

Student Research Database – MINIMUM Guidelines for Verification of Experience

USC definition of undergraduate research: A scholarly effort, generally beyond-the-classroom, aimed at developing a student’s skills in inquiry through opportunities to contribute to and/or pursue original intellectual or creative work. (Please note that independent studies and other course based experiences may be included with mentor approval.)

The requirements for “meets expectations” should be established between you and your student. You are welcome to use the following. It is designed to provide guidance on the *minimum* expectations of a semester of research, not as a checklist. Faculty and students are encouraged to use this as a starting point for the expectations and goals of a successful and productive experience. If a student has not yet met one or more expectations (with the exception of Time on Task) but the overall growth, development, and reflection is appropriate for the student’s level of experience, a rating of meets expectations is encouraged.

Time on task REQUIRED - What qualifies as a semester of work?

- This requirement must be agreed upon between the mentor and student prior to the start of the experience.
- Time on task varies significantly, particularly for experiences involving course credit, salary, or grants.
- Variations are common between disciplines and skill level of students.
- Time on Task may be project dependent. Some projects may be shorter in timeframe but just as time intensive as a full semester. This type of project is acceptable with mentor approval.
- The MINIMUM time on task to count toward a *semester of work* is generally 60 hours but may vary as described above.

NOTE: If a student begins late in the semester but hasn’t fulfilled the mentor’s expectations for the equivalent of a *semester of work*, the mentor may indicate “in progress” if all other criteria are acceptable. The student can register the experience in the following semester to continue involvement and fulfill this requirement.

What happens if the experience “meets expectations?”

A record of completion will be provided to the University’s experiential learning initiative, including but not limited to USC Connect’s Graduation with Leadership Distinction program.

What happens if the experience “does not meet expectations?”

This status does NOT affect a student’s academic record. Students and mentors are encouraged to discuss expectations and outcomes of the research experience.

- Students do not receive notification regarding the status of the experience. If asked, the office will refer students to their mentor.
- Only records indicating “meets expectations” will be forwarded as complete for the university’s experiential learning initiative. All other records will remain within the Office of Undergraduate Research and comments remain confidential.
- For grant awardees, depending on the situation the student may be at risk to lose funding or be ineligible for future awards.

How will the registration information be used?

Registry information will be shared as part of the University’s experiential learning initiative in accordance with [FERPA guidelines](#). The system provides valuable data regarding faculty and student participation in undergraduate research. Information will be used for review and future development of programming, outreach, and recognition. Student and faculty data may also be shared in aggregate within the institution and in outside reporting.

Questions or concerns may be directed to the Office of Undergraduate Research at our@sc.edu or 803-777-1141.

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Expectations:		Meets expectations	Does not meet expectations
A	Time on Task* REQUIRED Please see notes on cover page	<p>Works the scheduled hours agreed upon with mentor</p> <p>Participates in regular meetings and trainings necessary for project</p> <p>Student consistently makes steady progress on tasks and goals that move project forward within the appropriate timeframe</p>	<p>Works fewer hours than agreed upon</p> <p>Does not fully participate in regular meetings and trainings</p> <p>Does not make consistent progress and/or meet deadlines</p>
B	Engagement and Interaction Student participation, motivation, and interaction	<p>Student reports progress regularly to designated supervisor and/or mentor</p> <p>Student demonstrates the ability to work independently and/or within a group setting</p> <p>Interacts in a professional manner with all project stakeholders</p>	<p>Supervisor and/or mentor must ask frequently about progress of tasks or project status</p> <p>Student does not demonstrate interest or commitment to project</p> <p>Demonstrates lack of professionalism or not taking direction appropriately</p>
C	Knowledge/Skills The knowledge and skills student applies, practices, or develops, and how this is performed or accomplished	<p>Demonstrates the following or the growth thereof:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Articulates depth and/or breadth of project knowledge and skills - Demonstrates critical thinking and creative problem solving - Utilizes written and verbal communication skills effectively 	<p>Unable to demonstrate appropriate knowledge of project background, tasks, etc.</p> <p>Unable to think critically or creatively</p> <p>Writing style or verbal communication is not professional or appropriate</p>
D	Feedback and Reflection <i>(Required; see next page for resources/guidance)</i> How student receives feedback on involvement and reflects on learning	<p>Receptive to constructive feedback and modifies behaviors or performance accordingly</p> <p>Exhibits personal and professional growth and/or creative development throughout the semester</p>	<p>Does not exemplify growth or modification of behavior despite receiving feedback</p>
E	Research Outcome Overall contribution to project	<p>Student exhibits growth in abilities to contribute to and/or pursue original intellectual or creative work</p>	<p>Student does not exhibit growth in abilities needed to contribute to or pursue original intellectual or creative work</p>

Feedback and Reflection:

These resources may be of assistance when offering feedback and fostering reflection with your student.

Feedback (From UNIV 401 Instructor materials; Additional guidance can be found on the [Human Resources website](#))

- Should be: Timely, Relevant, Understandable, Digestible, Accurate, Thought-Provoking (TRUDAT)
- Consider benchmarks, collectively set to help determine progress on projects
- Ask student how feedback is preferred: 1:1 in-person, emails, handwritten comments
- Request student self-assess in conjunction with mentor assessment (task or project specific)
- Revisit progress points—what has changed or advanced since last meeting based upon earlier feedback provided
- Things to guard against
 - Feedback provided too late or too infrequently
 - Insufficient comments; not enough detail

Reflection* – Encourage students to think critically about their research experience, how it fits within their academics and future goals, and the connections between them all. Asking questions to facilitate these thoughts can be helpful in facilitating reflection. Some examples include:

- What have you learned from this experience or about yourself?
- In what ways do you see yourself as the same and/or different as when you started this experience?
- What questions or goals does this raise for you about the future?
- How do you think this experience has affected you as a student?
- How has this contributed to your educational goals?
- What connections do you see between this experience and what you've learned in your courses?
- How did this experience challenge or support your assumptions and stereotypes?
- What was the best/worst/most challenging thing that happened?
- Describe an issue or situation that occurred during your work. What worked or didn't work? What might have been done differently?
- Are there steps, processes, ideas, or solutions from this experience that could apply to other situations in your life?
- Where do we go from here? What's the next step?

➤ Some students may benefit from writing or journaling thoughts to the above questions or a more formal reflection exercise such as:

Thinking about your research, identify and describe as follows at least two relevant (specific to the experience) activities, principles, concepts, skills, competencies, etc.:

Describe - (keep this brief; ~3-4 sentences) – look back at something (e.g. an event, idea, object, theory) and explain what you did or how you did it,

Interpret - analyze the event or idea in depth from multiple perspectives with specific examples. Why did this happen? What from your classes/coursework, readings, other experiences, even your feelings, etc. could help you understand why this occurred?

Evaluate - what does it mean for future use/application in your life personally and/or professionally? Reflect forward. What does this mean for your future?

*This exercise based on - Corwin, Sara, and Charlotte Galloway. "PUBH 498: Public Health Capstone Seminar." Syllabus and Course Materials, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, 2018.

*Reflection References and Resources:

Reed, Julie, and Christopher Koliba. "Facilitating Reflection: A Manual for Leaders and Educators." http://www.uvm.edu/~dewey/reflection_manual/ (accessed November 7, 2018).

Center for Teaching Excellence, Texas A&M University. "Using Reflection to Facilitate and Assess High-Impact Practices." <https://sites.google.com/site/ctereflexionhip/home> (accessed November 7, 2018).