

College of Arts & Sciences
Student Research Mentorship Policy and Implementation Process
[Updated: October 2018]

In 2014-15, the College of Arts & Sciences Committee on Undergraduate Research developed a policy to track mentorship of student research. Under this policy, faculty members will be able to accrue credits toward reassigned time as compensation for their work mentoring student research outside of a class such as Research Methods. This policy was presented to the College of Arts & Sciences Faculty Assembly in March 2015 and was accepted by the Dean of Arts & Sciences in April 2015. This statement articulates the policy and its implementation process.

Eligible Faculty: This policy only applies to full-time faculty holding the rank of Instructor and above. Any full-time faculty who are engaged in student research mentorship for which they already receive compensation through stipends or in-load teaching credit (i.e. reassigned time) will not also accrue teaching credit hours (TCHs) for this mentorship.

This policy does not cover part-time faculty. Any adjunct faculty member who is engaged in research mentorship should discuss appropriate compensation with her/his Department Chair and the Dean.

Accrual: In general, faculty members may accrue one TCH for each credit hour earned by a student. TCHs may be accumulated during fall, spring, or summer sessions, as long as the faculty member is not otherwise compensated by a stipend or reassigned time. Faculty will not earn TCHs for research mentorship if the student involved is not registered for an appropriate research course (see approved course list).

Students engaged in mentored research may enroll in a zero credit hour research course to facilitate record keeping if they do not need or want to register for a regular 1-3 credit hour course. Faculty members covered by this policy will earn one TCH for each student enrolled in a zero credit hour course.

Faculty will accrue TCHs for a course when the student involved earns academic credit. Faculty members will not accrue teaching credit hours for grades of “N”, “F”, “U” or “I”. (See *Faculty Responsibilities*, below.)

Eligible Student Research Courses: This credit is to be earned for student research experiences, including research-focused independent study courses¹, Honors Theses, or Master’s Theses.² Independent study courses that are not research-focused are not eligible for compensation under this policy. Research courses should have a clear and relevant title to facilitate record keeping. (See *Department Chair Responsibilities*, below.)

¹ “Research-focused” is defined as: Students are engaged in the generation of new knowledge or appropriate creative products as defined by the discipline. Independent study courses that focus on content mastery but do not entail the generation of new knowledge or creative products are not eligible for TCHs under this policy.

² In the cases of Master’s and Honors theses, the instructor of record should be the student’s lead advisor and “first reader.” Only this individual may include thesis supervision in her/his count. Additional readers may count this work as Professional Stewardship.

Determining Appropriate Credit Value for Students: Students should earn credit for student research based upon the formula below. Work-week hours are based upon a 15-week semester, and should be adjusted accordingly for research during summer sessions. The research mentor must be the instructor of record to earn TCHs under this policy.

Non-laboratory research:

Three credit hours = 150 hours total, or 10 hours of student work per week.

Two credit hours = 100 hours total, or 6.67 hours of student work per week.

One credit hour = 50 hours total, or five (5) hours of student work per week.

Zero credit hours = 50 hours total, or five (5) hours of student work per week.

Laboratory or field work:

Students engaged in laboratory experiments, supervised field work, or research that involves time-intensive faculty supervision may halve the time requirements listed above. (i.e., three credit hours = 75 total hours; two credit hours = 50 total hours; zero or one credit hour = 25 total hours.)

Zero credit hour research:

Students who are engaged in research but are not earning academic credit must enroll in a zero credit hour course to facilitate record keeping.

Research mentoring of students not enrolled in a research course is not eligible for accrued TCHs under this policy even if this work is not otherwise compensated. In these cases, faculty should report this work as Professional Stewardship or Scholarly Activity, as appropriate.

Earning Reassigned Time: The College of Arts & Sciences will provide two courses (three credit hours each) of reassigned time each semester, to be distributed among faculty from two different departments who have accrued TCHs under this policy pending budgetary approvals by Dean and curricular instruction approvals by department chairperson. Reassigned time will be awarded on a first-in, first-out model. Once awarded, the reassigned time may be deferred by one semester in consultation with the faculty member's department chair in order to best accommodate department needs.

Faculty will be eligible for their first course of reassigned time (three credit hours) upon earning 36 TCHs. Once the course of reassigned time is awarded, the 36 TCHs will be deducted from that faculty member's running total. The faculty member will then be eligible for a second course of reassigned time (and third, fourth, etc.) after earning 48 TCHs per course of reassigned time (with 48 hours being deducted from his/her total each time he/she receives a course of reassigned time).

The Dean's Office will maintain and update a list of faculty earning TCHs and the current total of TCHs that each faculty member has accrued. This list will be available on the CAS website to ensure transparency (see Dean's Office Responsibilities).

Impact on Faculty Evaluation: This policy does not impact the College or University policies regarding faculty evaluation.

Student Responsibilities: Each student engaged in mentored research is responsible for registering for the appropriate student research course, meeting regularly with the instructor/mentor, and satisfactorily completing tasks and work products as assigned.

Faculty Responsibilities: Faculty members mentoring a student enrolled in a research course (even a zero credit hour course) must submit a syllabus for each course (SACS requires that each unique CRN have a unique syllabus). Faculty must also design (or help the student design) a research experience appropriate for the credit hours being earned, meet regularly with the student to monitor her/his progress, and otherwise uphold her/his academic responsibilities as a course instructor.

Faculty members are also responsible for monitoring their own entries on the College's list of faculty accruing TCHs, and reporting any possible discrepancies to their department chairs. In cases where students initially earn a grade of Incomplete, no TCHs will be added to the faculty member's total for that student at that time. The faculty member is responsible for notifying the Dean's Office when the student has completed the course requirements and course credit is awarded, at which point the TCH(s) will be added to the faculty member's total.

Department Chair Responsibilities: Department chairs will provide the Dean's Office with a list of courses that are eligible to count under this policy. These courses should have titles appropriate to the activity (i.e. "Undergraduate Research in [discipline]" or "Master's Thesis"). If and when departments create new courses, department chairs are responsible for providing an updated list to the Dean's Office.

Department chairs are responsible for creating the research courses, including them in the course schedule, and ensuring that instructors of record create and submit syllabi for the courses and otherwise meet their academic responsibilities. The department chair will be responsible for ensuring that students are registered for appropriate number of credit hours for each opportunity, based upon the scope and intensity of the research experience.

Department chairs are responsible for checking the list of faculty TCHs generated by the Dean's Office for accuracy. Department chairs are also expected to notify the Dean's Office of any faculty included on the list who are compensated for research mentorship by other means, and of any possibly discrepancies on the list identified by faculty members.

From time to time, faculty members teach research course that is normally taught in load (i.e. Senior Capstone or Research Methods) as an independent study. In these rare occasions, the faculty member may count this independent study under this policy. It is the responsibility of the department chair to report these instances to the Dean's Office as they arise.

Dean's Office Responsibilities: TCHs will be tracked by the Dean's Office and the list of eligible courses provided by the department chairs. The Dean's Office will also publish this list and publicize who receives reassigned time as compensation for accrued TCHs each year.

These lists will be updated at least once per year, and posted online by May 15. The Dean's Office may also update these lists more frequently throughout the year.

The Dean's Office is also responsible for collaborating with the College of Arts and Sciences' Student Research Committee or its successor(s) every two years to assess the effectiveness of this policy and to adjust it accordingly if needed.

Implementation: This policy goes into effect in Fall 2015. During the initial implementation year (2015-16), departments are expected to create courses as necessary, and the Dean's Office will begin to track TCHs and publicize accordingly. Departments may make limited use of "X" courses (the fast-tracked one-time-only courses that can then be converted to regular courses) in order to begin accurate tracking of mentored student research while new courses are going through the full curriculum review process.