**VALENTE CENTER UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAM**

**Call for Proposals**

The Valente Center for Arts & Science is soliciting applications for **paid** undergraduate research positions for students to pursue an independent arts and sciences-focused research project for AY 2020-21. **Hours are flexible and should average five hours per week (up to 120 hours over the academic year) with an hourly wage of $12.75.** Research fellowships include periodic milestones to track progress and culminate in a manuscript and an oral presentation at the spring Undergraduate Research Showcase. Researchers *must* also attend enrichment events such as the undergraduate research “boot camp” in the beginning of the academic year, hosted in conjunction with the Honors Program.

Undergraduate Researchers are required to have a faculty mentor to provide guidance over the course of the year as the student independently undertakes their project. Prior to submitting an application, candidates must seek out a faculty mentor. If a student wants to participate and cannot find a mentor, they much reach out the Valente Center one week before the application is due to have a mentor suggested to them.

***Applications may be submitted until September 11, 2020.*** There are a limited number of positions, so potential applicants are encouraged to work on the proposal and apply as early as possible. Selection and notification will take place by **September 18, 2020**, with work on the project to begin soon after. **Applications are open to all class codes.**

**Note**: Research projects may **not** be used simultaneously for **any** course or program-related credit, including the Honors capstone project, a directed study or an LSM culminating experience.

To apply, submit the following documents in a single e-mail ***by September 11, 2020*** to Valente Student Research Manager Mark McKew (mckew\_mark@bentley.edu):

a. Résumé or CV
b. Research proposal (description attached)
c. Letter of support from a full-time Bentley faculty member willing to serve as mentor (description attached)

**Health TLN-Sponsored Undergraduate Researcher**

Bentley's Health Thought Leadership Network (www.bentley.edu/healthtln) is sponsoring a Valente UG Researcher whose research proposal will be related to health. We define health very broadly and would consider topics including, but not limited to, healthcare systems and administration, health-related technology and innovation, patient experience and healthcare information and how biological, psychological and social factors impact health. For a list of potential faculty mentors and their health-related research areas, please see the Health TLN website. If you would like to be considered for the Health TLN fellowship, please indicate so in your application.

**Faculty Mentor Description for Applicants**

Each researcher is required to have a full-time faculty member as a mentor. The purpose of a faculty mentor is to provide guidance over the course of the year as the student independently undertakes her/his project. The role of a faculty mentor is *not* to assign projects for the fellow or keep track of progress. Rather, a faculty mentor should act as an experienced resource for the fellow in the process of conducting original research, defining project scope, and finding novel areas to explore. Although faculty mentors may suggest avenues of research in consultation with the applicant, they should not simply assign research tasks in an applicant’s project.

\*\* Page 4 in this document gives information about the mentor’s role. You may provide this information to potential faculty mentors. \*\*

The faculty mentor should ideally conduct their own academic research in a field closely related to the fellow’s topic of interest to be able to meet these objectives. Although the fellow should average five hours of work per week, the faculty mentor’s time commitment should seldom be more than one hour per week. Fellows should arrange meetings with mentors on a weekly or bi-weekly basis to discuss the project and receive feedback. It is expected researchers will complete work on their own; faculty mentors have only an advisory role. **A Valente Undergraduate Research Project is student-driven.**

**Research Proposal Description**

The goal of a research proposal is to present and justify the need to study a research problem and to present the practical ways in which this research should be conducted. There exists no standardized format for a research proposal, but most follow an essay format. Regardless of the format that you chose, be sure to address these three themes in your research proposal:

***1. What do you plan to accomplish?***

• Be clear and succinct in defining the research problem and what it is you are proposing to research.

***2. Why do you want to do it?***

• Provide convincing evidence that it is a topic worthy of study. Be sure to answer the "So What?" question. If possible, conduct a review of the relevant literature.

***3. How are you going to do it?***

• Outline generally the methodology you hope to employ with your research project and create a mock timeline for your project and deliverable. Be sure that what you propose is doable.

**The Valente Center understands that during the course of researcher’s topic may change and other avenues may be explored**. This is not a problem, but prior to undertaking a project do your best to outline the scope of your project and what you hope to achieve.

**Before the Proposal**

These are tips for applicants before drafting a research proposal for submission.

***Identifying a Research Topic***

All projects must be related to the arts and sciences or the fusion of arts and sciences with business. It is important to remember that the arts and sciences, as well as their intersection with business, encompass a wide range of subjects. For example, a topic related to political science is within the realms of an arts and sciences related topic. If the applicant is unsure of whether their project falls within this space, contacting the Valente Center Director is advised. Beyond the topic, there are no set requirements as to the type of research project an applicant can undertake. Although research projects must be academically rigorous, applicants have considerable liberty to design specific projects.

***Meeting with a Potential Faculty Mentor***

Before beginning a research proposal, it is advised that candidates first speak with a potential faculty mentor to discuss their proposed project. A discussion with a faculty member about the research question in mind and the proposed research methodologies will be especially useful. This will allow the candidate to receive feedback on their ideas and also begin developing a relationship with a potential mentor. Since applications are accepted on a rolling basis until September, we encourage you to contact potential faculty mentors through email during the summer. This time is the best for both faculty members to be in contact with you, and for you to get all the materials ready for the application.

**Information for Potential Faculty Mentors**

The new Valente Undergraduate Research Program aims to provide motivated and competent students with an opportunity to conduct research with support from the Valente Center and faculty mentors. However, unlike paid Student Research Assistants, which directly support faculty research, these projects are student-driven.

As a result, the Valente Center will provide logistical, record keeping, and training support for UG research fellows. **Faculty mentors are NOT expected to check-in with students or monitor hours.** As projects are student-driven, the Student Research Manager in the Valente Center will coordinate check-ins and monitor progress with students. With respect to basic research skills, UG researchers will be expected to take part in an undergraduate research “boot camp,” which will be jointly coordinated by the Honors Program and the Valente Center near the beginning of the academic year.

All full-time faculty members (A&S or business) are eligible to serve as mentors. Faculty as mentors are expected to:

1. Provide a letter of support for student’s application;
2. If the student is selected for the UG Research Program, support the student with subject matter expertise, research advice, help with IRB requirements if necessary, and general advocacy for the student’s work; and
3. Meet with student for mentoring and discussion as needed, averaging no more than one (1) hour or so per week.

Faculty mentors will receive a **$1000** stipend from the Valente Center in April 2021.

**Questions?**

Please contact Mark McKew (mckew\_mark@bentley.edu), Valente Center Student Research Manager or Johannes (Hans) Eijmberts (jeijmberts@bentley.edu), Valente Center Director.