



SUMMER RESEARCH TRAINING PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



The MMUF Summer Research Training Program (SRTP) at the University of Chicago is an immersive research development program that equips Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellows with the necessary skills for advanced academic research and graduate studies. The program spans nine and a half weeks. During this time, participants will complete academic writing and social theory courses, engage in workshops, and receive personalized mentorship from accomplished graduate students and UChicago post-doctoral fellows. At the end of the SRTP, participants will showcase their research at the Chicago Research Symposium.

2025 DATES

Application Deadline:

March 30

Program Start:

June 11

Research Symposium:

August 12-14

Program End:

August 16



LIFE AS A SUMMER SCHOLAR

Capacities & Experiences Cultivated

This program enhances students' critical abilities and scholarly writing capacities and prepares them for independent research. Inspired by the life of Benjamin E. Mays, it provides unique mentorship opportunities with UChicago instructors and graduate students. MMUF students develop an understanding of research methodologies crucial for their projects and are introduced to various critical theories essential to their success as scholars. In the program, students experience a supportive community that promotes cross-cultural exchange and envisions a just world for all. The friendships students build during their Mellon SRTP experience last well beyond their time with us, and graduates of the program leave inspired by each other and well-prepared to continue their work in the academy and their communities.



Coursework & Workshops

Workshops explore themes such as:

- Applying Strategically to Graduate School
- Creativity in Scholarship
- Social History of Diversity
- Ways of Being an Engaged Scholar.

Courses Offered:

- Engaged Scholarship
- Writing for Research
- Research Development Seminar
- Weekly U.S. & Chicago Social Histories Workshop & Outings



The SRTP also offers a number of social gatherings, and sponsors outings to theater, dance, and music performance and to art and history museums and landmarks. Students to build a lasting community of scholarly and psychosocial support among their peers.

SUMMER COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Engaged Scholarship: History, Culture, and Social Theory and Practice

In honor of the legacy of Benjamin Mays, this course examines what it means to be an “engaged scholar.” The goal of this course is to consider how academics contribute to the development of emancipatory politics through the production of socially and intellectually important scholarship. In order to accomplish this task, we survey writings by critical thinkers and consider the object and method of their critique as a means for developing our own. Where appropriate, we review the connection of these works to their historical context, and consider their value in creating progressive social theory and practice. Readings include examinations of peoples and countries from around the world. Regardless of a student’s research interests, this course is an endeavor that asks students to think epistemologically and to examine the ways in which our own experiences (historical, social, cultural, class-located, gendered, and racialized) inform critical inquiry and may influence how we pose scholarly questions.

Writing for Research: Constructing Problems

This course is taught by Senior Instructional Professor, Kathryn Cochran. Ms. Cochran teaches professional and academic writing at the University of Chicago and to professionals in a wide variety of fields. Students meet twice a week for this course, once in lecture and once in small writing seminar groups led by the Chicago Writing Program staff. In the course, students learn how to craft their research interests into a working proposal. These skills include summary, annotation, analysis, and the construction of a problem which can be addressed by the proposed research.

Students submit writing assignments on a weekly basis, which are intended to help them assemble their research proposals and essays. This course assists students in writing the final requirements of the program, namely a research presentation, completed abstract, critical annotated bibliography (minimum of 20 entries), and revised research essays of 15-25 pages. This research essay is meant to serve as a “roadmap” for the research that students will carry out in the next year and as an agenda to guide them in working with their faculty mentors. You can view the Writing Center’s wonderful staff [here](#).

Research Development Seminar

Where possible, students meet weekly, or every other week, with their graduate student research mentor to discuss their research and to raise questions. Students are asked to develop a reading list (approximately 20 books and articles) in consultation with their mentors relevant to their research project. Program instructors and graduate students guide MMUF students in various ways:

- Similar to a supervised reading course, graduate student research mentors introduce their assigned MMUF students to research methods and theories relevant to the student’s research interests.
- Graduate student research mentors assist students in understanding readings relevant to their research projects and help them to critically situate these readings within a history of thought –locating them on an “intellectual map” – appropriate to the student’s field of study.
- In consultation with research librarians and mentors, students are introduced to the various research tools in the Regenstein and Crerar Libraries.
- Graduate student research mentors guide and oversee the development of the MMUF student’s final requirements for completing the SRTP: a research presentation, completed abstract, critical annotated bibliography (minimum of 20 entries), and revised research essays of 15-25 pages.
- Graduate student & post-doctoral research mentors share their experiences and contribute to our collective effort to demystify the academy.

STUDENT BENEFITS

- Participants will not be charged fees or tuition. Participation in the 2025 Summer Research Training Program is free for all Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellows.
- Participants will receive a stipend, dining plan, dormitory housing, and the resources necessary to complete their coursework over the duration of the program.
- Students earn an official transcript for two UChicago credit-bearing courses – Writing for Research and Engaged Scholarship.
- Access to UChicago’s world-renowned libraries, research archives, and sports facilities.

End of Summer Research Symposium

By the end of the SRTP, participants must submit three key deliverables: an abstract, a critically annotated bibliography with at least 20 entries, and a revised research essay of 15–25 pages. The research essay serves as a "roadmap" for the research students will conduct over the next year and as a guide for collaborating with their faculty mentors during the academic year. The program concludes with participants presenting their preliminary research at the Chicago Research Symposium.