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## Proposal for Research Intensive (RI) Course designation to the Faculty Senate

The following Research Intensive (RI) Course designation is proposed by Thomas Kvale, director of the UT Office of Undergraduate Research for adoption by Faculty Senate. The main motivations for this adoption are two-fold. First, having the “Research Intensive” course(s) experience on the student’s official transcript is viewed very positively by prospective employers and/or graduate school admissions committees. This view has been presented at national meetings of undergraduate research programs by directors at institutions that have adopted this designation. The second motivation is that the RI designation will greatly assist the Office of Undergraduate Research in maintaining a more complete survey of the multitude of undergraduate research activities by UT undergraduate students. It is envisioned that the RI designation will be implemented in similar fashion as the existing Honors (HON) and/or Writing-Across-the-Curriculum (WAC) course designations.

### Research Intensive Course Designation Criteria

In order for a course to be identified as "Research Intensive (RI)", all of the following four criteria must be satisfied:

**1. Students must make serious attempts to advance (and/or make significant contributions to) the knowledge or understanding in the field of the investigation.**

For example, this could be the results of new observations, experiments, inventions, and/or theories in the (natural and human) sciences and engineering, or a new synthesis of recently-discovered knowledge through literature/library/museum/business/education/etc. studies. Implicit in this criterion is that the students must also have (or gain) knowledge of the current level of understanding in the field of investigation in order to advance (and/or make significant contributions to) it. Even though the instructor has complete freedom and responsibility for assigning students’ grades, it is encouraged that the students’ grades should not be penalized if the research did not go as originally planned if it was outside the control of the student(s).

**2. Neither the students nor the instructor have *a priori* knowledge of the final result(s).**

This criterion is necessary to distinguish RI courses from the normal academic (classroom and laboratory) courses in which the instructor has knowledge of what the final outcomes should be if the course proceeds as planned or expected. “Students” are included in this criterion definition for completeness; however the main emphasis is on the instructor’s *a priori* knowledge. It is acknowledged that in some RI courses, instructors may have preconceived notions of what they expect the final result to be but research is needed to either confirm or negate those notions.

**3. The student investigators must present and/or disseminate their results to a wider audience than to just their class population.**

Students gain valuable experience when they provide professional, public presentations on topics they have acquired knowledge through research/critical discovery. The actual presentation type is determined by the instructor and/or the student(s) in the RI course and can be: an Oral or Poster presentation at an event or a Print submission to a publically/professionally disseminated publication. For instance if the Oral and/or Poster options are chosen, the students can meet this requirement in a multitude of different venues. These may include:

- a) Inviting their department and/or the public to the Research Presentation if the instructor chooses that as a class activity.
- b) Presenting their research at an Honor's and/or their department's "Brown Bag Lunch".
- c) Presenting their research at their department's/college's Research Events (e.g., College of Engineering "Senior Design Exposition", Department of Theatre and Film "Video/Film Senior Showcase", Department of Art "Art Festival", etc.)
- d) Presenting their research at the annual "UT Scholars' Celebration / Sigma Xi Student Research Symposium".
- e) Presenting their research at the annual "Posters and the Capitol: Undergraduate Research in Northwest Ohio".
- f) Presenting their research at the annual National Conferences of Undergraduate Research (NCUR).
- g) A presentation arranged with help from the Office of Undergraduate Research, if requested by the student and/or the instructor.
- h) Other venues for public research presentations as determined by the instructor and/or the student(s).

In cases where the presentation/dissemination occurs after the semester ends (e.g., NCUR, Bag Lunches, etc.), the instructor has the prerogative of assigning final grades or progress/incomplete grades until Criterion 3 is met.

**4. A summary Course Report from the instructor of each RI course must be submitted to the Office of Undergraduate Research at the end of the semester the course is offered. The Course Report must contain: i) the number of students in the course, ii) the Research Title(s), and iii) how Criterion 3 was met for each student. In addition to the Course Report, the students (upon consultation with the course instructor) in each RI course are highly encouraged to submit a written Final Report of their research project(s) to the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR-UT).**

OUR-UT will be the depository for all RI Course Reports and submitted student Final Research Reports and thus be a resource for both the students and instructors in deciding about participating in a "Research-Intensive" course. Selected Final Reports (and/or their Abstracts) may be included in OUR-UT reporting functions such as the OUR-UT Annual Reports and/or displayed on the OUR-UT website (and/or its publications). Implicit in this criterion is that OUR-UT will coordinate with the appropriate UT offices for projects involving possible patent issues, publication issues, confidentiality issues, etc. prior to posting on OUR-UT's website (and/or its publications).

The written Final Report may be secondary to the primary outcome of the research project if appropriate for the research subject area (e.g., Art exhibitions, musical/theatrical/film performances, Readings, etc.). In these cases, the written Final Report could help explain the background/methodology/etc. of the project with the main project report residing in non-print media.

Notes:

Some special topic courses such as ARS2980: *Issues in Research and Scholarship* can also merit the RI designation even though it doesn't technically meet the four criteria because the content of the entire course lays the foundation for the safe and ethical conduct of research.

Research is taken to be an integral part of all disciplines, although its form may vary between disciplines. The above four criteria represent the minimal set of criteria identifying a course as "Research Intensive". The instructor/department/college may also impose higher standards and/or may impose additional criteria in addition to the above criteria for their "Research Intensive" course designation.

Explanation and Justification

Criteria 1 & 2 are related and define *research* as an integral component of *discovery*.

- 1. Students must make serious attempts to advance (and/or make significant contributions to) the knowledge or understanding in the field of the investigation.**
- 2. Neither the students nor the instructor have *a priori* knowledge of the final result(s).**

Criterion 3 defines *research* as gaining value when the results of the research endeavors are made *public*.

- 3. The student investigators must present and/or disseminate their results to a wider audience than to just their class population.**

The required component of Criterion 4 is necessary for Reporting and Assessment purposes. The voluntary component of Criterion 4 is related to Criterion 3 and defines *research* as gaining value when the results of the research endeavors are made *public*.

- 4. A summary Course Report from the instructor of each RI course must be submitted to the Office of Undergraduate Research at the end of the semester the course is offered. The Course Report must contain: i) the number of students in the course, ii) the Research Title(s), and iii) how Criterion 3 was met for each student. In addition to the Course Report, the students (upon consultation with the course instructor) in each RI course are highly encouraged to submit a written Final Report of their research project(s) to the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR-UT).**

### Implementation

The “Research Intensive” (RI) designation of courses is a partnership between the Faculty Senate, having purview of university-wide curricular matters and the Office of Undergraduate Research, which is charged with being the focus of undergraduate research at UT. Note that the following proposed procedure is consistent with the Faculty Senate-approved procedure with Honors designated courses (or sections of courses). The RI approval procedure can take the following form (if approved by Faculty Senate):

1. Departments (including programs and interdisciplinary studies) wishing to identify courses, or sections of courses, as “RI” must submit a planned, sample syllabus and discuss how the four criteria will be met to the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR-UT). OUR-UT will then forward the proposal to the RI Course Designation Committee.
2. The RI Course Designation Committee will be composed of 6 members chosen by the Advisory Committee for OUR-UT (listed on the following page) and 2 members selected by Faculty Senate. The Director and Associate Director of the Office of Undergraduate Research will also serve on this committee as *ex-officio* members.
3. The RI Course Designation Committee will evaluate whether or not the course (or course section) merits the RI identification and if so, it will forward its recommendation to the Faculty Senate and after approval by Faculty Senate, coordinate with the Registrar for designation on students’ official UT transcripts.
4. The Office of Undergraduate Research will provide Faculty Senate an annual report listing the courses submitted for the RI designation that academic year and the RI approved courses (or sections of courses).

Should Faculty Senate adopt the possibility of “Research Intensive” course designations, the RI criteria will be included in the UT General Catalog.

The Office of Undergraduate Research Advisory Committee (AY2008-09)

The OUR-UT Advisory Committee consists of one member each from the following colleges/offices with the exception of the College of Arts and Sciences having one member each from the Arts/Humanities/Social Sciences areas and one member from the Natural Sciences/Mathematics areas. Members are appointed for three year terms, except for the Student Government member (1 year term) and the director of the Office of Undergraduate Research (*ex-officio*).

The Office of Undergraduate Research Advisory Committee (AY2008-09)

**Arts and Sciences**

Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences      Russell Reising      AY2008-2011

Natural Sciences and Mathematics      Alison Spongberg (chair)      AY2006-2009

**Business Administration**      Margaret Hopkins      AY2008-2011

**Education**      Edward Cancio      AY2008-2011

**Engineering**      Dong-Shik Kim      AY2006-2009

**Health Science and Human Service**      Phillip Gribble      AY2006-2009

**Medicine**      Robert Crissman      AY2006-2009

**Nursing**      Diane Salvador      AY2007-2010

**Pharmacy**      James Slama      AY2007-2010

**University College**      Glenn Sheldon      AY2007-2010

**Director, Undergraduate Research**      Thomas Kvale      *ex-officio*

**The Office of Research**      Elsa Nadler      AY2007-2010

**Student Government**      Jody Knapke and Glenn Main      AY2008-2009