

Send date: July 31, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

We are writing today with guidance about undergraduate research and creative activity for the fall semester, including associated undergraduate research and independent study courses. As in all of our reopening plans, we seek to prioritize the safety of our campus community, limit gatherings and density on campus wherever possible, and support the agency of our faculty, staff, and students in making choices about the degree to which they will be engaged in on-campus activities.

Guidance for fall undergraduate research and creative activity:

- **Training.** All undergraduates who will be involved in research and/or enrolled in experiential learning credit (e.g., internship, undergraduate research, thesis, independent study) must complete the online COVID-19 safety training. There are two options for completing the online training and either training is acceptable: [“Returning to Research Training Course”](#) OR [“Returning to Campus Training Course.”](#) **Students only need to complete one of the trainings even if they are engaged in multiple research or experiential learning opportunities.** Students must provide email confirmation that they have completed the training to their research mentor/supervisor/faculty advisor. As always, research mentors/supervisors are responsible for ensuring their undergraduate researchers have completed the [EHS](#), [human subjects](#), and/or [animal use](#) training relevant to the research in which they are involved.
- **Safety Plans.** Undergraduates involved in laboratory and/or human subjects research should review, sign, and follow their mentor’s OVPR-approved COVID-19 Safety Plan. The responsible faculty member/principal investigator is responsible for ensuring undergraduates’ compliance with all facets of the approved Safety Plan.
- **Remote as Default.** Wherever possible, research (including research with associated course credit or student employment) and related activities should be completed remotely in furtherance of the goal of limiting gatherings and density. This includes activities such as lab/research group meetings and 1:1 meetings. **Consider remote activity the default** and reserve in-person/in-lab/in-studio time for activities that can only be accomplished with the equipment and materials in those spaces.
- **Course Modality.** If a student is enrolled in course credits based on their involvement in research, independent study, or creative activity this fall, ensure that the course’s modality accurately reflects the modality of the student’s planned involvement. Modality changes to these courses should be made promptly so students’ enrollment reflects how all their fall courses will be delivered.

For the remainder of the **summer** (through Friday, August 28<sup>th</sup>), the current undergraduate research [approval process](#) will continue via the submission of student and faculty request forms. **This additional approval is for the summer period only; it is not required for the fall campus reopening.** Residential students with a summer undergraduate research approval may be involved in research on their campus of residence during the 2-week quarantine period (if they remain on campus and limit their physical contact with others), but may not be involved in off-campus or inter-campus research during that time.

Faculty are encouraged to contact the Office of the Vice President for Research ([ovpr@uconn.edu](mailto:ovpr@uconn.edu)) or the Office of Undergraduate Research ([our@uconn.edu](mailto:our@uconn.edu)) with any questions. Our undergraduate students value the opportunity to engage in research, independent study, and creative activity at UConn. Thank you for your efforts to involve students safely this fall semester.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Shoulson

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Jeffrey S. Shoulson  
Vice Provost for Academic Operations