

Memo To: All UH-Downtown/PS Holders
From: Loren J. Blanchard, President
Subject: Directed Studies

UH-Downtown/PS 03.A.17
Issue No. 6
Effective date: 08/01/2022
Page 1 of 4

1. PURPOSE

This PS states the University of Houston-Downtown (UHD) policy on directed studies courses.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **Directed Studies Course:** A directed studies course is an academic credit-bearing course in which a student works closely with a specific faculty member to tailor the learning experience on a topic of interest or to engage in research or creative activities beyond the scope of existing courses in the curriculum. Thus, a directed studies course is intended to expand the curriculum and may not duplicate an organized course. A directed studies course requires a term paper, research study, or comparable project deliverable
- 2.2 **Faculty Member:** For the purposes of this policy, “faculty member” refers to the full-time faculty member who serves as the instructor of record for the directed studies course.

3. POLICY

3.1 Criteria for Student Eligibility

Any student wishing to take a directed studies course should meet the following criteria:

- 3.2.1 The student must be in good academic standing ([see Grading System Policy, PS 03.A.04](#)).
- 3.2.2 The student must have instructor approval and complete required forms prior to enrolling in the course.
- 3.2.3 The student must have the approval of both the department and the dean to enroll in the course. The academic department of the course or the college may have additional prerequisites or requirements for enrollment in a directed studies course.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 Procedures

- 4.1.1 Directed studies courses require consultation and collaboration between a student and faculty member that exceed that of structured courses in the curriculum. Well in advance of registration, the student develops an idea for a topic for independent study or communicates the need for a directed course of study and consults with an appropriate faculty member to lead the course. If the faculty member and student agree on the advisability of such a course and on the mandatory elements of the course (e.g. requirements, meeting times, grading, a culminating project, report, or other artifact), the student obtains the directed studies request form (see Exhibit A) from the appropriate department office.
- 4.1.2 The faculty member and student complete a syllabus that includes a detailed project/course outline and sign the form. The syllabus must be attached to the request form. When applicable, the outline must include the title of the project, description of the project, list of course materials and/or books, meeting times, methods of evaluation, and specific assignments which the student must complete.
- 4.1.3 The form and attached syllabus must each clearly describe the features of the course decided upon in Sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.2.
- 4.1.4 The instructor of record of the directed studies course secures the approval of the appropriate department chair and the office of the dean, each of whom reviews the proposed course syllabus and signs the form. For programs that do not have a department chair, the student will secure approval from the program director of the program in which that course is housed.
- 4.1.5 The office of the dean retains the request form and attached syllabus. They then send a copy to the department chair (or program director), the faculty member, and the student.
- 4.1.6 The department chair or program director enables student registration for the directed studies course, and the student registers for the course using regular registration procedures.
- 4.1.7 At the conclusion of the directed studies course, the faculty member collects the project, report, or other culminating artifact and assigns the grade.
- 4.1.8 For courses that require a research project or other product, a copy of the

culminating artifact is sent to the department chair or program director and is kept by the faculty member in the LMS course shell (or otherwise as necessary) for one year.

4.2 Faculty Credit

A full-time faculty member receives credit for each student taught in a directed studies course. This credit accumulates toward released time or can be paid out as an overload as stipulated in the official faculty workload policy (See PS 10.A.04).

4.3 Maximum Credit Hours per Student

Degree requirements may limit the number of hours of directed study which may be applied by a student towards completion of the degree

5. EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A: Directed Studies Request Form](#)

6. REVIEW PROCESS

Responsible Party (Reviewer): Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

Review: Every five years, or as necessary

Signed original on file in the Office of Human Resources.

7. POLICY HISTORY

Issue #1: 04/20/83

Issue #2: 06/17/86

Issue #3: 04/01/88

Issue #4: 12/18/00

Issue #5: 06/22/15

Exhibit A: DIRECTED STUDIES REQUEST FORM

This form must be approved and filed in the office of the appropriate dean prior to registration.

I. Summary Description

- a Academic division _____
- b Academic department _____
- c Subject/Course number _____
- d Semester and year _____
- e Faculty member _____
- f Student name _____
- g Student's UHD ID _____
- h Project/course completion date _____
- i Project/course title _____

II. Project / Course Outline—A complete syllabus outlining the proposed course must be attached to this form. When applicable, the outline must include the title and description of the project, list of course materials, meeting times, methods of evaluation, and specific assignments.

III. Is this course expected to satisfy part of the student's degree plan? Yes No

Upon finishing this course, how many directed studies courses will the student have completed? ____

IV. Approval

_____	_____
Student	Date
_____	_____
Faculty Member	Date
_____	_____
Department Chair (or Program Director)	Date
_____	_____
Dean	Date