Everything you need to know about the First-Year Honors Mentor Program

What is it?
Each spring, first-year Honors students are offered an opportunity to experience the world of research first-hand by working under the guidance of an Iowa State faculty mentor. It’s a unique opportunity to become involved in research early in your academic career.

How does it work?
The matching process begins in the fall. Here’s how it works:
- ISU faculty fill out an online profile that describes the research they are doing and what will be expected of their student mentees.
- You go online, describe your interests and skills, and select five faculty members with whom you’d be interested in working.
- You meet with the mentor and, if you both agree to work together, sign a contract.
- You will then spend 3 or 6 hours each week during Spring semester working with your mentor. Students can earn either one or two credits of Hon 290 for their work in the Mentor Program.

What happens in the Fall:
Sept 28-Oct 5: Students register online and choose faculty
Oct 10-17: Faculty preference students
Oct 18-28: Students & faculty matched on mutual interests
Non-contracted positions open for rematch
Oct 31-Nov 1: Students notified of matches
Nov 1-17: Students & faculty discuss terms of mentorship, complete contract and register
Nov 17: Contracts due (4:00 p.m.)

What kinds of research can I be involved in?
There are a wide range of research opportunities to choose from involving many disciplines & departments. You could work on a project that is in your field of study. You can pick a topic that helps you decide on a major, or you can explore a field you just enjoy.

What will be expected of me?
- A time commitment of 3 or 6 hours per week (you and your mentor decide which is appropriate)
- Completion of three evaluations/reflections:
  - Early online “check in”
  - Participation in midterm discussion group
  - Written final evaluation
- You will be graded on Satisfactory / Fail basis

Before the program, being at a research university was a vague concept that did not relate to my own life...research work has changed all of that. Participation in this program has helped me build a deeper understanding of ISU—the opportunities that are available here and the work that is done in the field of research.

Working with people of various educational backgrounds taught me how to work in groups more effectively than a class project, where the majority of people have the same amount of knowledge. The Mentor Project is a great way to begin research studies, gain priceless skills, build your resume, and make the most of your college experience.
How do I sign up?

- Go online: [https://sws.honors.iastate.edu/mentee/](https://sws.honors.iastate.edu/mentee/) The system is open from Wednesday, Sept. 28 until noon on Wednesday, October 7.
- Describe yourself: Personal information, academic interests, and skills
- Browse for potential mentors: Search the mentor info to find research topics that interest you and faculty with whom you’d like to work.
- Select your top five (5) potential mentors- **Be sure to set ‘Confirm Participation’ to YES by noon October 5.**
- Wait until you hear from us about your match — we will notify you on October 31st or November 1st. Don’t sweat it if you’re not matched right away; there’s a lot of switching and adding afterwards.

### Registration Tips

**Your online profile is the mentor’s first introduction to who you are.** When completing your profile be sure to:

- Write in complete sentences
  
  Whether you write in paragraphs or bullet points, using complete sentences conveys professionalism and thoughtfulness.

- List relevant information
  
  Write about experiences and skills that relate to the type of project you would like to work on.

- Save your information on your computer
  
  Type up your profile information and save on your computer. It makes it easier to edit and will be there just in case your browser eats your work.

- **Edit before submitting**
  
  Re-read your profile before submitting it. Correct any spelling or grammatical errors.

**When searching for a mentor:**

- Don’t just focus on your major
  
  The Mentor Program allows you to explore inside or outside of your major. Look for projects that can complement your major. Look for projects that suit your other interests (i.e., working with a mentor in Criminal Justice because you love crime shows). Look for projects in majors that you are considering or might pursue as a minor.

- Google the Mentor
  
  Investigate the research potential mentors focus on and what other projects they have worked on. This will give you more information on how your interests match up and the type of work you might do.

- Write down and save info on your “Top 5” mentors and why you liked them
  
  Once we close the registration site you won’t be able to access your preferences. Before you submit your preferences, write down the professors’ names, departments, and project titles. This list will help you remember who you chose and why you selected that mentor/project.

### Questions?

Ask your leaders or come upstairs and talk to: Alexa Bueltel (294-6265, honorsresearchga@iastate.edu)