

WORK-STUDY RESEARCH ASSISTANT PROGRAM 2026-2027



Program Overview

The [Work-Study Research Assistant Program \(WSRAP\)](#) provides undergraduate students who have a *federal work-study award* with an opportunity to develop research skills and explore their academic interests by working as a research assistant under the supervision of a faculty mentor. These meaningful research assistant positions allow students to develop foundational research skills that they can build on as they progress through their academic career. Participation in undergraduate research is also a great way for students to explore their academic interests, learn about how research is conducted at the university, and develop transferable skills useful in a range of fields.

Federal Work-Study

Work-Study is a need-based financial aid work program, through which students can earn the designated amount of the award through employment in an eligible position. Funds are limited and are awarded based on financial need and order of application filing date to eligible full-time students who submitted a FAFSA by the federal on-time deadline. **Students may only earn up to the limit of their Work-Study awards for the period of the award (semester or academic year).** Work-study and the university will pay 100% of the student's wages up to the dollar limit of their awards.

Developing a Work-Study Research Assistant Position

Faculty are responsible for developing a job description for their specific research assistant position. **Our expectation is that the research assistant will be substantively engaged in a faculty member's research endeavors. These positions are not to be exclusively clerical or lab upkeep positions.** Faculty should review the [Guidelines for Faculty Posting a Research Assistant Position](#) as they develop a position description.

Submitting a Research Assistant Job Description

Job descriptions for 2026-2027 research assistant positions must be submitted to the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) through the online [WSRAP Submission Form](#). OUR will post positions through **12Twenty**, UConn's student employment platform. We encourage faculty to submit research assistant opportunities early in the summer and no later than **Monday, August 10, 2026**.

Selecting a Research Assistant

Faculty have control over the hiring process and are responsible for reviewing student application materials, interviewing the students (if interested), and selecting a student to hire. Faculty are encouraged to review the [WSRAP Interview Guidelines](#). The only constraint is that the student must be an undergraduate student with a 2026-27 *federal work-study award*. OUR will post the job, collect the applications, and forward all the eligible applicants to faculty for review. OUR will only screen the applications to determine if the student is an undergraduate with a work-study award.

Hiring Process

Faculty will notify OUR when they have selected a student to hire. Faculty are expected to extend job offers via email (templates available). Once a student accepts a WSRAP position, OUR staff will share instructions on the hiring process (e.g., completion of the I-9 employment form, W-4 forms, direct deposit). Note that OUR and Enrichment Programs staff will manage all payroll and timekeeping processes – these will not be the responsibility of your departmental staff. Information on the hiring process for student employees is available on the ["For Student Employees" section](#) of the Enrichment Programs website.