PURE in a Nutshell

PURE is a student-run organization that aims to provide research experience to underclassmen in engineering. As graduate students, you will have the opportunity to mentor up to four
undergraduate students for a semester-long project. PURE Mentors will first get to select their mentees, then plan a project with mentees to be completed under the mentors’ guidance. Mentees are expected to produce three deliverables: **Project Plan, Mid-semester Lightning Talk** and **Poster to be presented at the Symposium**.

**Why PURE?**
There are numerous benefits to becoming a mentor in the PURE program. As PURE mentors, you would be able to gain mentoring/teaching experience, share your experiences in graduate school with undergraduates, obtain help with your own research/projects and claim independent study credit(s). Moreover, extra research funding is available upon request for purchasing software and equipment for PURE research projects.

The most commonly mentioned aspect of PURE that met or exceeded past mentor expectations was that the undergraduate students were motivated, intelligent, and excited about research. The vast majority of past PURE mentors say that they want to be PURE mentors again because being a PURE mentor provided valuable teaching experience, helped them get part of a research question answered and provided them inspiration while benefiting mentees from the research experience. Most of them also considered mentoring in the PURE program as a fun experience.

**PURE Timeline**

9/7 - Mentor Application Due at noon
9/10 - Undergraduate Application Deadline
9/14 - Decisions released/program commences*
Week of 10/15 - Mid-semester progress reports*
Week of 12/10 - PURE Poster Symposium*

*dates not finalized

**Aims and Expectations of PURE**
PURE is an introductory program geared towards freshmen and sophomores in the college with little experience. Please try to tailor appropriate project(s) for them.

The time commitment for PURE is at the discretion of the mentors and mentees. PURE is a one-credit course so we would expect the majority of the projects to take approximately **5 hours per week**. The aim of these projects is to provide first-hand experience to mentees and educate them about methodologies in research. Mentors and Mentees should set up an agreement(either verbal or written) regarding time commitment when making project plans.
For your reference, the posters of the projects in PURE in Fall 2015 can be found here: https://wiki.illinois.edu/wiki/display/PURE/PURE+Archive

It is highly encouraged for PURE mentors to invite mentees to participate in research group meetings and to meet faculty advisors. We aim to provide networking opportunities for mentees in the PURE program. PURE Mentors are also expected to inform their faculty advisor regarding their participation in PURE.

Selection Process of PURE
The PURE Committee is going put up profiles of mentors after we have received applications to PURE from mentors. Then, PURE will open another application to prospective mentees where they can put their priorities for mentors.

After the due date of mentee application has passed, PURE is going to sort the applications and forward relevant applications, i.e. applications that stated the mentor as one of the top three priorities, to the mentors. Mentors can then select mentees according to their application. Mentors can also hold interviews if they believe that is helpful to the selection process.

Mentors then should submit a list of mentees they would like to take in for the semester to the committee. The list should both selected mentees and also a prioritised list of backup selections. For example, if you wish to take three mentees for the semester, you should provide a list of three selected mentees and also backup mentees (in a priority order) so to fill in the spot if any of your selected were matched up with another mentor.

Deliverables
There are three main deliverables throughout the semester. The first deliverable is a Project Plan that should be produced collaboratively between mentor and mentees at the beginning of the semester, in order to set course for the research project. This project plan should be uploaded to Wiki by the mentee within the first few weeks of the program.

The second deliverable is a Lightning talk given by mentees after approximately two-thirds of a semester. This is a three-minute talk delivered by the mentees to the other participants of the PURE program to summarize the work they have done in the first two thirds of the semester and possible future work for the rest of the semester. Mentors are also encouraged to attend the lightning talk.
The last deliverable is a Poster to be presented at the symposium at the end of the semester. This poster should summarize the work done in the project. Mentees are expected to present their poster to faculty judges. Mentors are encouraged to assist mentees in both producing the poster and preparing for the oral presentation at the symposium.

Mentee Groups in PURE
Mentors are expected to have at least one, and at most four mentees in PURE. Mentees are allowed to form groups in PURE if they work under the same mentor. They can then produce one poster and one longer lightning talk. However, they are expected to fill out individual project plans.

Course Registration for PURE
PURE has a course registered on the course catalog and coded ENG 199. However, if you are an ECE mentor, and your advisor has a section in ECE 297, your mentee will have the option to sign up for ECE 297 as a technical elective credit in ECE. This should be handled by your mentee.

Please be advised if your mentee signs up for ECE 297, he should first discuss this with you since this requires coordination with your faculty adviser. On the other hand, ENG 199 does not require the adviser to be involved in the process, your adviser should, however, still be informed about the mentee.

Application
Application form/information can be found on the pure website (https://wiki.cites.illinois.edu/wiki/display/PURE/Home). If you cannot access the form, please email surao2@illinois.edu with:

1) Your name/department
2) A picture of yourself
3) A brief summary for your research
4) Prerequisites/ Extra Information for mentees
5) Up to three Additional question(s) for mentee
More Info and Contacts

For more information on the program please visit:
https://wiki.cites.illinois.edu/wiki/display/PURE/Home

You can also contact our President Shreya Rao at: surao2@illinois.edu