

Contract Profiles



Hannah Zang

Majors- Biology and Psychology

Hannah Zang, of Dallas, Texas, is pursuing a career in medicine. Her HFP contract was with PSY 382, a course on the Biology of Psychopathology. Her professor was interested in studying DHEA/cortisol levels through noninvasive metrics as a way to assess hormones. Zang's research experience at Lyon and the University of Arkansas had taught her how important grants are for funding research. This inspired her to design a project to write a grant proposal for her professor's research.

How did you devise this project? How did it come together between you and your professor?

Zang: I had a general idea of what a grant consisted of through my research experiences, but I still learned a lot about the process. I wanted to experience the process from start to finish because I am considering a dual D.O./Ph.D. or M.D./Ph.D. program, which is very research-intensive. This meant selecting a professor that had not yet done research at Lyon.

The first step was to research different types of grants available to an undergraduate institution. Next, I generated an annotated bibliography by narrowing my professor's EndNote library of papers that were related to the topic of interest. After completing the bibliography, I was familiar with the research topic and wrote the review of literature, which was a section that was included in the grant.

How did you grow from the contract experience?

Zang: Since I was new to grant writing, I was open to feedback and advice. However, my project was more independent and I had to do a lot of research. In that aspect, I thought it was a great learning experience because I now feel more confident about the process.

What advice do you have for other Fellows as they prepare for a contract semester?

My advice is to definitely pick a project that is interesting to you. Contracts provide a lot of freedom and independence, so it can be an opportunity to learn more about something that you're interested in.

Another piece of advice is to set a schedule to meet with your professor. Professors can have variable schedules, so it is important to be as communicative and open as possible.



Abigail Grimes

Major- Political Science

Abigail Grimes partnered with Dr. Sung to conduct research regarding opinions of the LGBT community across generations. Grimes used STATA to analyze her variables from nationally-representative survey data and ultimately presented her findings at the Arkansas Political Science Conference with another Fellow, Kristen Towery.

How did you devise this project? How did it come together between you and your professor?

As a political science major, I am required to take a research methods course. When I took this course in the fall, I developed a thorough understanding of STATA and variable analysis through a research paper. Upon completion of this course, Dr. Sung offered students the chance to take our research to the next level.

With Dr. Sung's guidance, I built upon my previous research and fine-tuned it to be ready for the Arkansas Political Science Conference.

How did you grow from the contract experience?

My contract experience enabled me to build an even deeper relationship with my professors. I received one-on-one feedback from Dr. Sung each week about my research. Through conducting research and developing my own professional research paper, I am now able to read variable tables in undergraduate and graduate studies and accurately understand the symbols and findings from their research.

Presenting my work to graduate professors was intimidating, but this experience also gave me confidence in future research I conduct.

What advice do you have for other Fellows as they prepare for a contract semester?

To Fellows who will soon complete contract work, I promise it is not as scary as it seems. You will be expected to put time and thought into your work, but you will learn and grow from those opportunities. It is extremely rewarding to look back on the contract work you complete. Contracts can truly enrich the coursework you do for your major and enable you to build meaningful relationships with your professors.