



The purpose of research credit is to allow advanced undergraduates to pursue an in-depth research project driven by the student and overseen by a faculty member. During the semester preceding the semester of registration, students plan their individualized research project, present their ideas to a faculty member with expertise in the subject, and, should the faculty member agree to sponsor the student, produce an independent research proposal, detailed below. This document acts as a contract to ensure that both parties meet the expectations set out during the planning stage.

PLCY399R fulfills the Experiential Learning requirement for the Bachelors of Arts Public Policy major. The course provides a basis for reflection upon and evaluation of a student's practical, substantive experience in conducting research with a faculty member. A faculty member oversees the research, and the academic curriculum spans the semester's duration.

Credits and Student Hours

For undergraduate students, the number of hours a student commits to the project per week is up to the student. Students can choose to register for one credit (three hours/week), two credits (six hours/week), or three credits (nine hours/week). Students should discuss with their advisor how these credits count for their major and toward graduation.

Permission to register: Students must first receive approval of their research experience. Students must complete a research proposal with their faculty member and submit it to the Director of Undergraduate Studies. It ***must have a direct relationship to public policy***. Once approved, students must then complete and submit a contract and syllabus with their faculty member before receiving permission to register for the course.

Research Proposal

The following information must accompany the research proposal when it is submitted to the Director of Undergraduate Studies for review:

- Description of the course, outline of work, methods, schedules and due dates, and bibliography.
- Objectives of the course.
- Final product(s) expected at the conclusion of the course.
- Detailed method(s) of evaluation for coursework.
- Student's reasons (qualitative and/or quantitative) and qualifications (prior experience/course work) for pursuing study.
- Description of how this research complements the student's academic program and professional goals.
- Meeting times
- Faculty advisor's written approval.
- Any additional information as necessary.

Contract & Syllabus

Once the research proposal is approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies, a final contract and syllabus must be developed and submitted prior to permission being given for the student to register. The final contract and syllabus will include information from the proposal and should include signatures from both the student and faculty member. Please see the Director of Undergraduate Studies for previous examples.

Student Requirements & Expectations

The research and course registration must be completed ***concurrently***. A student may not complete research over the summer and earn the credit in the Fall Semester, for example. The policies for the course must follow the [regular UMD add/drop schedule](#) for the semester the credit is being earned. Summer credits are more expensive than credits in the Fall/Spring, so students should take that into consideration when planning their research experience.

Please email the Director of Undergraduate Studies, Dr. Jennifer Littlefield, at jnlittle@umd.edu with any questions!