-made set of faculty members and fellow students eager to introduce them to the collegiality of academic life.

The REU program pays for tuition, room and board, computer expenses, and books. In addition, students also receive a \$3,000 summer stipend for participation in the program, which should allow the selected students to fully concentrate on their REU experience over the 2-month program. Students will receive an additional \$1,000 stipend after presenting a paper at the annual SDA meeting in fall 2008.

Who is eligible to be an REU student? This program is open to US citizens and permanent residents. Undergraduates who have completed requirements for sophomore or junior standing are eligible to apply, with the ideal time for REU being the summer between the junior and senior year. Preference is also given to applications from students with some statistical/methodological training, those who declare sociology as a major, and/or those who are participating in a social science honors program at their home institution. Students who have excellent grades, a serious interest in thinking about graduate school *in the social sciences*, and a thematic interest in minority group well-being and demography are especially encouraged to apply. A letter of reference from a nominating faculty member will also be given serious weight in our selection decisions.

How do interested students apply for the REU program? THE APPLICATION DEADLINE IS Friday, February 29th, 2008. Applicants should submit: (1) a completed application form, (2) a current resume, (3) college transcripts; and (4) one letter of recommendation from a nominating faculty member. The application packet should be mailed to:

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