

Visiting Summer Undergraduate Researcher Program on Neurodivergent Undergraduate Students in STEM (Summer 2024)

Program Description:

Our research group will host two visiting undergraduate students for a 10-week summer program in STEM education research. During the summer, depending on students' interests and academic backgrounds, the students will be trained in either quantitative or qualitative methods in STEM education research and work on a research project under the supervision of Dr. Stephen Podowitz-Thomas in the College of Life Sciences at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, PA. Students will also gain experience presenting research results. The students will work closely with a team of other undergraduate researchers.

The students' projects will focus on a National Science Foundation-funded research study on the self-concept of neurodivergent undergraduate students in STEM (including students with ADHD, autism, learning disabilities and/or mental health disabilities). The study focuses on developing a quantitative scale to measure academic self-concept as a neurodivergent undergraduate student in STEM, as well as studying the sociocultural contexts within which neurodivergent students develop their beliefs on their neurodivergence and how their neurodivergence relates to their learning in STEM. Student projects may involve either analyzing quantitative survey data or qualitative interview / focus group data. The students will also work on a joint project with their summer cohort focused on disseminating valuable information about the self-concept and learning of neurodivergent STEM students to a national audience of STEM faculty and students. Throughout the summer, the students will work both independently and with groups of other summer students, meet regularly with Dr. Podowitz-Thomas to discuss their project, and attend and present at weekly research group meetings. There may also be opportunities to co-author academic journal articles or present at national conferences after the summer program.

Program Details:

- The program will run from May 20 - July 26, 2024 (*These dates are negotiable upon prior arrangement, but students should expect to work on their project for a total of 10 weeks. Please specify your availability in your application.*)
- Students will receive a \$4,500 stipend for the summer. (*This program does not include summer housing. A limited amount of funding may be available for travel to and from Philadelphia for students who live outside of the region.*)
- Students should expect to dedicate 30-40 hours per week to their participation in the program.
- Our research team is located on the East Falls campus of Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, PA. Students who live in the Philadelphia metro area should plan to be in the Philadelphia area for the 10 weeks of the program. We welcome students from outside of the Philadelphia area to apply, and are open to

making arrangements for remote work for some or all of the summer for those who are unable to relocate to the area.

- Prior to beginning the program, students must complete an online human subjects research ethics training.

Eligibility:

- Applicants must be enrolled in an undergraduate program with at least one remaining semester before graduation following the summer.
- Students who expect to graduate from an associate degree program in the spring immediately prior to the summer program AND plan to continue on to a bachelors program in the fall immediately following the summer program are eligible to apply.
- Applicants should have an interest in the experiences of neurodivergent students and STEM education research. Overall, our research group is dedicated to contributing to a fundamental understanding of the experiences and adaptive approaches of neurodivergent students in STEM, with the ultimate goal of making STEM instructional practices and culture more inclusive of neurodivergent students.
- Students with a range of academic backgrounds would contribute well to the project, including those majoring in psychology, statistics, sociology, and other science, technology, engineering, and math fields.
- No prior experience with qualitative or quantitative analyses is necessary, and students will receive training on the research methods needed to complete their projects, but applicants with this prior experience are certainly encouraged to apply.
- We encourage neurodivergent students and students from other marginalized groups in STEM (including those who are neurodivergent) to apply.

Applying:

Please apply through the following link:

https://jefferson.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_72jsUhYQDGV3hFI

We will review applications on a rolling basis through a **priority deadline of Monday, February 26, 2024**. If positions remain unfilled, we will continue to consider applications until our final submission deadline of Monday, March 25, 2024.

We plan to interview a group of candidates by mid-March and inform applicants of our decision by early April of 2024.

At the above link, you will be asked to submit your resume (including your GPA and relevant experience) and three short statements (max. 1500 character, including spaces) on: (1) your interest in the program, (2) experiences and skills that will support your successful in the program, and (3) how the program relates to your academic and

career goals. You will also be asked for the names and contact information of two recommenders, who will only be contacted if you are a finalist for the position.

If you have any questions about the program, application process, or our research, please reach out to Dr. Stephen Podowitz-Thomas at stephen.podowitz-thomas@jefferson.edu.