2016 OFF-CAMPUS AND EXCHANGE SURF INFORMATION SESSION
Introduction

- Overview of off-campus SURFs
  - Eligibility
  - Identifying and contacting a mentor
  - Funding
  - The application process
- Overview of SURF Exchange programs
- Expectations and requirements
- Questions?
Why do an off-campus SURF?

- Broaden your research experience
- Work with a leader in your field
- Chance to live and explore another place and/or culture
- Check out a possible graduate school
- Be closer to home and/or friends
- Opportunity to get away!
Ways to do an off-campus SURF

- SURF at another US university
- SURF at an international university
- Participate in a SURF exchange
Eligibility requirements

☐ Must be a Caltech student

☐ Must be a continuing undergraduate eligible for fall term registration

☐ Must have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 (2.5 for Exchanges)

☐ Must complete spring term at Caltech (or another school approved by the Dean)

☐ Must not be under disciplinary sanction
Finding an off-campus SURF

- Use your academic network. Talk to your advisor, previous research mentor, professors, postdocs, and graduate students.
- Determine schools you are interested in attending and browse their websites. Look for Caltech alums who are on the faculty.
- Look through list of option seminars. Attend if possible.
- Come by the SFP office to discuss possible mentors.
The First Contact

- Be professional
- Have confidence that you have something to offer, but don’t act entitled
- Provide adequate information about yourself—but not too much
- Learn something about the research topic in advance and state your interest in it
- Request additional references
- Request a telephone or skype interview
- Review interview guidelines on SURF website
Funding for off-campus SURFs

- Cost-sharing for the most competitive proposals
- Mentor pays for all research related costs
- Student pays for travel, housing, etc.
Funding (cont’d.)

- Refer to SURF in first email and include link to SURF mentor page
- If mentor is interested, then share information on funding
- SFP will handle the rest
- Focus on putting together the strongest application and proposal possible
All off-campus SURFers need to identify a Caltech faculty member to serve as an associate mentor. Associate mentors will:

- Review the student's research proposal and provide feedback to SFP about the suitability of the project and student match
- Assist the students with any challenges

The Associate Mentor does not have any financial responsibility for the student's financial award or research costs.
Application process

- The application
- The research proposal
- Two recommendations (not from your mentor or associate mentor)
  - At least one from a faculty member
  - We will solicit a mentor and associate mentor evaluation after an application is submitted
Research proposal

The proposal explains:

- what you plan to do in your research
- why this work is necessary or desirable
- specifically, how you will do it
- and persuades, by your preparation and by force of argument, that you are the right person for the job.

- Clear guidelines are available on the SURF webpage.
- Attend proposal writing workshop on Feb. 5 for more details.
- The proposal will be reviewed by someone in your general field.
Questions about off-campus SURFs
SURF Exchanges

- University of Iceland
- Gwangju Institute of Science and Technology
University of Iceland

- Located in Reykjavik
- About 14,000 students
- Particularly strong in biomedical research and earth sciences
University of Iceland

- $6K award
- Students pay for travel and food
- UI will arrange and pay for housing
- Will arrange several tours over the summer
- English is widely spoken
Gwangju Institute of Science and Technology (GIST)

- Located 200 miles south of Seoul
- Modeled after Caltech
- Particularly strong in Chemical Engineering, Materials Science, Applied Physics, Photonics
Gwangju Institute of Science and Technology (GIST)

- $6K award
- Students pay for travel
- GIST will arrange and pay for housing
- Will arrange several tours over the summer
- English is spoken in labs
Exchange application process

- Due February 9, 5:00 pm
- Hardcopy application
- Personal statement about research focus and why the exchange location fits that interest
- Two letters of recommendation from faculty
- Unofficial transcript
- Interview
Students do not need to find a mentor and write a proposal in advance

With your input you will be matched with a faculty mentor

Once placed students will write a project plan due in May
Expectations and requirements

- Conduct projects on a full-time basis for a ten-week period. Different schools, cultures, and mentors may have different definitions of what full-time means.
- Complete two progress reports, an abstract, and a final paper.
- Must give a final oral presentation at Caltech and maybe at their host school.
- Attend any safety sessions required by host school.
- Complete any additional requirements of host school.
- Serve as an ambassador, actions are guided by the Honor Code, host site school policies, and local law.
Questions?

How to Reach Us
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