Using this Handbook

This handbook was prepared to serve as a guide that describes the history, services, benefits, expectations and procedural policies of the *Ronald E. McNair Post Baccalaureate Achievement Program* at the University of Delaware. The program is commonly referred to as the McNair Scholars Program or McNair Program, therefore, program titles may be used interchangeably throughout this handbook. As a McNair Scholar, you are expected to adhere to the rules and expectations as written in this handbook. All McNair Scholars will be held to the standards that are outlined. Students accepted into the McNair Scholars Program and funded as University Undergraduate Scholars are also held accountable to the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook. This handbook serves as a reference to faculty mentors, faculty advisory board members and participating scholars regarding all matters pertaining to the McNair Scholars Program. Procedural policies within this handbook are applicable during the summer and academic year program components, including graduate school preparation experiences.

The McNair Scholars Program staff reserves the right to modify the contents of this handbook as needed. All new or revised program policies and procedures will be provided to participants as amendments. All McNair scholars are held responsible for adhering to all handbook updates.

Program Staff

**Executive Program Director, TRIO**
Dr. Kimberly Saunders

**Program Coordinator**
Matthias Seisay, M.D.R., M.A.

**Sr. Program Assistant**
Kelsey Obringer

**Summer Program Assistants**
Jordan Barnada

Faculty Advisory Board

The McNair Scholars Program Faculty Advisory Board is charged to serve as advocates and scholarly consultants for the McNair Scholars Program in order to assist the McNair staff in accomplishing program goals and objectives. The Advisory Board consists of faculty from several diverse disciplines and advises the McNair Program Director on standards of excellence that insure compliance to program grant policies and related institutional regulations.

Office Location

McNair Scholars Program  
180 South College Ave  
Newark, DE 19716  
Office Phone: 302-831-4396  
Fax: 302-831-0341  
Program Email: mcnairscholars@win.udel.edu  
Program Website: www.udel.edu/mcnair
Program Overview and History

The Ronald E. McNair Post Baccalaureate Achievement Program began in 1999 at the University of Delaware and is a source of great pride to the academic community. This university-wide Program reports to the Executive Director of TRiO Pre-College and Student Success Programs, under the Deputy Provost Office. The Program is currently located in the Undergraduate Research and Experiential Learning (UREL) Office (a unique academic house). Other programs in the UREL house include the Office of Undergraduate Research, Service Learning and Artsbridge. The McNair Scholars Program is one of four TRIO programs at UD funded by a grant provided by the U.S. Department of Education and additional funding support is provided by the University of Delaware. The goal of the McNair Program is to improve effective preparation for doctoral study of low income, first generation or underrepresented undergraduate college students.

Program Motto:

Scholarly Excellence Today, Graduate Success Tomorrow, Leadership for the 21st Century

About Dr. Ronald E. McNair

Dr. Ronald E. McNair was born on October 21, 1950 in Lake City, South Carolina. While in junior high school, Dr. McNair was inspired to work hard and persevere in his studies by his family and by a teacher who recognized his scientific potential and believed in him. Dr. McNair graduated as valedictorian from Carver High School in 1967. In 1971, he graduated magna cum laude and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Physics from North Carolina A&T State University. Dr. McNair then enrolled in the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 1976, at the age of 26 he earned his Ph.D. in laser physics. His dissertation was titled, “Energy Absorption and Vibrational Heating in Molecules Following Intense Laser Excitation.” Dr. McNair was presented an honorary doctorate of Laws from North Carolina A&T State University in 1978, an honorary doctorate of Science from Morris College in 1980, and an honorary doctorate of science from the University of South Carolina in 1984. Dr. McNair died on the spaceship Challenger, January 28, 1986 along with 6 colleagues.
Mission and Purpose Statement
The McNair and University Undergraduate Scholars (UUS) Program’s purpose is to prepare, empower, and expose talented low-income, first generation and underrepresented college students toward the pursuit of a doctoral degree. Through a collaborative mentoring environment and simulated graduate school experience, students will gain competencies needed to graduate as distinguished scholars with enhanced critical thinking, leadership, research methodology, intercultural, and communication skills.

*All references to McNair are likewise applied to UUS students

McNair Eligibility Requirements and Procedures

Application Qualifications
Full-time undergraduate students at the University of Delaware who meet the following criteria are eligible to apply to the McNair Scholars Program:

- U.S. citizen or permanent resident;
- Have or will have satisfactorily completed 60 credit hours of course work by May 31;
- Have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.75 (sophomore), 3.0 (junior);
- A first generation student demonstrating financial need (qualifies as low income by the U.S. Department of Education), and/or a student from an underrepresented population.

Underrepresented McNair Participants are defined as:
- African-American
- American Indian/ Alaska Native
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

Applications for the program are competitive. The University of Delaware McNair Scholars Program is funded to serve 25 students in each project year.

Application Procedures
Prospective McNair Scholars can be nominated by University of Delaware faculty, current/past McNair Scholars, staff of pipeline TRIO and/or university student support programs. Interested students (including self-nominees) must complete an online application that can be found on the McNair website at www.udel.edu/mcnair. A complete application will include:

- A copy of the parent’s (or applicant’s if independent) most recent Federal Tax Return
- Two written recommendations (1 must be from a professor)

Selected applicants must be interviewed before acceptance. Upon acceptance into the program, the Project Director and/or Coordinator will meet with each scholar to discuss securing an appropriate faculty mentor, research proposal guidelines, and participation contract. Accepted scholars will complete the following forms and assessment materials prior to beginning research:
Once accepted into the McNair Program, you are eligible to participate until you graduate, contingent upon maintaining scholarly excellence and integrity.

**Non UD Summer Research Scholars**

Through our McNair Scholar Exchange initiative, a non-University of Delaware student who is a McNair Scholar at another school is welcome to apply to our Summer Research Internship Program. Non-UD Summer Research Interns will adhere to all of the standards and requirements for the summer research component discussed during summer orientation. Stipend, mentor supplies allowance, room and board costs are to be covered by primary McNair program, unless otherwise approved by the UD McNair Director. (Limited funding may be available from academic departments)

**Research Proposal**

Once admitted into the program, all McNair Scholars are required to submit a well-developed, faculty mentor approved research proposal. The proposal must include the following:

1) Introduction (project summary) and general question(s) under investigation  
2) Methods used to address these questions  
3) A short, working bibliography of readings (Use current MLA or APA citation)  
4) Expected Results  
5) Project Budget  
6) A projected time table for the ten-week summer program  
7) Faculty mentor signature approval for the project

A proposal contract (must include signatures of both scholar and faculty mentor) will serve as the cover sheet to the research proposal and faculty mentor supervisory contract. The proposal must be completed before research begins and should be submitted to the McNair Director. All research proposals will be reviewed by the McNair professional staff and/or advisory board members to assure quality of research approach.

**Stipend**

In order to receive your first stipend, you must have submitted your research proposal, as well as a completed faculty mentor contract. You will also need to have completed and signed ACH form available in the McNair Office. In order to receive your remaining stipend, you must
demonstrate significant progress in your research and attend all required McNair events, as well as complete any assignments or exercises required by the program. Additionally, you must complete the following:

- Submit a 8-10 page research paper on your project
- Obtain your mentor’s approval for research paper and research presentation
- Complete a Graduate School Preparation Checklist
- Full participation in the Summer Research Symposium
- Participation in McNair seminars and workshops
- Participation in a McNair Group/Individual community service project

Taxes on Your Stipend

Like graduate student fellowships, all Scholar stipends are considered by the federal government to be taxable income. Taxes are not withheld from your checks and the scholarship income is not reported by the University. In this case, you are expected to report the income under “other income” on page one of the 1040 form; for “type and amount,” list “Scholarship $3,000.”

McNair Scholar Expectations

Scholar Responsibilities

The University of Delaware Ronald E. McNair Post Baccalaureate Achievement Program academically and financially supports talented undergraduate students who desire to earn a doctoral degree. The McNair program fosters intellectual collegiality, provides an undergraduate research experience, and demystifies the graduate school application process. The undergraduate research experience, an essential element of the program, engages students in research projects that genuinely advance the research projects of their faculty mentors. Thus, McNair scholars are expected to maintain the highest standards of excellence and integrity.

McNair Scholars are also expected to:

- Meet all deadlines for submission of required documents, (e.g. research proposals, final research papers, and weekly research journal reflections).
- Submit a research proposal/abstract, describing the intended research project, identifying the faculty mentor, and outlining the research to be completed; the research proposal must follow proposal guidelines and bear the faculty mentor’s approval.
- Perform/conduct up to 28 hours of research per week during the summer program (8 hours per week for academic year research).
- Participate in a McNair group community service/service learning project
- Meet regularly with their faculty mentor (minimum of once per week in summer).
- Attend the Graduate School Preparation Seminar Series and complete all assignments within designated time frame.
- Submit copies of all graduate school acceptance/rejection letters, entrance exam scores, financial award letters and degree confirmation notifications.
• Be punctual and participate in all scheduled orientations, seminars, courses, and events.
• Notify the McNair Program Office of any change of name, address, e-mail, and/or telephone number.
• Attend 2-3 individual meetings during the summer and bi-monthly meetings during the academic year with the Program Coordinator or assigned staff for the purpose of academic counseling, graduate school advising, and professional/student development.
• Present their research at the Summer Research Symposium, UD Research Conference, and at least one external research conference.
• Complete and submit program evaluations for all workshops, courses, activities, and research experiences.
• Cooperate with all follow-up contact (written questionnaire, e-mails and telephone interviews) by the McNair staff through the completion of the scholar’s doctoral degree.
• Attend academic year, monthly group meetings and seminars
• Respect the thoughts and views of your McNair peers
• Apply to graduate school your senior

Failing to meet expectations as outlined within this handbook could lead to revoked program benefits and/or program dismissal.

Scholar Learning Goals and Outcomes

• Learn how to propose, conduct, and present research
• Prepare for graduate school entrance exams, selection, application, and funding
• Foster mentoring relationships with faculty, students, and alumni
• Increase self-esteem and self-awareness surrounding academic and professional identity
• Effectively collaborate and communicate with diverse populations
• Build an appreciation for outreach and service learning
• Demonstrate critical thinking through written and oral reflections of scholarship

Journal Reflections

Scholars are required to maintain a journal/blog of all their research and graduate school preparation activities. Journal entries should be created 2-3 times per week and include an overview of research activities (accomplishments and challenges) and reflections from any McNair seminar or course session. You should also document any trends and changes regarding your research. Scholars should continue to maintain journal reflections on a regular basis during the academic year. Journal reflections will be collected and reviewed during individual and journal reflection group meetings. Reflections can be shared as a blog within your individualized McNair e-portfolio.

Evaluations

All components of the McNair program will be evaluated by participants (i.e. seminars, courses, research experiences, symposium, and conference/graduate fair). Graduating McNair Scholars will be requested to do an evaluation of their experience and services provided by the McNair
Scholars Program. These exit surveys will be used to enhance and modify the program as necessary.

**McNair Research Competition and Graduate School Fair**

The McNair Scholars Program at the University of Delaware will host an annual or semi-annual Research Conference and Graduate School Fair in October. You will be required to volunteer, present recent research findings and to also attend the Graduate School Fair. The Graduate School Fair will bring approximately 80 different graduate programs across the nation to the University of Delaware.

**Printing Posters**

Students who will be printing posters should print them in Smith Hall Computing Lab room 004. Prior to printing posters for the symposium or conferences, please review your poster draft with a McNair staff at least one week before printing. Poster dimensions and the purpose code for printing will be provided by McNair staff.

**Attendance Policy**

1. **Attendance Expectations**
   Attendance at all McNair program scheduled seminars, individual/group meetings and courses is mandatory. All program activities are designed to aid scholars’ research experiences, to demystify the graduate school application process, and to expose scholars to professional and academic life.

2. **Penalty for Non-Attendance**
   Student stipends are supplied by the U.S. Department of Education and the University of Delaware. If a McNair Scholar misses any mandatory event (workshops, seminars, scheduled meetings with the Director or Coordinator, cultural events, symposiums, etc.) or fails to turn in required exercises/assignments on time, monies will be subtracted from stipend amounts supplied by the University. Subsequent violations of the student contract will result in additional loss of stipend monies, program benefits and possible dismissal from the program.

   Each violation will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Generally, first violations will result in a loss of $50, a second violation will result in an additional loss of $100, and a third violation will result in an additional loss of $150, for a total loss of $300 and possible dismissal from the Program. Additionally, you risk losing scholar benefits, such as the McNair fee waiver.
Assignment Policy

Scholars will be provided with a list of assignments and due dates during orientation. Failure to adhere to those due dates will result in the following monetary deductions:

- 1st late assignment: $10, and $5 for each subsequent day
- 2nd late assignment: $20 and $10 for each subsequent day
- 3rd late assignment: Meeting with Director for possible program dismissal

Scholar Benefits and Services

Benefits and services available to McNair Scholars include, but are not limited to the following:

- Invaluable research experience(s) and contributions to a faculty mentor’s research project
- $3000 stipend and campus housing for the 10-week summer research component
- GRE preparation course
- Funded graduate school tours and professional research conferences
- Peer and alumni mentoring (Ambassadorial Network)
- One-on-one faculty mentoring
- Academic, financial aid, and graduate school preparation advising
- Access to McNair Office conference room workspace and resources (9am – 5pm)
- Graduate school application fee waivers (participating colleges/universities)
- GRE fee reduction for eligible scholars (U.S. citizens and low income)
- McNair Alumni Mentoring

Seminar Series

The McNair Scholars Office will host a series of seminars designed to assist you with personal, academic, and professional development.

College Trips

College tours may take place in the summer and/or fall. Scholar feedback regarding the colleges/universities of interest within our region will guide our selection of schools for college tours. Visiting these universities will provide an opportunity to network with graduate students, faculty members and financial aid counselors. In many instances, college visitations builds greater awareness about graduate school opportunities not initially considered by scholars.

National Research Conferences

McNair Scholars are required to attend at least one national research conference. The purpose of McNair students presenting at a non-UD conference is to expose students to various associations related to their field or to potential graduate schools. It is also imperative for McNair students to become confident in their work and their ability to defend and showcase research results to various constituencies.
GRE Testing

Senior scholars who are taking the GRE or other graduate/professional school exams should take their exams no later than November of their senior year. Taking your exam any later will seriously jeopardize your consideration for the graduate/professional program of your choice. The McNair office will arrange suggested group testing dates.

Graduate School Application Checklist: McNair seniors are required to submit the following items to the McNair Scholars Office no later than December 1st. Those students who are in need of assistance with these items should contact a McNair staff member.

- Personal Statements
- GRE (GMAT, LSAT or MCAT) Scores
- List of Schools Applied
- Names of Recommenders
- Resume/CV
- Research Abstract
- Letters of Acceptance and Financial Awards

Graduate School Advisement

Seniors that are applying to graduate school must meet with the Coordinator and/or Director at least twice, individually during the fall semester of their senior year. Senior Scholars are NOT to submit written materials, including personal statements and writing samples until it has been reviewed by a McNair staff member.

Seniors are highly encouraged to apply to a grad program at UD if it fits their interest area

Admitted Student Days

McNair Scholars who are admitted into graduate school should attend admitted student days at the schools where they have been accepted. The McNair Office may be able to provide some funding for these visits.

Faculty Mentor Selection and Expectations

Faculty Mentor Selection

Scholars who have not identified a summer and/or academic year research mentor should begin thinking about the areas of research that you would like to explore. Please look at this website to get some ideas of professors and their research [http://urel.udel.edu/faculty-project-listings](http://urel.udel.edu/faculty-project-listings) Ideally you should try and find 2-3 potential faculty members that are conducting research in a field aligned with your interests. Once you have identified those faculty members you should set up a meeting with that faculty member to discuss conducting your own research under their guidance or supplementing their current research. If you are having difficulty identifying faculty
or research ideas, please e-mail mcnairscholars@win.udel.edu as soon as possible so that the McNair staff can work with you to identify a potential research mentor.

Faculty Mentor Expectations

The faculty mentor will assume the role of supervisor and evaluator for a McNair or University Undergraduate Scholar (UUS) by providing regular, individualized, research project feedback meetings and scholarship building suggestions, towards graduate school preparation. Additional responsibilities will include:

- Orient the intern to the research department, working space, safety rules, policies, priorities, shared equipment, and supporting staff.
- Provide references for introductory background reading materials relevant to the established research project.
- Establish and approve a research proposal with the scholar, which includes a project summary, methodology, projected supplies budget and research work schedule.
- Provide weekly research progress feedback (bi-monthly during academic year). An evaluation will be provided to submit at the conclusion period of the research project(s).
- Encourage scholar to maintain standards of scholarly excellence and provide advisement towards graduate school preparation.
- Serve as the abstract, research paper, and poster referee in preparation for McNair Scholar research presentations during the Summer Research Symposium and any additional attended conferences.
- Attend the University of Delaware Summer Research Symposium and McNair Scholars National Research Conference (if appropriate).
- Provide scholar and the McNair Office with the name of a co-mentor if primary mentor will be absent from research site for more than 1 week.
- Plan to host a research site visit by a professional McNair staff member to discuss research progress with student and mentor.
- Please support scholar’s required attendance to all McNair program seminars, courses and journal reflection meetings (Schedule of events will be provided).
- Consult with Dr. Kimberly Saunders (Director) or Matthias Seisay (Coordinator) in the McNair Scholars Office by calling (302) 831-4396 or by emailing mcnairscholars@win.udel.edu if you have any administrative questions or concerns regarding a McNair or UUS Scholar.

The University of Delaware Ronald E. McNair Post Baccalaureate Achievement Program truly appreciates those faculty members who step forward to become McNair Faculty Mentors.

Please note that the McNair Scholar’s research project advances not only the learning of the student but also the research of the faculty mentor. In fact, the research project is to be a collaborative effort.
Faculty Benefits:

- Access to McNair students nationwide, providing a potential graduate school pool.
- $200 for supplies and materials (request should be included in research proposal budget).
- Guide potential scholars through the research process.
- Outstanding faculty mentoring service to the University of Delaware.
- Impact the future course of the academy and society by increasing the number of first generation, low income and underrepresented students who complete doctoral degrees.

Program Advisement and Resources

Advisement

Advisement within the McNair Scholars Program will come through a variety of means. McNair Scholars will meet individually with either the Director or Coordinator 2-3 times and as Empowerment Teams with program assistants as required during the Summer Research Internship. During the academic year, scholars will meet with McNair staff bi-monthly to discuss academic progress, graduate school applications, financial aid, GRE or other professional testing scores, and your current research. Additional areas of advisement pertain to event, seminar, and/or service learning planning.

McNair Student Ambassadors

The McNair Scholars Program staff will select between 5-7 McNair Scholars to serve as program ambassadors. These ambassadors will assist with the recruitment of new scholars, peer mentoring current scholars and attending various events on behalf of the McNair Scholars Program. Alumni Ambassadors will also available to serve as mentors to graduating McNair Scholars.

University Resources

| Career Services | 401 Academy Street  
|                 | (302) 831-1452  
|                 | udcareers@udel.edu  
| Writing Center  | 016 Memorial Hall, (302) 831-1168  
| Math Lab       | 106 Ewing Hall (302) 831-2140  
| Academic Enrichment Center | 148-150 South College Ave  
|                 | UD-aec@udel.edu  
|                 | (302) 831-2805  
| Center for Counseling and Student Development | 261 Perkins Student Center  
|                 | (302) 831-2141  
| Student Health Center | Laurel Hall (302) 831-2226  
| Office of Graduate & Professional Education | 234 Hullihen Hall  
|                 | (302) 831-8697  
|                 | http://www.udel.edu/gradoffice/  
| Occupational Health and Safety Office | General Services Building, South Chapel Street, Room 132 (302) 831-8475  

11
Housing

McNair Scholars will be housed in a residence hall. Scholars choosing to live on campus will be housed together. The McNair Program covers the ten-week housing rate. If you choose to live off campus, please inform the McNair Program staff by April 30. Federal regulations prohibit the use of McNair funds for off-campus housing.

Residential Rules

All McNair students who will reside on campus during their 10-week research internship will have to abide by the Residence Hall Regulations [http://www.udel.edu/reslife/community_living/regulations.html](http://www.udel.edu/reslife/community_living/regulations.html) and the Student Guide to University Policies [http://www.udel.edu/stuguide/14-15/index.html](http://www.udel.edu/stuguide/14-15/index.html). During the summer you will also have a Summer Program Assistant living with you in your residence hall. Students who do not adhere to these regulations and policies can be dismissed from the program.

If you do not return the keys to housing or cause physical damage to the room, you will be responsible for the cost.

Safety

All McNair Scholars are expected to use extreme caution to ensure the safety of personnel, equipment, and the environment. Please be sure you are given demonstrations on laboratory safety either by your faculty mentor, by his/her assistants, or by the staff of Environmental Health and Safety, in the General Services Building, South Chapel Street room 132 (831-8475).

Medical Coverage/Insurance

Since your stipend is not considered a wage, you are not insured by Workman’s Compensation if you are injured during the Summer Internship Program. For this reason you are required to have accident coverage either through a parent’s policy, through the accident policy program sponsored by the University, or through some other policy of your own. If you presently do not have any insurance coverage, you should enroll in the student plan during the month of May, the last “open” period before your internship begins. For full information about policy enrollment, benefits, deductions, and exclusions, contact the Student Health Center.

Paying a summer sessions health fee is optional. Check the student health service website for current fees at [http://www.udel.edu/studenthealth/insurance/index.html](http://www.udel.edu/studenthealth/insurance/index.html). The optional fee covers all the services covered by the student health fee during the academic year. It must be paid directly at the Student Health Center, either at the beginning of the summer or when you first wish to use a student health service. During the summer, you may also pay on a fee-for-service basis if you prefer.
Parking & Transportation

If you will be living off-campus or if you would like to park your car on campus, you may purchase a gold parking sticker for the summer from Parking Services located at 147 Perkins Student Center. Parking stickers are required if you would like to keep a car on campus.

If you do not have a vehicle on campus, please note that the University provides a limited shuttle bus service around campus during the summer.

Things to Do This Summer

As a McNair Scholar you will be able to use on campus parking (with the proper permit), the Morris and branch libraries, Carpenter Sports Center, the outdoor pool, and the Student Health Center. The following website will inform you of free or cheap activities in the area during the summer: [http://www.visitwilmingtonde.com/](http://www.visitwilmingtonde.com/)

Emergency Contact Information and Procedures

If you are in an emergency situation while you are conducting research, please contact the proper authorities (public safety (302) 831-2222, police, fire department, poison control etc.). Once the situation is under control please contact a McNair staff member to alert them to the situation.

If there is an emergency while you are in the residence hall, please follow all residence hall procedures.

Grounds for Program Dismissal

Failure to adhere to scholar responsibilities and expectations and university and academic rules and expectations are cause for program dismissal. In addition, students who change their career or educational goals in a way that is not supported by the grant (i.e. no graduate school plans) are subject to program dismissal. Finally, students who do not maintain academic (i.e. failure to meet min. GPA requirements) and social integrity (i.e. disrespectful to peers and/or staff) are subject to program dismissal.
**FAQ's**

**Employment & Summer Classes**

*Can I work or take classes while conducting summer research?*

McNair Scholars are discouraged from taking classes and working during the summer, however if the scholar finds it absolutely necessary to participate in either of these activities, please obtain approval from the McNair Director before the beginning of the summer.

**Student Conduct**

*If I get in trouble with the university can this impact my ability to be a part of the McNair program?*

The McNair Scholars Program is a prestigious program that is very highly regarded at the University. Behavior that is against any current McNair rules and expectations and anything that is against the student code of conduct, illegal or against residence hall rules and policies can be cause for program dismissal.

*If I am a 2nd year McNair Scholar, do I have to repeat the summer research internship?*

Once you become a McNair Scholar, you are always a McNair Scholar. Ongoing research is expected of returning seniors and can be satisfied during the academic year, summer, off-site summer internships, or senior thesis experience. Returning seniors are also required to attend academic year seminars, meet regularly with McNair staff and complete assignments as provided by the program. We highly encourage our returning students to seek opportunities at other institutions for their 2nd summer research internship.

*How long will the McNair Program track my academic progress after graduation?*

The McNair Scholars Program staff will stay in contact with you over the next ten years or until you complete your Ph.D., whichever comes first.

**Money/Funding**

*When will I receive my research stipend?*

Scholars will be paid on a payroll schedule 2-3 times throughout the summer.

*How do I get money for supplies, college visits or conference attendance?*

Funding for the aforementioned items can be requested through our funding request form which is on our McNair website at [http://mcnair.urel.udel.edu/](http://mcnair.urel.udel.edu/).