

There are several ways undergraduates, particularly those planning to attend graduate school, can earn laboratory research experience. The most common ways are independent study, paid work, or volunteering.

Finding a lab through faculty websites

- Finding a lab position in Molecular and Cell Biology faculty labs:

1.

1. Check out the [MCB Faculty Research webpage](#) and determine which labs you are interested in.

2. Before contacting a professor, review some of the latest publications that have come out of his/her lab (available on the MCB Faculty Research Interest webpage and in the Biosciences Library in VLSB). You are not expected to understand the articles completely, but if you read some articles and try to understand the professors' research as best as you can, they will be more convinced of the seriousness and depth of your interest in research.

3. Set up appointments to meet with the professors you have selected. Tip: When calling or emailing professors, it is more effective to express interest in their particular field of research and what you would like to discuss with them than simply asking "Do you have space in your lab?" Once you make an appointment, keep the appointment and be on time! Otherwise, faculty may be less willing to make other appointments with you.

4. Bring a resume, contact information, and your most recent UC Berkeley transcript (an unofficial copy is fine!) to your appointment with a professor. Professors often find this information useful for future reference.

5. During your appointment, ask the professors if they would be willing to accept you into their labs to do an independent research project. Professors want students who are genuinely interested in their research, not students who are primarily interested in improving their resume. Be prepared to discuss his/her work intelligently. Since there is so much competition for MCB lab positions, it is wise to approach your search for a lab position with the same degree of professionalism you would approach a real job search.

6. Clearly indicate whether you are seeking a paid position or seeking work for academic credit. In almost all cases, professors only offer unit credit during the academic year. Some professors will pay summer salaries to students who continue working in their labs in the summer after having already done research during the academic year. Discuss whether you would take MCB 199 or, if you are eligible, our honors courses, H196A/B. Find out how many hours a week the professor expects you to work and decide on an appropriate number of units.

Apply to Structured Research Programs

- [University Research Apprenticeship Program](#) (fall 2012 applications period, 8/16/12 -

8/29/12)

- [Summer Undergraduate Research Program](#) (SURP - sponsored by mcbUSA)
- [Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships](#) (SURF)
- [Biology Fellows Program](#) (fall 2012 applications due 7/9/12)
- [UC LEADS](#)
- [Amgen Scholars Program](#)
- and many more at the research.berkeley.edu website

Diversify Your Interests:

Don't limit yourself to just MCB labs! There are many lab positions available on campus. Look into working in the following Cal departments: [Anthropology](#) (209 Kroeber Hall, 642-3616); [Chemistry](#)

(419 Latimer Hall, 642-5884);

[Environmental Science, Policy, and Management](#)

(149 Mulford Hall, 642-6730);

[Integrative Biology](#)

;

[Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory](#)

;

[Nutritional Sciences and Toxicology](#)

(119 Morgan Hall, 642-2879);

[Plant and Microbial Biology](#)

(111 Koshland Hall, 642-5167); Psychology-Biopsychology Group (3210 Tolman Hall, 643-8114);

[School of Public Health](#)

(285 University Hall, 643-0874).

A campus-wide database is available on the [faculty expertise website](#) .

Finding a lab position off campus:

You can also check out opportunities through off-campus laboratories, such as the [Children's Hospital Oakland Research Institute](#)

(CHORI) and the

[University of California, San Francisco](#)

(UCSF).

