

Faculty Handout

Thank you for mentoring a BDP student! Our undergraduate students gain an invaluable introduction to the work of their chosen field through research. We appreciate the work you do with these students, who may be experiencing the responsibilities of a research project for the first time. Our office is available to address any questions or concerns you may have throughout the semester. Please do not hesitate to contact us.

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For additional information and resources, please visit our Faculty Mentor Handbook on the BDP website at: utexas.edu/ugs/bdp/faculty/mentoring

FACULTY MENTOR GUIDELINES

- Meet with student periodically throughout the semester or arrange regular email contact.
- Encourage student to make connections among the research experience, the student's BDP topic, and methodologies, controversies, and trends in the student's discipline.
- Help student consider new directions and possible career paths.
- Assign final grade or credit. This responsibility may vary depending on the course number and departmental requirements.

SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENT EXPLANATIONS

IMPORTANT: Academic requirements are generally at the discretion of the faculty mentor, though the BDP office may suggest or request changes if adjustments are needed for us to be able to approve the student's Connecting Experience. The most common reasons we ask for changes to the academic requirements are that the amount of work required of the student does not appear to be sufficient for three hours of credit, or that the link between the work the student is doing and the student's specific BDP topic needs to be stronger. With the exception of the Reflection Essay, which is required of all students completing a Connecting Experience, the following assignments are suggestions only, and many other types of assignments are frequently given for Connecting Experiences, in addition to these.

- **Research paper.** Be sure to specify a page length, and the student will note this on the Connecting Experience Contract that will be sent to you for your final approval. Students conducting independent research should have an opportunity to receive feedback from the faculty mentor on stages or drafts of the project before the final paper is due. For larger projects, consider setting deadlines for each stage of the project or section of the paper early in the semester, to help the student stay on track. The average page length for research experiences in which the research paper is the primary assignment is 15–20 pages.
- **Research Assistant Responsibilities.** Although there is not an hours requirement for Connecting Research Experiences, the BDP office suggests that students serving as a lab assistant should contribute an average of 10–12 hours/week to the study. This work can include literature review, interacting with study participants, data coding or analysis, attendance at lab meetings, and other assignments deemed appropriate by the faculty mentor.
- **Reflection Essay.** The BDP office requires every student to write a 3–5 page Reflection Essay at the conclusion of the Connecting Experience. The Reflection Essay is due on the last class day of the semester. The student will be responsible for submitting a copy to the BDP office and the Faculty Mentor. The Reflection Essay prompt can be found on our web site under "Quick Links and Forms."
- **Poster or Video.** You might ask the student to design a poster about his or her research experience, which may be presented at the annual BDP Poster Session in April. You could also consider asking students to create a two-minute video for the Texas Student Research Showdown (ugs.utexas.edu/our/showdown). The Office of Undergraduate Research offers workshops on designing posters (as well as information on the Research Showdown), and you could suggest that your student attend a workshop. For more information about the workshops or the BDP Poster Session, please contact Larissa Noake at larissa.noake@austin.utexas.edu or (512) 232-7586.