Undergraduate Student Guidelines and Rules

**Goal.** Undergraduate students can make significant contributions to the overall research mission of the lab. However, the primary goal is to simply provide a rewarding introductory experience to basic and applied research in an academic setting. This experience should include learning current experimental techniques in the broad field of tissue engineering, basic experimental design, data analysis and interpretation, and scientific writing.

**Time Commitment.** It is understood that your primary objective is to complete your undergraduate coursework; thus, the time commitment is expected to be 8-10 hours/week during the academic year, and 40 hours/week in the summer.

**Primary Mentor.** Every undergraduate will be assigned a primary mentor. The primary mentor will either be a doctoral student or postdoctoral researcher, and will be responsible for the overall training of the undergraduate researcher. The primary mentor should approve the planning, execution, and interpretation of all experiments. The undergraduate researcher and mentor should plan to meet with Dr. George no less than twice per semester.

**Independent Study (Academic Credit).** Each undergraduate researcher is expected to work in the lab the first semester to learn basic techniques in cell culture and to develop a plan for independent study. There is no compensation or academic credit for the first semester. It is then anticipated that given sufficient progress and interest, each undergraduate student will complete two semesters of academic credit (3 units/semester). Each semester requires the completion of a written report summarizing all features of the research project (~ 8-10 pages). After two semesters of work for academic credit, a student may continue in the lab and receive additional academic credit, although these additional credits cannot currently be applied towards graduation requirements. These additional units are, however, graded, and given sufficient progress a student can expect to receive a grade of “A”.

**Summer Research Fellowship and Work Study.** There are limited opportunities to work in the lab and receive financial compensation. All undergraduates are strongly encouraged to work in the summer during which significant progress and momentum on the research project can be made. The primary option for funding is summer research fellowships available from Washington University and the School of Engineering. These fellowships generally provide $4,000/summer (10 weeks). If the application for a fellowship is not successful, and funds are available, the student can receive $10/hour during the summer, which should also provide $4,000 for ten weeks of full time work.

A second option to receive compensation is the Work Study program. If Work Study is part of a student’s financial aid package, the lab can be the Work Study job provided that adequate funds are available and you are able to work approximately 10 hours/week for the 15 weeks/semester (150 hours maximum). A student cannot simultaneously receive academic credit and be paid through the Work Study program for work in the lab during any given semester.