

# Goals and Expectations Faculty Worksheet

## Undergraduate Research & Creative Activity

### **Purpose**

Onboarding an undergraduate to a research or creative project can be challenging, but taking the time to provide your students with a clear, thoughtful, and thorough orientation is essential for providing the structure and boundaries that will make the experience worthwhile for both you and your students.

Your orientation should include the following information:

- a clear explanation of the project, both in terms of the specific goals of the project and how it fits within the broader context of the discipline,
- a detailed outline of your expectations of students, including time commitment, communication policies, and a project timeline, and
- an overview of the skills and knowledge students will develop while working on the project and how they will acquire and develop those skills.

These questions are intended as talking points for faculty to help students understand the goals of the undergraduate research & creative activity work as well as expectations for success.

### **Discussion Questions**

- 1. What is the project you are working on?**
- 2. Why is the project important? Who will benefit from it? How does it fit into the broader context of the discipline?**
- 3. Why are you, the faculty mentor, working on this project?**
- 4. What are the main goals of this work?**  
*This will help guide #5.*
- 5. What are the outcomes you plan to achieve this year?**  
*Outcomes should be specific and measurable. Think of this as a more focused goals list.*
- 6. What are your expectations of your students?**  
*Think of this like a job description. What is the time commitment? What should students expect to do during synchronous, in-person research time with you? What should they anticipate needing to do on their own?*

**7. What should your students expect from you?**

*What kind of structure are you providing? How will you communicate with students, and how often? When and where will you meet? As a mentor, what are you offering your students?*

**8. What skills and/or new knowledge will your students need to complete this work?**

*Coming up with a starting list like this is important for getting everyone on the same page. This also can help faculty research mentors think through what additional guidance and/or instruction you will need to provide to promote student learning and success.*

**9. What will a typical week look like for students working on this project?**

*Faculty should be clear on expectations for work times and communication.*

**10. What will the main project milestones be? How will you celebrate them?**

*Celebrate the wins! This is especially important as students learn to adjust to the extended timelines of undergraduate research and creative activity.*

For more resources on undergraduate research & creative activity, visit [cel.mercer.edu](http://cel.mercer.edu).