

# 2026 VETERINARY SUMMER SCHOLARS RESEARCH PROGRAM

## MENTOR RESPONSIBILITIES/FAQ

### What are my main responsibilities as a mentor?

- Be aware of all schedules, timelines, important dates etc.  
<https://vetmed.tennessee.edu/research/veterinary-summer-scholars/>
- Mentor the student through the research project itself.
- Make sure your student is attending lab meetings, journal clubs, etc., as pertinent to the research being done.
- Make sure you are checking in with them AT LEAST once a week regarding their project, any help they may need etc.
- Make sure they are logging their time correctly. Details about working/payable time are below.
- Make sure they are attending the required weekly seminars hosted by the program. They will be Tuesdays and Thursdays 12pm-1pm location TBD at UTCVM.
- About halfway through the summer, you and your student should start working on the presentation slides and research poster for their culminating project. It is expected that you review, revise and assist the student in the creation of these slides. Details are below for the culminating presentation.

### What are the working hours of the program?

Each scholar must decide this with their mentor. While some of the research projects can be completed in a traditional 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. workday, others involve weekend and evening work. In addition, if a scholar needs to be absent from the project for any reason, this needs to be discussed with their mentor. **It is expected for students to take up to a week off for vacation in the summer. Mentors should be accommodating of this and organize this with the student. Remember, they cannot work more than 40 hours per week.** It is up to the student and the mentor when their first day of work should begin. Students can start any time after Monday May 18th.

### How are scholars paid?

Students funded by the Office of Research vary each year between \$15 - \$16.25 per hour, not to exceed 40 hours of work per week, and not to exceed a total of 400 hours for the summer. Each project has a varying workload. Some projects may require full time 40 hours per week, whereas some projects may only require 20 hours per week.

Students funded by [Boehringer Ingelheim](#) are required to have a full time project, for the full 40 hour weeks, for 10 weeks, for a total of 400 hours, for a total of \$6,500.

## What counts as “payable time” for the program?

Scholars can log their paid time for the following (keep in mind, you should be giving them close to 40 hours per week on the following items):

- Active research being done in the lab or in the field.
- Attending the weekly program 1 hour seminars.
- Attending any lab meetings/journal clubs as required by the mentor.
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- Remember, students **may not** exceed 40 hours per week.
- **Students and mentors need to decide on the students start date. The start date can be any time AFTER Monday May 18th.**

## How do students find a research project/mentor?

All available research projects will be posted [here](#) on **January 30, 2026**.

Once the student finds a project that they would like to work on, the student sets up a meeting with that mentor to further discuss the project. Students are encouraged to talk with multiple mentors, to get a better understanding of what each project entails.

**MENTORS:** You should be talking with students ahead of their application due date, so you have a preference of what student you'd like for the project.

Next, students will fill out the application found on the UTCVM Summer Program Website. They will be required to list their potential mentors in preference order. They may list up to 5 mentors. **Student applications for Summer 2026 are due February 26, 2026 at 11:59pm.**

Faculty mentors will also fill out a separate ranking form for up to five students in preference order. **Mentor “ranking of student” forms for Summer 2026 are due February 26, 2026 at 11:59pm.**

Last, the students and mentors will be matched. The student and mentor ranking forms will be processed by Summer Program Directors Dr. Sree Rajeev and Dr. Andi Lear. **Match results will be announced via email on March 9, 2026.**

## Helping students prepare for the oral presentation/slides

Mentors are expected to sit down with students and create a 3 minute speed talk slide, and a final research poster, both due at the end of the summer. The 3 minute speed talk slide will be to present at Research Day in September. Drs. Lear and Rajeev require them to submit the slide by the end of the program. In addition, students will present their research poster in a Research Poster Presentation Symposium on July 31st. Mentors are expected to help, review, and approve those posters prior to printing. About halfway through the program, students should start working on their 3 minute speed talk slide and posters. As a mentor, you are expected to guide them through this process, help them organize/layout the slide and the research poster and interpret the data to include in their presentations. Remember, this is a teaching/learning experience! A template will be provided if they would like to use it for guidance. This goes for both the slides and poster.