

Student Name: _____ **Mentor Name:** _____

The following agreement provides a framework for the partnership, allowing mentor and student to set and discuss goals and expectations for their work together. 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 students and mentors should keep a copy of this agreement.

1. Upon completion, save this form as a PDF or Word Document. The student will submit the form to the URES Fellows ICON course that will open *three days* before the start of the semester. 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.

A productive partnership is built on mutual respect and open communication. Undergraduate research opportunities are subject to the same university policies and procedures as any other official course. A mentor or mentee that has concerns about their partner should contact the Office of Undergraduate Research for assistance.

Undergraduate researchers and their mentors should discuss the following:

1. The responsibilities of the undergraduate student. This should include the schedule (days/hours) that the student is expected to work. *For an **Academic Year ICRU/GCRU** (1 credit hour), the student is expected to work 8–10 hours per week. **Summer ICRUs/GCRUs** (Zero credit hours, zero fees) are expected to work 18–20 hours per week.*
2. The responsibilities of the faculty/staff mentor, 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. How often will both mentor and undergraduate student meet to discuss the status of the project? Which modes of communication will be used? (In-person meetings, Zoom, email, etc.)
5. What is the timeline for completing the key components of the 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 – The faculty/staff mentor and undergraduate researcher should each establish three goals. These goals could pertain to academic work, skill development, personal development, professional development, and so on. Goals should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and have a time frame.

Mentor Goals for Student

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Student Goals for Student

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Schedule Expectations (hours/days per week):

Communication Goals:

(What will be the primary means of communication: face to face, Zoom, email, etc.? How often do you plan to touch base?)

By ***electronically signing and dating this form***, we acknowledge that we 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:

Date:

Faculty/Staff Mentor:

Date:

Guidelines for a Productive Mentor/Mentee Partnership

- 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 as well as its public relevance and resonance in general.

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.

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.

Please let us know if you have any questions. We are looking forward to working with you.
undergraduate-research@uiowa.edu – 319-335-8336 - <https://our.research.uiowa.edu/>