



Council on Undergraduate Research
734 15th Street NW Suite 550
Washington, DC 20005
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Making Your Congressional Office Visits

POH participants are asked to visit the offices of their Congressional Representative and Senators while in DC. Please note that you may wish to contact your home Congressional Representative in addition to the Representative in the district where you attend school, if they are different.

- To identify your Representative, visit <http://www.house.gov/> and type in your zip code on the top left-hand side of the page.
- To identify your Senator, <http://senate.gov/> and choose your state from the drop-down menu on the top right-hand side of the page.

You may request a meeting with your Representative and Senator using the letter below. The visits are to be scheduled on Tuesday, May 5 between 11:00am and 3:00pm.

A note on meeting logistics: A typical visit is short, usually around 15-20 minutes. You can get from one House office building to another in about 10-15 minutes, but allow a little longer going between the House and Senate buildings. Please check the specific street address of the office you are visiting, as there are many office buildings around the Capitol. If you prefer to take metro, take the red line towards Shady Grove, switch to the Orange or Blue Line towards New Carrollton or Largo Town Center at Metro Center, and exit at Capitol South. This is only convenient to the offices on the South side of the Capitol. It will not be possible for us to store poster materials in the vicinity of the Capitol this year, so if your poster is too big to carry around with you, you may wish to leave it at the hotel. You can return to the hotel by subway from the Capitol no later than 3 PM to fetch the poster. It will take about an hour for the round trip. This will leave about a half an hour for the set-up. Adjust these times to fit your own needs.

Some tips for your visit:

- Arrive on time, but be flexible. Do not be surprised if the appointment is with a staffer instead of your member. Allow plenty of time between visits.
- Use the talking points we provide for you as a guide, and practice your remarks in advance.
- Bring a camera, and take pictures of your visit. Send the photos to your Senator or Representative, or their local office via e-mail when you return to campus. Remember to ask permission of the Senator or Representative to use photos of your visit, and tell them where you plan on publishing the information.
- Consider publishing a small paragraph about your visit on your department website, or in the school newspaper or departmental newsletter. Include links to the website of the Senator or Representative.
- Invite the Senator or Representative to visit your campus.



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All participants will need to draft letters to their Representative and Senators, inviting them to the poster reception and asking for a time when you can meet with them or their staff in their offices. You should follow up a few days later with a phone call to the Washington office to work out a time for the office visit that fits your and their schedules. **Often, students are most successful in setting up appointments by calling.** It is critical that the students and faculty take the time to make these calls. While you should feel free to compose your own letter, a sample is provided below. Copies of the official invitation will be available at the orientation session on May 4, 2009.

Date

Honorable (First Name) (Last Name)
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

or

Honorable (First Name) (Last Name)
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator / Representative (Last Name):

I am pleased to inform you that I have been selected in a national competition sponsored by the Council on Undergraduate Research to participate in a poster session at the Capitol. This event will feature research conducted by undergraduate students from across the country. My poster will be displayed in **B-338, B-339, and B-340 of the Rayburn House Office Building** on May 5, 2009 from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM.

As an undergraduate at [XYZ College] in your [state or district, depending on whether you are writing to your Senators or Congressional Representative], I would like to invite you or a member of your staff to attend the poster session. [My faculty mentor, Dr. ABC, will also be present.]

I [We] would also like to explore the possibility of meeting you in your office. I [We] are available to meet on Tuesday, May 5, 2009 between 11:00am and 3:00pm.

The Council on Undergraduate Research is a professional society whose mission is to promote the participation of undergraduates in research and to provide faculty with increased opportunities to remain active in research while they use their new knowledge to develop investigative teaching strategies. [XYZ College] also believes that the best way to learn science is by doing it. I would like to share with you my personal story and to thank you for supporting opportunities for undergraduate research through federal programs.

I look forward to meeting you at the poster session and sharing my excitement for research. You may contact me directly at (phone number) or (email address) or (college address). I will call your office next week to confirm a time that I [my faculty mentor and I] can meet with you or your staff.

Sincerely,