



Faculty (Co-) Sponsor Information

Program in Biology // Undergraduate Program in Neuroscience

📍: 1140 Undergrad. Science Bldg. (USB)

🌐: [http://www.lsa.umich.edu/biology \(/neurosci\)](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/biology (/neurosci))

✉: lsa-biology-advising@umich.edu

☎: 734-763-7984

The Program in Biology and the Undergraduate Program in Neuroscience have established the following guidelines to facilitate the relationship between faculty researchers, co-sponsors as needed, and the undergraduates who work in research labs around campus.

1. What counts as “research?”

The student is expected to be involved in a project that will develop their skills in all three of these aspects of research: **the design, execution, and interpretation of experiments**. Projects that only engage the student in analysis of data that have already been collected (for instance projects based exclusively on analysis of medical records) or running experiments in which they have no role in the design and data analysis are not eligible for lab research credit.

2. Who is responsible for mentorship?

Initially the research is usually done in close collaboration with a graduate student or post-doc, but eventually it is expected that **the faculty mentor will establish a relationship with each undergraduate researcher** and help carve out a sub-project that they take more control over.

3. What is the expected work product?

An end-of-the semester summary is a common requirement. Mentors (and co-sponsors) should establish specific guidelines for the work expectations.

4. How many hours should the student work?

3-4 hours of lab work per week (during the full term) are expected per credit. Hours spent reading papers and participating in lab meetings or journal clubs can count toward this total. Students should receive appropriate credit for their time contribution.

5. To whom do we report problems?

The Programs in Biology and Neuroscience provide student and sponsor support and grievance oversight where necessary. **The sponsor/co-sponsor and/or the undergraduate researcher should bring any and all issues to the Administrative Manager of the Programs.** *Laboratories that receive multiple complaints may no longer be supported as independent research sites by the Programs in Biology or Neuroscience.* Questions or concerns should be directed to: Anna Cihak, Admin. Manager, 1140 USB, cihak@umich.edu.

6. What is Co-Sponsorship and when is it required?

Students working in **labs outside of EEB or MCDB must have an EEB or MCDB faculty co-sponsor** who will assign a grade based on a review of the term’s work and the faculty mentor’s grade recommendation. Faculty mentors are strongly encouraged to reach out to EEB/MCDB faculty to **help students obtain a co-sponsor**. Where this is not possible, the Program in Biology or the Undergraduate Program in Neuroscience will assist.

SAMPLE SPONSORSHIP AGREEMENT (this format is not required, but is provided as an optional template):

The student’s end-of-semester summary should meet the following criteria (due by the last day of classes):

- 1. In 3-5 pages, with 12 pt. font, double-spaced, standard margin;*
- 2. Provide an introduction to the project that includes the “big picture” problem the project is working on;*
- 3. Describe the student’s specific project within the lab;*
- 4. Summarize results from the student’s experiments;*
- 5. Provide an interpretation of what the results mean; and,*
- 6. Indicate future research directions to clarify or extend the results;*
- 7. This should be written primarily in third person as a scientific abstract would be (optional: occasional first-person asides to emphasize the individual student’s work).*
- 8. For CO-SPONSORSHIP: This summary must be (1) approved by the faculty mentor and (2) include their email address. The faculty mentor must contact the co-sponsor to indicate the recommended grade.*

Note that in co-sponsorships, the faculty mentor’s grade is a recommendation only, and the co-sponsor has the final say over the student’s grade. The mentor’s recommendation will weigh heavily in the final grade, but ultimately, the co-sponsor’s evaluation will be based on the mentor’s comments and the end of semester summaries.