



Student Name:

Faculty/Staff Mentor Name:

The following agreement is intended to provide a framework for the partnership, allowing the mentor and student to set and discuss goals and expectations for their work together. Mentored research and creative projects offer some of the best opportunities for teaching and learning.

A successful mentee/mentor relationship requires a commitment on the part of both partners. Read and discuss the following learning objectives and best practices and complete the goals section.

This agreement will also form the basis of the end-of-project reflection. Both the students and mentors should keep a copy of this agreement.

1. After both the student and mentor have provided their goals, this form should be saved as a PDF or Word Document and submitted through the URES Fellows ICON course by the student. Please **do not** email this form to OUR.
2. Submit the completed agreement by the date assigned in the ICON course. Students who fail to meet the deadline will have their funding delayed until the completed form is submitted.

Undergraduate researchers and their mentors should discuss the following:

1. The responsibilities of the undergraduate student in this research or creative project (including working days/hours).
2. The responsibilities of the faculty/staff mentor in this research or creative project - including frequency of direct work and contact with the undergraduate student. If applicable, highlight the responsibilities of and contact with any other project contributors with whom the student may work.
3. What professional qualities (work ethic, initiative, communication, etc.) will the student demonstrate, and how will they serve as an asset to the work?
4. In what form and how often will both the mentor and undergraduate student report on the status of and constructive feedback on their research or creative work?
5. What is the timeline for completing the key components of the research or creative project?
6. Describe the measurable final product(s) that will serve as the goal(s) for this research project (data set, scholarly manuscript, presentation, performance, etc.)?

Goals – Faculty or staff mentors and undergraduate researchers should each establish three goals for the student’s work. These goals could pertain to academic work, skill development, personal development, professional development, etc. Goals should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and have a time frame.

Mentor’s Goals for the Student

1.

2.

3.

Student’s Goals for themselves

1.

2.

3.

By ***electronically signing and dating this form***, we acknowledge that have read and discussed the components of this framework for a mentored research partnership at the beginning of this research semester (academic year or summer).

Undergraduate Researcher:

Faculty/Staff Mentor:

Learning Objectives for Undergraduate Researchers¹

- Articulate a clear objective and/or research question for the project. Identify and demonstrate appropriate methodologies and know when to use them, including practicing scholarly ethics and responsible conduct.
- Know the existing body of relevant research, literature, artwork, etc. to their topic and explain how their project fits.
- Know and apply problem solving skills to constructively address any challenges or setbacks.
- Work both autonomously and collaboratively with other researchers in an effective manner, using listening and communication skills.
- Reflect on your research or creative work, identifying lessons learned, strengths, and ways to improve. Work to synthesize your research, creative, academic, and/or professional interests and goals.
- Explain your work to others in the field and to broader audiences (informally and formally), articulating its relevance to your studies and/or professional future.

Effective Practices for Undergraduate Researchers

- Approach the project as a learning experience, setting a goal of not only learning content, but also developing skills you can apply in the future. Take ownership of learning those skills.
- Communicate with your mentor about your expectations. Listen to their own expectations and goals for you (including work habits and time commitment).
- Where appropriate, ask your mentor questions and discuss your work to keep them in the loop and cultivate your academic communication skills. Think about connections between your research/creative work and courses.
- Even if you are working as part of a team or assisting your mentor, work with your mentor to carve out a niche over which you have responsibility and take intellectual ownership. Make sure that you produce work that is beneficial to your collaborators and mentor as well.
- Find opportunities to present your work and to deliver effective presentations. Take advantage of OUR workshops and courses for these and other skills.
- Build a professional network— your mentor, their colleagues, other working professionals, and students, etc. Meet with other undergraduate researchers to discuss effective practices, build a community of like-minded people, and share experiences of what it is like to be an undergraduate researcher at the University of Iowa.

¹ Adapted from: www.luc.edu/lurop/formentors/formentorsandresearchers/
Green, P. & Kaufman, K. (Undergraduate Research Program Manager). Center for Experiential Learning, Loyola University Chicago.

Effective Practices for Research Faculty/Staff Mentors

- Approach mentoring in part like teaching, training students in the skills they need to succeed in their work. Provide regular, constructive feedback, and expect regular communication from your undergraduate researcher.
- Set clear expectations for the student's role (work habits, time commitment, etc.), and your goals for them as a researcher. Listen to their own expectations and goals and formalize your working relationship through a learning agreement/research contract.
- Even if students are working as part of a collaborative team or assisting you with your project, work with your student to carve out a niche over which they have responsibility and can take intellectual ownership.
- Let your undergraduate researcher know about opportunities to present their work and help them deliver effective research presentations to audiences inside and outside of their discipline.
- Assist your undergraduate researcher in building a professional network—introduce them to colleagues, other working professionals, and graduate students who may serve as additional mentors, consider taking them to professional development events.
- Discuss graduate/professional school and career options with your undergraduate researcher where appropriate, offer useful advice about their professional career.