

SPS UROP and Summer Internship Panel

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Overview

- UROP - IAP/summers are good times to start
 - Takes some time before you know your way around the lab
 - Usually have to try a few
 - Projects not always well-defined
 - Senior thesis - should be working by summer before senior year
- REU/Internship - apps due \approx February
 - See how people do it elsewhere
 - Meet people from other schools
 - Explore a different area of the country
 - Shorter than a UROP - work is more well-defined, structured, you will have a specific project to complete in 8 weeks

Getting a UROP

<http://sps.scripts.mit.edu/resources/urop.php>

- Choose who to ask: Try 1-2 professors at a time
 - Ask friends, upperclassmen, your advisor, your professors for advice
 - What you do on a day-to-day basis is more important than the topic you are researching: Do you like coding? Building stuff? Proving theorems?
 - I recommend young, up-and-coming professors
- Ask them
 - Email for an appointment
 - Do some research beforehand
 - Resume/references not a bad idea

Applying for REU/Internships

<http://sps.scripts.mit.edu/resources/intern.php>

- Work on apps over vacation and IAP
- Two recommendation letters
 - Ask them by the end of this term
 - It's okay if you don't have two really solid writers yet
 - Can ask your advisor
 - Provide transcripts, personal statement, resume, points you'd like them to emphasize
<http://math.mit.edu/kedlaya/recs.shtml>
- Essays
- Transcript
- Admissions is really nondeterministic
- Doesn't hurt to try

Closing thoughts

- Heads up... when you apply to graduate school...
 - You will need THREE (!) letters of recommendation
 - You should have some idea of what field you want to go into, and you should have done some work in that field
 - This advice usually comes to people after it is too late :)
- Don't be shy! Professors are busy so it's up to you to talk to them.