RESEARCH LEARNING AGREEMENT

V. 6/4/25

**Directions:** Students should aim to complete this research agreement in consultation with their mentor.  The purpose of the agreement is to clearly establish expectations, goals, and communication plans between student researchers and their mentors; this agreement should facilitate that conversation. Fill it out at the beginning of the research period, then refer to the agreement at the end of the research experience and discuss the student’s progress (particularly the last section about outcomes).

**1. CONTACT INFORMATION**

Student Name:

Phone:

USC E-mail:

Faculty Mentor/Advisor Name:

Department:

Phone:

E-mail:

Name of Daily Supervisor OR Graduate Student:

*\*if other than faculty advisor*

Phone:

E-mail:

**2. EXPECTATIONS**

**Work Schedule:** It should be understood that even with a set schedule, some weeks or projects may require more or less time, and your hours may need to be adjusted to accommodate. Changes to a schedule should be discussed as early as possible. Items to discuss/consider include course schedule, expectations about working or not working on breaks (fall, winter, and spring breaks), exam time, summer, and end of semesters.

START DATE:

END DATE (or blank):

* Flexible Schedule (\_\_\_\_\_hours per week)
* Set Schedule (list days of week and times)

**Communication Plan:** Discuss preferred format and appropriate usage (how often, how late is ok, expected time to respond for messages, etc) of email, phone, texting, office hours, etc for general concerns or questions, when problems or issues arise, and for emergencies. Include how all involved prefer contact (mentor, student, and supervisor).

***Who*** and ***how*** to contact when late or missing an established meeting time (sick, etc), for emergencies, problems, etc:

Name:

Phone:

Email:

**Other Requirements:**Items to note: What are the student’s responsibilities for each type of meeting or how to prepare successfully (bring an agenda, list of questions, project status report, prepare a presentation for the group, etc.)? check all that apply

[ ]  Meet regularly with faculty mentor or supervisor

* How often/when?
* Location?
* With whom?

[ ]  Attend scheduled research group or lab meetings

* How often/when?
* Where?

[ ]  Give a presentation of your progress at above meeting or other

* How often/when?
* Who can assist in preparation?

[ ]  Review research notes/findings/lab notebook regularly with faculty mentor or supervisor

* How often/when?
* Who can assist in preparation?

[ ]  Prepare a presentation for conference, meeting, etc.

* Details of conference (Name, location, date, format, etc).:
* Timeline of draft and final version:
* Who can assist in preparation?

[ ]  Other (please specify; may include reports, summary paper, journal articles, etc)

**3. PROJECT DETAILS**

**TITLE OF PROJECT**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**SHORT DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:**

*(1-2 sentences)*

**MILESTONE(s):** Identify several tasks that the student should aim to accomplish as they move toward completing the project, including a tentative schedule.  Be sure to include any product, such as a paper, creative work, or presentation, that the student is expected to complete by the end of the semester. (Add more fields as needed).

Example Research Milestones:

*Identify six articles to read.*

*Successfully clone gene of interest.*

*Administer survey.*

*Submit abstract to present at Discover USC*

*Turn in the first draft for a final paper.*

**Milestone 1: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

* Target completion date:

**Milestone 2: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

* Target completion date:

**Milestone 3: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

* Target completion date:

**Milestone 4: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

* Target completion date:

**TRAINING NEEDED:**

*Include who will teach and when, if possible. Be sure to include training needed for human subjects, animal care, safety and compliance, special equipment, etc.*

***Please check if required:***

* CITI Training
* Lab Safety
* Hazardous Waste Management
* Biosafety
* Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**4. STUDENT OUTCOMES**

Identify several outcomes (skills, knowledge, professional development, etc.) that are important for the student to develop through the completion of this project. Use these questions to get you started: What does the student want to get out of this research experience?  What does the mentor want the student to get out of the experience?

Example skills outcomes:

*Can identify relevant sources from library databases.*

*Learn to operate a thermocycler to complete PCR.*

*Can successfully use Final Cut Pro to edit my film.*

Example content knowledge outcomes:

*Be able to compare/contrast 3 different scholars' interpretations of "Brave New World."*

*Be able to summarize the latest research about the causes of depression among the elderly.*

*Be able to explain and understand the concepts behind the PCR technique and its application to the lab's work.*

Example professional development outcomes:

*To show my artwork in a gallery.*

*To attend a professional conference.*

*To create a writing sample/portfolio for graduate school applications.*

*To help me decide on my career options.*

**Outcome 1: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

* Student level at start of project: *(no experience, beginning, adequate, advanced)*
* Student level at end of project: *(no experience, beginning, adequate, advanced)*

**Outcome 2: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

* Student level at start of project: *(no experience, beginning, adequate, advanced)*
* Student level at end of project: *(no experience, beginning, adequate, advanced)*

**Outcome 3: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

* Student level at start of project: *(no experience, beginning, adequate, advanced)*
* Student level at end of project: *(no experience, beginning, adequate, advanced)*

**Outcome 4: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

* Student level at start of project: *(no experience, beginning, adequate, advanced)*
* Student level at end of project: *(no experience, beginning, adequate, advanced)*

**5. STUDENT PERSONAL STATEMENT**

Share how this project connects to your goals (academic, personal, and/or professional) and why this project is important to you.

**6. BUDGET JUSTIFICATION**

Indicate estimated number of student research hours per week and hourly rate separated by semesters when student is enrolled in classes or not enrolled in classes (generally fall or spring vs summer semesters). Time during breaks (Fall, Winter or Spring break) are still hours during semesters of enrolled classes. Most students earn $11-15 per hour; minimum hourly rate for undergraduates is $11 per hour.

**7. SIGNATURES AND DATES**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Mentor/Advisor:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Daily Supervisor /Graduate Student:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_