



FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

Undergraduate  
Research and Inquiry

# Florida Atlantic University Undergraduate Research Curriculum Committee

## Undergraduate Research and Inquiry Intensive Course Designation Manual

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## Section 1 Defining Research and Inquiry Intensive Courses

Research and Inquiry Intensive (RI) designated courses are courses in which undergraduate students **actively engage in the process of research and inquiry at the [intensive level](#)** with facilitation provided by an instructor or faculty mentor. A significant portion of RI course should include 1) original research, scholarship and creative discovery where the student makes an original, intellectual, technical or creative contribution to the discipline or practice; and/or 2) applied research, where the student uses discipline-appropriate data to address a clearly defined or unstructured research question for which no clear answer exists. RI designated courses generate tangible outcomes recognizable as the product of research and inquiry in the discipline including the opportunity for students to communicate the design, method and results of the inquiry.

While many courses at FAU conform to some extent with the broad definition of research noted above, RI courses are distinct in the following ways:

A. They must address all six of the following Office of Undergraduate Research and Inquiry (OURI) student learning outcomes and demonstrate how these SLOs are implemented at an intensive level. The six student learning outcomes are detailed below.

1. **Knowledge:** Students will demonstrate content knowledge, core principles, and skills.
2. **Formulate Question/Problem:** Students will formulate research questions and/or scholarly or creative problems with integration of fundamental principles and knowledge in a manner appropriate to the discipline.
3. **Plan of Action:** Students will develop and implement a plan of action or discipline appropriate methodology to address research and inquiry questions or scholarly problems.
4. **Critical Thinking:** Students will apply critical thinking skills to evaluate information, their own work, and the work of others.
5. **Ethics:** Students will identify significant ethical issues in research and inquiry and/or address them in practice.
6. **Communication:** Students will convey all aspects of their research and inquiry (processes and/or products) in appropriate formats, venues, and delivery modes.

B. They must be taken for a letter grade.

C. A significant portion (40% minimum) of the course grade must be tied to the RI assignment(s) or project(s).

D. RI projects may be individual or group projects; however, each student must receive an individual assessment.

Additionally, courses receiving RI designation are strongly encouraged to:

- promote and support co-curricular participation in URI activities, e.g. symposium presentations, journal submissions, OURI workshop attendance etc.
- promote and support students' completion of Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR), Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) training, or other training as appropriate for the student's discipline.
- promote and support students applying for the undergraduate research certificate.



## Section 2

### Application Guidelines for Faculty Submitting Research and Inquiry Intensive Courses for Approval

Faculty who wish to have their course considered for RI designation shall have a complete application package approved by the department and the college-level curriculum approval process. A complete application package consists of:

1. **A course syllabus** which includes:
  - i. standardized syllabus language for all RI courses (see below).
  - ii. a written description detailing the RI assignment(s). These RI assignments, guidelines and deadlines should also be mirrored in the course topical outline section.
  - iii. A completed [RI course matrix](#) which provides the following:
    1. a description of the 6 student learning outcomes and how students in the course will meet those outcomes at the [intensive level](#). Note: Sample SLO Language is provided but faculty are encouraged to edit the language specific to the course.
    2. a breakdown of the percentage of the grade (minimum 40%) and how it is assigned to the RI assignment(s)
  - iv. for group projects, the syllabus must articulate how students will be individually graded/assessed.
2. **The appropriate form: Either**
  - a. A [New Course](#) Form for all new courses or some existing courses requesting RI designation. For existing courses, this form should be used if departments wish to add a new RI section of a course while retaining a non-RI version of the course.
  - b. A [Course Change](#) Form for all other existing courses where RI will be included permanently and in all sections.

Note: If changing the course to RI or adding a new RI course impacts a program, then a [New/Change Program request form](#) is also required.

NOTE: For multi-section courses, a common syllabus template will need to be provided, and the department chair will be asked to sign off on the new course/course change form.

Standardized syllabus language to be included:

#### RI Designation

This course contains an assignment or multiple assignments designed to help students conduct research and inquiry at an intensive level. If this class is selected to participate in the university-wide assessment program, faculty will submit one work sample of a student's research assignments for review. Visit the Office of Undergraduate Research and Inquiry (OURI) for additional opportunities and information at <http://www.fau.edu/ouri>.

#### Undergraduate Research Certificate

FAU now offers an Undergraduate Research Certificate to recognize undergraduate students for the systematic development of excellence in undergraduate research. Students seeking a certificate must complete 12 credits in research-intensive (RI), skill-building, exposure, and research dissemination activities. Successfully completing this course earns you three credits in research intensive coursework. Learn more about the [Research Certificate here](#).



## Section 3 - APPENDICIES

### A. Undergraduate Research Curriculum Committee

**Purpose:**

The Florida Atlantic University Undergraduate Research and Inquiry Curriculum Committee (URCC) is a committee within the Division of Academic Affairs. Its primary function is to support and promote the development of research and inquiry enriched courses and programs at the undergraduate level. As a subcommittee of the University Undergraduate Program Committee (UUPC), the URCC will advise the UUPC on *curricular matters related to undergraduate research and inquiry education* at Florida Atlantic University, including whether courses proposed for research and inquiry designation meet appropriate institutional standards, and conducting the 5-year review/recertification process.

**Membership:**

1. The Florida Atlantic University Undergraduate Research and Inquiry Curriculum Committee will consist of one faculty member from each college that confers undergraduate degrees. Members are selected according to the appropriate policies in their colleges and serve at the discretion of the Dean. Each will be a voting member of the committee.
2. The Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Research will be *ex officio*, non-voting members of the URCC.
3. The presence of fifty percent of the Committee's voting members will be considered a quorum for the purposes of conducting business.

**Operation:**

1. The Associate Dean will be chair of the Undergraduate Research and Inquiry Curriculum Committee.
2. The University Undergraduate Research and Inquiry Curriculum Committee will have at least one regular meeting per semester during the academic year from September through April.
3. Additional meetings may be called by the chair of the URCC or by request of one of the *ex officio* members.

### B. Procedure for RI Course Designation

URI College Liaisons are available to assist any faculty interested in submitting a course for RI designation. Information about each college's URI Liaison can be found [here](#).

1. After approval in the Department and College undergraduate committees, the approved application package is submitted to the URCC for review (see Section 2).
2. Proposals approved by URCC will continue through the university channels for approval. This includes: UUPC → Steering and Policy → Senate → Provost → State
3. Once the Statewide Course Numbering System, SCNS approves the course, the Registrar's Office adds the course for scheduling and adds it to the University Catalog. Department chairs will receive a copy of the SCNS report to inform them the course has received all approvals and is ready for scheduling.
4. Proposals not approved by the URCC may be revised and resubmitted.  
Note: Faculty/Departments making modifications/changes to existing RI courses are also asked to route those changes to the URCC for review prior to submission to UUPC. Changes could include but are not limited to removal of RI, Course-pre-requisite changes etc.



### C. Expectations of Faculty Who Teach Courses with RI Designation

1. Faculty teaching RI designated courses are expected to teach the course in a manner that satisfies the RI designation requirements. We recommend you complete a training module introducing RI designation offered through Canvas, to promote best practices for teaching RI designated courses. For access to the Canvas course please contact [ouri@fau.edu](mailto:ouri@fau.edu).
2. RI designated course syllabi shall be reviewed at most once every five years by the Faculty Liaisons/URCC using a common review worksheet.
3. Each course that receives the RI designation will be evaluated periodically to determine how students are performing in building skills related to undergraduate research. Information about these specific skills can be [found here](#).
  - a) Faculty shall be notified prior to the start of the semester if their course has been selected for evaluation.
  - b) Faculty will not be asked to have their classes participate in the assessment process more than once every five years.
  - c) Faculty will be asked to electronically submit the following documents for review.
    - i. an updated syllabus including the [RI course matrix](#)
    - ii. a statement of what research looks like in your discipline (for context for the reviewers)
    - iii. student work-sample(s) for review
  - d) Feedback from the review process will be shared with the faculty member for re-certification and continuous improvement purposes.
4. Faculty will also be encouraged to participate in professional development opportunities related to integrating URI into the curriculum offered by OURI and other programs on campus.

### D. Guidelines for Research Intensive Course Compacts

**Purpose:** To provide a mechanism for students to receive Research Intensive credit in a course which is not currently designated as Research Intensive.

A research intensive compact is:

- an agreement between a student and an instructor that, under the instructor's guidance, stipulates that the student will engage in the process of research and inquiry in a manner consistent with other courses that receive research intensive credit at Florida Atlantic University
- intended to provide a student with RI credit for a course that is not otherwise designated as an RI course
- an achievement that is noted on the student's transcript

An RI compact is **not**:

- a device that merely makes the material of a course more challenging without providing the type of enhancement typically found in other RI courses at Florida Atlantic University

An RI compact **must meet the following RI criteria. Compacts must:**

1. provide opportunities for active engagement in 1) original research, scholarship and creative discovery where the student makes an original, intellectual, technical or creative contribution to the discipline or practice; and/or 2) applied research, where the student uses discipline-appropriate data to address a clearly defined or unstructured research question for which no clear answer exists.



2. generate tangible outcomes recognizable as the product of research and inquiry in the discipline including the opportunity for students to communicate the design, method and results of the inquiry.
3. address all six of the following *Distinction through Discovery* (DTD) student learning outcomes and engage students in intensive level research and inquiry activities:
  - a. **Knowledge:** Students will demonstrate content knowledge, core principles, and skills.
  - b. **Formulate Question/Problem:** Students will formulate research questions and/or scholarly or creative problems with integration of fundamental principles and knowledge in a manner appropriate to the discipline.
  - c. **Plan of Action:** Students will develop and implement a plan of action or discipline appropriate methodology to address research and inquiry questions or scholarly problems.
  - d. **Critical Thinking:** Students will apply critical thinking skills to evaluate information, their own work, and the work of others.
  - e. **Ethics:** Students will identify significant ethical issues in research and inquiry and/or address them in practice.
  - f. **Communication:** Students will convey all aspects of their research and inquiry (processes and/or products) in appropriate formats, venues, and delivery modes.
4. Assign a significant portion of the course grade related to the RI assignment(s)/project(s).

### Procedure

**Applications for RI compacts must** clearly demonstrate how the RI component is:

- complementary to and extends the existing content of the course
- significantly richer than the established requirements of the course both in content and methodology

Faculty supporting a student completing an RI compact in his/her course must:

- commit to meeting individually with the student outside of class, at least three times during the semester to provide guidance on the development and completion of the research intensive assignment associated with the RI compact
- notify the Office of Undergraduate Research and Inquiry, OURI whether the student has successfully completed the requirements for the RI compact by the procedural due dates
- facilitate the student communicating their research and inquiry findings as part of this RI Compact

Procedural Due Dates:

1. No later than the second week of the semester, the student will submit electronically to OURI a copy of the course syllabus (with the tentative meeting dates highlighted) and a completed "Research Intensive Compact Proposal and Approval Form" which both the student and the instructor of the course have signed.
2. OURI will review the application as soon as possible and will notify the student, the instructor, and the department chair whether the RI compact has been approved or must be revised.
3. Each RI compact must be completed with all required signatures, and the instructor must notify OURI whether or not an RI compact has been successfully completed no later than the **last official day of final examinations for that term.**
4. OURI will provide the registrar with a list of all successfully completed RI compacts no later than **the day that grades are due in the registrar's office for that term.**
5. In the event that, due to circumstances beyond his or her control, the student is granted an official Incomplete in the course, the RI compact must be completed no later than the date when all other course requirements must be completed.
6. Any appeals involving an RI compact should follow the appeals procedure (as detailed in the Code of Academic Integrity). Normal university deadlines for all grade changes still apply.



### Research Intensive Compact Proposal and Approval Form

*Must be completed and submitted electronically to OURI no later than the Friday of the second week of the term in which the Research Intensive Compact will be completed.*

#### Course Information:

Course Prefix  
Course Name  
Semester and Year  
Number of Credits

#### Student Information:

Student name  
Z-number  
Email

#### Instructor Information:

Instructor's name  
College and Department  
Email:

**Question:** Describe what the student will do to fulfill this RI compact and how the compact meets the RI criteria listed above.

*Acknowledgements: The URCC committee guidelines and URI course designation manual was adapted from the FAU University Honors Council Curriculum Manual and with assistance from the Writing across the Curriculum Program.*