

Guidelines for Students/Faculty Submitting Undergraduate Research Proposals (Approved 4/21/10, amended 10/31/11):

1. The Undergraduate Research proposal form and guidelines are included on the Biology Department website in PDF and Word format. Students must use the proposal format for consideration, including the signature from their mentoring research advisor.
2. Students must submit their proposals no later than the deadline date for credits in the given semester, although proposals may be submitted earlier. ***The fall deadline is 9/15, spring deadline is 2/15. For summer proposals, the deadline is Study Day of the prior spring semester.*** Should this date fall on a weekend, the following Monday will become the due date. No proposal will be reviewed if submitted after the due date. It should also be noted that submitted proposals may still be rejected or returned for revision. Students should be aware that submission doesn't guarantee approval, and take this into consideration when they turn in their proposals. ***It is highly recommended to students that they submit proposals in the semester BEFORE their project takes place.*** This shows evidence of proper planning and forethought for the project at hand. Each proposal must be written ***by the student*** with guidance from the mentor.
3. Projects that will progress across more than one semester can be written into one proposal. There is no need to submit multiple proposals for the same project. The total expected number of credits for each semester should be included in the proposal. If approved, the Committee's approval letter will indicate that these credits, once completed, will be considered as Biology elective credit.
4. The review process is meant to hold students to a high standard for both scientific process and scientific writing. In the committee's voting process, a majority vote approves the proposal, even if a committee member has objections. The committee will provide feedback for revision and resubmission by the student. Resubmissions must be performed as soon as possible to aid in the Committee's ability to render a 2nd response quickly. ***Resubmissions will not be accepted past the end of the original semester that the proposal was submitted, and not past the W date (NOT WP/WF date!) for the given semester.***
5. It is against general policy to award more than 3 Undergraduate Research credits in a given semester. No more than 4 Undergraduate Research credits can be included towards a Biology major.
6. A student cannot be paid for research work at the same time they are receiving credit for that work, although a student CAN be paid for research work in a semester when they are NOT receiving credit for that work, even if they are continuing on the same project.

7. The committee also likes to see adequate references (peer-reviewed journal articles in a bibliography/references cited section) and some description of what the expected final outcome/output of the project will be (a chalk talk, a CNSM poster, some other poster or talk). Time/effort requirements should also be clearly stated. A good rule of thumb is that 1 credit is equal to at least 3 hours/week of effort by the student.

8. 1 credit literature reviews require students to document a plan to meet the 3 hours/week effort guideline throughout the semester. ***It is recommended that students pursue other options for required biology elective credits.*** While there have been such projects approved in the past, it is the Committee's goal to eliminate such projects, except under exceptional circumstances (See #9).

9. The committee reserves the right to examine each case individually and approve proposals that do not meet these requirements under EXCEPTIONAL circumstances.