

## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

### Research Mentors for Public Health Undergraduate Honors Theses

#### MENTOR'S ROLE

Students completing an Honors Thesis in Public Health must have a research mentor with expertise in the student's subject area. **The research mentor, who must have a doctoral degree (PhD, MD, ScD), has the ultimate responsibility for guiding the student towards the successful completion of the research, thesis, and potential publications.** Daily supervision (especially in a laboratory environment) may be delegated to a graduate student or other researcher. Mentor can be in any department on the UC Berkeley or UC San Francisco campuses.

**Required student courses:** Students completing an Honors Thesis must take the PH 196 course, Senior Seminar in Research Methods, in the fall of their senior year. Through PH 196, students will develop the capacity to:

1. Develop and define a research question.
2. Be proficient in finding primary literature sources and managing literature citations using bibliographic management software (such as EndNote, RefWorks, or Zotero).
3. Be able to critically interpret information from peer reviewed medical or social science literature.
4. Know basic data management skills and have working knowledge of Stata.
5. Know how to appropriately visualize data & select appropriate analytic tests.
6. Be able to execute & interpret basic analytic tests in Stata (bivariate, non-regression).
7. Be able to execute & interpret regression analyses in Stata (bivariate & multivariate).
8. Develop a research protocol for study of human subjects.
9. Be familiar with laboratory, analytic and other methods used in human research.

In the fall, students must take PH H195A: Honors Thesis and in the spring, students must take PH H195B: Honors Thesis. While the instructor of record for PH H195A/PH H195B is a member of the Undergraduate Management Committee (UGMC) in the School of Public Health, the research mentor supports the student in writing their thesis and provides the final grade for the thesis (which is the student's PH H195A/PH H195B grade).

**Adequate progress and thesis signoff:** The [attached timeline](#), describing student and mentor responsibilities, is a guide to support students in completing the Honors Thesis in a timely fashion. The UGMC will check in with the research mentor via survey or email at 3 time-points during the academic year (late fall, early spring, and mid-spring) to ensure the student is making adequate progress. Students must submit a final *draft* of their thesis to the UGMC in the week before R&R week. The research mentor can contact the UGMC at any point if they have concerns about the student's progress.

**AS A RESEARCH MENTOR:**

- 1) I understand that the student will complete the Senior Seminar in Research Methods in the fall, and the Honors Thesis courses (PH H195A and PH H195B) in the fall and spring (for which I will provide a grade).
- 2) I will:
  - Provide access to a dataset, which will be complete early in the Fall semester
  - Meet with the student at least bi-monthly
  - Oversee the student in writing their thesis
  - Complete periodic check-ins initiated by the UMGC by email or survey, providing assurance as to the student's progress
  - Review, comment on, and sign off on student's thesis
  - Provide a grade to UGMC for the student's thesis work
- 3) I am willing to act as a mentor for (student name) because *[please let us know how you know this student and why you believe they will be successful in completing a thesis in a few sentences]*:

While I am the primary research mentor, I will delegate daily supervision of the student to (if applicable):

Name:

Title:

Email Address:

Research mentor name:

Date:

Department:

Email Address:

Signature of research mentor:

Questions about the Public Health Honors Thesis can be directed to the Undergraduate Program at [sphug@berkeley.edu](mailto:sphug@berkeley.edu).