2012 ARP Research Assistantship Program

Purpose:
The Agricultural Research Programs (ARP) Research Assistantships are awarded each year on a competitive basis in an effort to support new tenure-track Assistant Professors as they establish their research programs by providing funding for graduate student research. A primary purpose of this program is to develop and promote research ideas which can be developed into proposals for extramural funding. Important areas of research not having access to outside sources of funding will be considered, however.

Eligibility:

- *Only tenure-track Assistant Professors in the Colleges of Agriculture, Health and Human Sciences, and Veterinary Medicine who have been members of the Purdue University faculty for less than three years as of October 1, 2011 and are eligible for federal formula funding support.*

- *Faculty who apply for ARP Research Assistantships MUST prepare and have an approved Hatch, Animal Health, or McIntire-Stennis project that is consistent with the mission areas of USDA-NIFA. More information on NIFA’s priority areas may be found at: [http://www.csrees.usda.gov/about/background.html](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/about/background.html)*

- *A tenure-track Assistant Professor may receive only one ARP Research Assistantship during his/her first three years of employment.*

General Information:

- Individual Assistant Professors may submit only one proposal. *Proposals are due electronically in pdf format to ARP before 5:00 PM on Monday, November 7, 2011.*

- The ARP Research Assistantship stipend amount will be $17,500 per year. Funds will be available July 1, 2012. Assistantships are awarded for one year, but may be renewed for a second year pending written confirmation by the PI that the student has made satisfactory research progress. No detailed budget page is necessary since these funds are intended for graduate student assistantship support.

- The stipend may be used for MS or PhD student assistantships. *The proposal should clearly describe the research role of the graduate student supported by this ARP Assistantship. What will they do and what learning outcomes do you expect from them?*

- The ARP Research Assistantships may be activated after July 1, 2012, and no later than June 30, 2013. Funds will be released to the departmental business office when the PI informs ARP that they have selected a graduate student and wish to activate the assistantship.
Awards are limited to ARP-affiliated departments and to tenure-track Assistant Professors with an ARP appointment on an approved USDA-NIFA Hatch, McIntire-Stennis, or Animal Health (federal-formula) research project. If an Assistant Professor does not have an approved federal-formula project, one may be developed at the time of application for the ARP Assistantship or prior to an award. However, assistantship funds will be released only after approval of the federal-formula funded research project.

Proposal Structure:

1. **Cover Page:** Prepare a cover page with the project title, faculty investigator name, and faculty contact information (campus address, email, telephone).

2. **Abstract:** Provide a concise summary of the proposed project. (Limited to one page double spaced)

3. **Background:** Provide a discussion of the problem/hypothesis to be addressed and other appropriate literature review. Provide a justification in “lay language” which explains why this research is important to the USDA-NIFA mission areas, e.g., agriculture, rural communities, nutrition, food, animal disease, and/or natural resources. Also discuss any preliminary data or previous work in a related area. (Limited to four pages double spaced)

4. **Research Objectives:** Describe the specific objective(s) of the proposed project. The objective(s) should be appropriate for a graduate student and attainable during the two-year assistantship period. (Limited to one page double spaced)

5. **Plan of Work:** Describe the procedures, methods, and analytical approaches to be used to achieve the stated objective(s). Be sure to explain how the methods and analysis being proposed will contribute to achieving your research objective(s) and addressing the problem or hypothesis. Also, discuss expected results as well as any potential problems that could be encountered and how these might be addressed. Be sure to clearly describe what the graduate student’s role and research experience will be. (Limited to four pages double spaced)

6. **References:** Normally six to twelve key references should be sufficient.

7. **Curriculum Vitae:** Include a CV (up to 2 pages) that includes your education (degrees obtained and institutions), relevant employment history, and most relevant publications. Other items may be included as long as the page limit is not exceeded.

**Format:**

- The text and figures for the Abstract through the Plan of Work (items 2-5 above) shall be limited to 10 pages, double-spaced. Cover sheet, references, and vita will not count against the 10 page limit. No appendix is allowed.
- Do not use a less than 12-point font for all components.
- Do not use less than 1 inch margins for all components.
- Proposals that do not meet the above specifications (including the proposal structure) will not be considered.
Please send an electronic copy in pdf format via e-mail to jcrum@purdue.edu by no later than 5:00 pm, Monday, November 7, 2011. Notification from the review panel with written feedback will be shared individually with all who apply by mid-January 2012. This timing should help those of you who are successful in receiving an ARP Research Assistantship recruit a graduate student for the 2012 fall semester.

Proposal Writing Tip:

Keep in mind that the review panel will be made up of faculty from diverse backgrounds representing departments in the Colleges of Agriculture, Health and Human Sciences, and Veterinary Medicine. Proposals must adequately describe the justification for the work and the methodology to be used in a way that allows a diverse group of faculty to evaluate the merits of the project. However, methods should be detailed enough to clearly demonstrate that the investigator has a well thought-out plan that clearly engages the graduate student in the research effort.

Evaluation Criteria: (see attached reviewer evaluation sheet for more information)

Proposals will be ranked based on the overall quality and scientific merit of the proposal. Reviewers will evaluate the appropriateness of the project for a graduate student and the feasibility of completion within the two-year timeline of the assistantship. The role or contribution of the graduate students must be clearly delineated. Reviewers will consider how well the investigator demonstrates knowledge and capability in the proposed area of research. The proposals must be consistent with the USDA-NIFA mission areas, e.g., agriculture, rural communities, nutrition, food, animal diseases, and/or natural resources. All questions regarding proposal preparation should be directed to Marshall Martin (4-8365 or marshallmartin@purdue.edu).
Review Form for ARP Assistantship Proposals (revised 8/2011)

Title: 

PI: 

1. Problem or hypothesis clearly identified and stated (15 Points) 

2. Addresses relevancy of project (e.g., agriculture, rural communities, food, or natural resources and potential application) (10 points) 

3. Objective(s) appropriate, specific and logically arranged (5 points) 

4. Evidence presented that investigator has performed related work and is capable of conducting the work proposed (10 points) 

5. Feasibility of attaining objective(s) within two years (10 points)

6. Appropriate methodology chosen to complete objective(s) (20 points)

7. Overall scientific and technical quality of proposal (15 points)

8. Clearly articulates the role of the graduate student in the research project (15 points)

Overall priority for funding: ◯ High ◯ Medium ◯ Low

Additional Comments: (Strengths, weaknesses, suggestions for improving the proposal):