

# ECE Undergraduate Research Fellows Program

Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering  
The University of Alabama

The Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at The University of Alabama offers the opportunity for a select group of undergraduate students to become actively engaged in many of the research and development programs lead by our faculty and conducted mainly by our graduate students. Such an opportunity provides the undergraduate student with practical research experience, knowledge of modern research practices, and advanced technical skills. Furthermore, the student will gain valuable skills working on teams with others from diverse backgrounds and in presenting their research findings. The Undergraduate Research Fellows Program is designed to provide our graduates with added value to their undergraduate degree. As such, evidence of the activity will appear on the participating student's transcript, and they will be recognized by the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering with a certificate when they successfully complete the program and their ECE degree requirements.

The Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering offers ECE 493 – *Special Topics: UG Research Scholars* as a variable credit course up to 5 hours. This course is graded on a pass/fail basis. A student participating on a research project will enroll in ECE 493 at least twice in order to complete the requisite 6 hours. However, they do not have to be enrolled in consecutive semesters. **ECE 493 – *Special Topics: UG Research Scholars* is not allowed to count as any form of elective in the student's degree program, and the six hour load is to be taken over and above the standard degree requirement.** However, if a student participates in a formal "Research Experience for Undergraduates Program," they will be required to enroll for only three hours of ECE 493. Hence, such an experience can count as 3 hours of ECE 493. **Furthermore, no portion of the credit or effort associated with the ECE Undergraduate Research Fellows Program may be counted as part of the credit or effort required as part of the Computer Based Honors Program.**

As part of enrollment in ECE Undergraduate Research Fellows, Fellows will be required to attend at least 4 hours of professional development workshops or technical seminars during each term of enrollment. Attending technical sessions at a conference is an acceptable way to earn this credit. The faculty mentor must approve these prior to attendance, and these hours cannot be carried over into a following semester.

Faculty members with research projects for which they desire to utilize Undergraduate Research Fellows will post the project on the departmental web site. The posting will list any specific requirements for applicants, such as prerequisite courses, GPA, etc. Students interested in a project will apply on the web site as well. The faculty member mentor will select from the applicants, and the newly appointed Fellow will be notified by email. They will then enroll in the appropriate section of ECE 493. **Please be aware that applying to participate does not guarantee selection, and not all students who wish to become an Undergraduate Research Fellow will be selected.**

The Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering supports three research focus areas: electromechanical systems, embedded systems, and material and devices. Each project posted by a faculty mentor will be designated within one of these three focus areas. Some projects will encompass two full academic year semesters, and others may only last for one semester. When a prospective fellow selects a project from one focus area, if it is only a one semester project, their second project must be selected within the same focus area.

We hope you are interested in participating in this exciting program. Please feel free to discuss the program with any of your ECE faculty members if you have questions.