Mentor Guidelines for a Successful REU Experience

Below are some guidelines and resources to help ensure a successful REU mentoring experience.

• Make yourself available and stay involved
  o The REU student’s interaction with a research faculty member is one of the most rewarding parts of their experience.
  o Your regular attention to their progress is critical to success.
• Foster community within your group
  o REU students are likely away from family, friends and their home institution; so connection to others (e.g., other students in your group) is critical to their well-being.
  o Be sure they understand how their work fits into your larger research agenda.
• Provide training on the skills needed for your project
  o REU students are not graduate students, so they lack experience.
  o But they can quickly acquire the necessary skills given sufficient guidance.
• Provide clear expectations for the student’s involvement, progress and deliverables
  o Be sure to inform the student early on of your expectations.
  o Specifically communicate your expectations in terms of their participation in your group, their time in the lab, weekly progress reports, and final deliverables.
• Goals
  o The goal of the REU program is not just to provide a free extra researcher to help in your lab, but to persuade them to pursue graduate research. Specifically, you should:
    ▪ Teach students how to do research
    ▪ Increase student’s desire to pursue graduate research
    ▪ Help them communicate their research via presentation and publication

Online Resources
• Preparing Mentors: scied.ucar.edu/soars/reu/running-an-reu/preparing-mentors
• REU Mentor Resources: www.herl.pitt.edu/education/undergrad/aspire/mentor-resources
• WSU Office of Undergraduate Research: undergraduateresearch.wsu.edu