

EXPECTATIONS FOR RESEARCH MENTORS OF UI UNDERGRADUATE PUBLIC HEALTH MAJORS

CPH:4990 Mentored Independent Undergraduate Research in Public Health

Engaging in public health research allows students to enrich their educational experience by integrating coursework with real-life experiences, establishing personal and professional relationships with research mentors, and applying their knowledge to make research contributions that positively impact populations. Students majoring in public health have the option to earn credit for a public health research experience through **CPH:4990 Mentored Independent Undergraduate Research in Public Health**. Students enrolled in this course will conduct an independent student research project under the supervision of a faculty mentor. Primary data collection is not a requirement for this course. Undergraduate public health majors who plan to graduate with honors in the major are required to register for this course in order to satisfy the honors thesis requirement. This course occurs over two semesters.

Public health research is defined as systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge related to the practice of public health. **Mentored** undergraduate research is defined as independent research under the mentorship of a faculty supervisor. **Independent** research is defined as scholarly activity that includes the conception and execution of a project by the individual student with frequent and regular contact with the supervising faculty member.

This course has been designed to occur over two semesters. Students should register for CPH:4990 during each semester. During the **first semester**, students are expected to (1) develop and write their research proposal and (2) begin their research project. During the **second semester**, students are expected to (1) conclude their research and (2) focus on writing up their research results. In limited circumstances and with prior approval by the Undergraduate Program Office, a student may petition to complete the requirements for this course in one, rather than two, semesters.

The CPH Undergraduate Program Office makes the ultimate decision regarding whether or not a specific research project meets the definition of mentored undergraduate public health research. In cases where the student's project is not deemed appropriate for mentored independent undergraduate public health research, the student may consider receiving alternate means of academic credit.

Who is eligible to register for CPH:4990?

To be eligible for registration and enrollment, students should:

- be a public health major in the College of Public Health
- have completed or be concurrently enrolled in CPH:3600 Applied Public Health Methods
- be in good academic standing as defined by the College of Public Health

Who can supervise undergraduate research for this course?

The primary appointment of the faculty supervisor may be at the College of Public Health, at the University of Iowa, or at another university, as approved by the Undergraduate Program Office. However, if the student wishes to graduate with honors in the major, it is required that the supervising faculty mentor have a faculty appointment with the College of Public Health (i.e., primary or secondary faculty on the tenure-track, clinical-track, or research-track). Honors research under the supervision of adjunct faculty and faculty not appointed within the College of Public Health will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and must be pre-approved by the Undergraduate Program Office.

General Expectations of the Student. The student will:

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- Define their area(s) of interest
- Identify faculty members who might have related interests
- Approach the faculty member in the area that interests them and discuss the possibility of completing an independent research project under their mentorship
- Reach an agreement with the research supervisor about the research question, the scope of the activity (e.g., start/end dates, hours, activities, compensation, etc.), and related products (e.g., publications or posters)
- Meet the requirements for course registration as set forth by the Undergraduate Program Office
- Complete all training, including training in human subjects protection, as required and prior to the initiation of research activity
- Perform the required work as agreed upon with the supervising faculty mentor
- Meet regularly and frequently with the supervising faculty mentor
- Be responsible for completing all course requirements in a timely manner, including early-term and end-of-term self-assessments, a final written report, and an oral/poster presentation in a venue approved by the Undergraduate Program Office.
- Honors students must also be responsible for completing all requirements for graduating with Honors in the Major in a timely manner, as outlined by the Undergraduate Program Office

General Expectations of the Supervising Faculty Member. The supervising faculty mentor will:

- Be available to their undergraduate researchers, answer their questions, and treat them with respect and fairness
- Work with the student to establish criteria by which the project will be defined
- Ensure that the student receives proper training for the research project, as needed
- Oversee the student's research experience
- Provide an early-term check-in (typically during the third week of an academic term) and end-of-term evaluation of student performance, for each semester in which the student is enrolled in CPH:4990 under their supervision. Online evaluation forms will be provided by the Undergraduate Program Office.
- The faculty mentor's primary responsibilities are not to be delegated to others.

QUESTIONS? Contact:

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