

Position: Ph.D. Research Assistantship – Poultry Behavior and Welfare

Location: University of Arkansas Department of Poultry Science Fayetteville, Arkansas

Closing Date: May 1, 2024

A Ph.D. research assistantship (including tuition remission and stipend) is available with Dr. Shawna Weimer in the Department of Poultry Science at the University of Arkansas. The research project focuses on the behavioral and welfare implications of heat stress on broiler breeders and breeder ducks, particularly how it affects offspring behavior and welfare outcomes. The successful candidate will be responsible for investigating how cyclic heat stress affects the fear, stress, and cognitive abilities of broilers and ducks. The study will utilize many welfare indicators, including behavioral observations and technologies, behavioral tests of affective state including fear, stress reactivity, and cognition, and physiological assays to understand the impact of heat stress. The student will be based in the [Center for Food Animal Wellbeing](#) and work with collaborators across campus and other universities and organizations on research and outreach activities.

The successful candidate will collaborate with Dr. Greg Fraley at Purdue University on a related project examining the epigenetic and neurobiological effects of heat stress on breeder ducks. This collaboration will provide the opportunity to apply neuroendocrine protocols and work in Dr. Fraley's lab for up to two weeks per year.

Desired Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- M.S. in Poultry/Animal Science, Neurobiology, Psychology, Engineering, or a related field (exceptional candidates with a B.S. may be considered for an M.S. assistantship).
- Strong interest in poultry welfare research, with experience in behavioral and physiological lab techniques.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively across labs and institutions.

Qualifications: M.S. degree in Poultry or Animal Science, Neurobiology, Psychology, Engineering, or a similar field with a minimum 3.0 GPA

For more information, see [POSC Graduate Program](#) and [UArk Graduate School](#) websites

Application Materials: 1-page statement of interest, CV, publications or scientific writing examples, contact information for 3 academic/professional references

Contact: Dr. Shawna Weimer, sweimer@uark.edu