

January 30, 2018

James Thompson
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Curricula

Dean Thompson,

The Office for Undergraduate Research is requesting changes to the criteria for undergraduate students to be awarded the Carolina Research Scholar Program (CRSP) transcript designation. The criteria include various types of coursework that are described at the end of this memo. The current criteria include the following:

- STEP 1: Completion of 1 of the following courses:
 - IDST 184: Research Beyond the Academy
 - IDST 194: Modes of Inquiry
 - 1 research-intensive course in a department different from that of at least 1 of the courses in STEP 2
 - 1 research-exposure course in a department different from that of at least 1 of the courses in STEP 2
- STEP 2: Completion of 2 research-intensive courses OR 1 research-methods course AND 1 research-intensive course
- STEP 3: Presentation at the UNC-CH Celebration of Undergraduate Research, a UNC-CH campus conference that is open to the public, or a professional conference

These criteria potentially limit the number of students who are eligible for the CRSP designation because enrollment in many of the aforementioned courses is limited. Additionally, there are logistical hurdles to conducting research in a department outside a student's major, as they likely do not possess the basic knowledge in the field that faculty mentors desire when identifying undergraduate research assistants. Lastly, a large number of undergraduate students participate in mentored research in a voluntary capacity (i.e. not for academic credit). These research experiences are invaluable to the students and represent substantial effort, but are not currently recognized by the CRSP criteria. We are requesting that the CRSP transcript designation criteria be changed to the following:

- Completion of 1 of the following courses:
 - IDST 184: Research Beyond the Academy
 - IDST 194: Modes of Inquiry
 - 1 research-methods course
 - 1 research-exposure course
- Completion of 2 research-intensive courses (or a total of 6 credits) OR 1 of the following options:
 - 1 research-intensive course (or a total of 3 credits) AND 150 hours of mentored research (equivalent of 1 semester at 10 hours per week)
 - 300 hours of mentored research (equivalent of 2 semesters at 10 hours per week)
- Attendance at 2 CRSP workshops (e.g. getting started in research, research ethics, literature/database searches, citation/reference management software, digital media, etc.)
- Presentation at the UNC-CH Celebration of Undergraduate Research, a UNC-CH campus conference that is open to the public, or a professional conference

All courses would require a grade of C or better with the exception of IDST 184 & 194 (Pass/Fail). Credit for mentored research participation would require the activity to be demonstrable research (e.g. not glass washing in a chemistry lab) and verification by a faculty mentor.

We request that, if approved, these changes be implemented effective July 1, 2018. Students enrolled after Fall 2018 would be required to meet the revised criteria. Students who enrolled in Fall 2015 (Class of 2019), Fall 2016 (Class of 2020), or Fall 2017 (Class of 2021) would have the option to receive the CRSP designation under the current or revised criteria depending on preference.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact me at troyb@email.unc.edu or (919) 843-2021.

Sincerely,



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Course Descriptions

- IDST 184 “Research Beyond Academia” is designed to introduce students to research outside the university setting. Researchers working in state and federal government (e.g. Environmental Protection Agency) and for-profit and non-profit organizations (e.g. the Research Triangle Institute) serve as guest speakers who discuss their research and the development of their careers.
- IDST 194 “Modes of Inquiry” is designed to introduce students to research being conducted at UNC-Chapel Hill. Faculty serve as guest speakers who discuss their research, how they became interested in the field, the methods they use, the satisfaction they derive (and the difficulties they have faced), and how undergraduates can get involved.
- Research-methods courses include training in specific research methodologies. These courses teach students the methods that scholars in a given discipline use to address research questions.
- Research-exposure courses introduce students to research by embedding a research assignment into course content. These courses require completion of at least one course assignment which is a fully-realized research project.
- Research-intensive courses require at least half of the course to be devoted to students conducting original research, and typically involve one-on-one faculty mentoring. These courses are typically offered for variable credit (1-3 credits), with 1 credit requiring 3-4 hours per week, 2 credits requiring 6-8 hours per week, and 3 credits requiring 10-12 hours per week.