

Faculty Member Contact Information

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Contact Info	
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Department	Exercise, Sport, and Nutrition Sciences Department

1 Funded, 2 Unfunded URCA Assistant(s)

Are you willing to work with students from outside of your discipline? If yes, which other disciplines?

- No

How many hours per week will your student(s) be required to work in this position?

(Minimum is 6 hours per week; typical is 9)

- 9 hours per week is ideal for the project for the paid URCA, 3-4 hours per week would be reasonable for unpaid URCA

Will it be possible for your student(s) to earn course credit?

- No

Location of research/creative activities:

- On campus at the IUE Athlete Nutrition Center (Cougar Pavillion) and the FRESH nutrition lab

Brief description of the nature of the research/creative activity?

- This research opportunity involves expanding the teaching kitchen capacity and culinary nutrition education we can provide the SIUE athletes through the nutrition center. This experience also allows students to develop and apply effective leadership and management skills in overseeing the athlete nutrition center (a small food service operation). The research is primarily qualitative where the URCA student will collaborate with athletic department and nutrition program to collect data about perception of food and nutrition activities, food quality, food variety, and nutritional value of food offered in the athlete nutrition center. Data will be reported from the URCA student and other student volunteer "staff" as to the operations and management of the athlete nutrition

center (as a food service operation). This project also involves coordination with the SIUE garden, nutrition program, and campus dining to support food sustainability practices, such as food waste collection, reducing food waste, and compost removal. The food sustainability component is an ongoing project that was initiated in 2025-2026 and now will have opportunity to expand. Data on food waste collection will continue to report and demonstrate impact.

Brief description of student responsibilities?

- All of the URCA responsibilities will be in collaboration with faculty mentor.
- The URCA student leadership responsibilities include: assist with developing training materials and conducting the training for student volunteers who help in the nutrition center on standard operating procedures, food safety and sanitation, and building rapport with the athletes and coaches. The URCA student will assist and oversee the food and supply inventory, purchasing orders and receiving of food deliveries for the nutrition center. The experience will be documented as part of the qualitative data collection.
- The URCA student responsibilities for food sustainability will involve creating signage, messaging, and education on food waste collection in the nutrition center that will include the athletes participation. Currently the student volunteers helping in the nutrition center are collecting the food waste, but we want to expand collection from the athletes participation, and this involves more education and awareness to involve their effort.
- The URCA student will develop a monthly food sampling and culinary nutrition food plan for the nutrition center. This will involve learning all food allergies, restrictions, and dietary needs from athletes. This will involve planning the menu and recipe items, purchasing the items, and when schedule permits, the URCA student will be participate or oversee the food preparation and service of these items. The goal is to increase the nutritional value of food items offered in the nutrition center, offer more foods that are culturally representative, and encourage more athletes to utilize the nutrition center. The secondary intent is to offer more nutrition education through casual, informal methods by offering more or different food items. This part of the project is our way of providing a "teaching kitchen" experience in a space that doesn't have an actual kitchen, so that we can help teach athletes how to prepare nutritious and healthy foods, once they have tasted and seen how we prepare the food. Data will be collected from athletes and coaches about this part of the project.

URCA Assistant positions are designed to provide students with *research or creative activities* experience. As such, there should be measurable, appropriate outcome goals. What exactly should your student(s) have learned by the end of this experience?

- By the end of this experience, the URCA student(s) will learn:

a) effective leadership and management skills that are relevant to food service and other future professional careers. Students will learn management and leadership theory and be able to practice these, and in turn reflect and report their lessons learned.

b) professional collaboration skills in addressing food sustainability across campus, as well as learn the importance of food waste reduction

c) to apply their classroom knowledge in food service and nutrition through culinary nutrition to educate athletes on sports nutrition and wellness

Requirements of Students

If the position(s) require students to be available at certain times each week (as opposed to them being able to set their own hours) please indicate all required days and times:

- Students need to be available Monday- Friday between 7:45 AM -3:30 PM when the nutrition center is open. Specific weekly schedule will be determined and coordinated around class schedules.

If the location of the research/creative activities involves off campus work, must students provide their own transportation?

- On rare occasions the URCA student will need to purchase food from stores in Edwardsville and own transportation will be needed.

Must students have taken any prerequisite classes? Please list classes and preferred grades:

- NUTR 408

Other requirements or notes to applicants:

- Prefer students to take the Manager level serv safe certification exam prior to or at start of semester, since this position involves food safety and sanitation.