

FOR FACULTY USE ONLY

Administration of the Project 2008-2009

St. Mary's Projects are housed in majors and in approved cross-disciplinary minors. Department chairs are responsible for the following:

- allocating the resources of faculty mentors to these projects;
- calculating the appropriate course-equivalent credit for each faculty mentor;
- tracking project evaluations;
- monitoring deadlines for the work;
- approving the budgets and the award of grants of support to these projects;
- coordinating and helping to publicize the schedule of presentations for the projects in the major or cross-disciplinary minor and;
- assessing whether departmental goals for SMPs are being met.

In the case of St. Mary's Projects in approved cross-disciplinary minors, coordinators will consult with department chairs about the above matters.

Guidelines: Each department or cross-disciplinary minor must develop specific guidelines for projects and a Catalog course description, with a code (e.g., ART, BIOL, HIST) reflecting the academic discipline in which the project is performed. This Catalog description must be consistent with the general guidelines for the project. As is conventional, all Catalog copy is reviewed and approved by the Curriculum Committee. (Cross-disciplinary minors may use their own code.)

Review of Action Plans for St. Mary's Projects: After a proposal has been approved by the faculty mentor and student, the department chair reviews the proposal. Each department is responsible for ensuring that students submit proposals for SMPs on appropriate departmental schedules. The student then submits a signed **Action Plan** to the Office of the Registrar for completion of course registration in the semester that the student begins work on their project. In every subsequent semester of enrollment in an SMP, the student must submit an action plan signed by the student and mentor.

Allocating Faculty Mentors: Department chairs are responsible for allocating SMPs to faculty mentors, taking into consideration student interests and faculty expertise and work load and the needs of the departmental curriculum. Service as mentor is generally considered to be the work of the full-time faculty.

Responsibilities of Faculty Mentors: A faculty member who serves as a mentor for a St. Mary's Project is expected to assist the student in the following ways:

- help the student define the project, develop a work plan, and prepare the proposal and action plan for registering the project; ensure Action Plan is submitted to Registrar;
- approve the project and its budget;
- meet regularly with the student;
- set guidelines for work in progress;
- read and comment on all work, providing timely feedback to aid student progress;
- assist in the planning of the public presentation; and
- evaluate interim work and the final product, including mid-term and end-of-semester written evaluations and provide a copy to the student.

Calculating Appropriate Course Equivalent Credit for Faculty Mentors: As a usual standard, the supervision of 1 student through the 8-credit St. Mary's Project will be awarded 1 teaching unit. Six teaching units will be the equivalent of a 4-credit course offering. Because projects may involve a variety of experiences and variable credit loads, the estimate of teaching units may not always conform to a given formula. Department chairs are responsible for evaluating the work of each mentor to award teaching credits and to provide for course equivalents, addressing the needs of the faculty member and the departmental curriculum. Department chairs will consult annually on these matters with the Provost. The following are posed as guidelines:

1. In some circumstances, the teaching unit may be divided into fractions (e.g., one-half unit will be awarded for partial or complete fulfillment of four credits of the project or for equal co-supervision of an 8-credit project).
2. If a student elects to do the project under the direction of an outside mentor (e.g., a professional at CBL, HSMC, etc.), the faculty mentor with continuing responsibility for project supervision and evaluation may be awarded 1 teaching unit.
3. In cases of group projects, the faculty member who completes all of the tasks of supervision and evaluation may be awarded 1 teaching unit for each student supervised.
4. In cases of a project across disciplines, as for a double major, it is preferable for one faculty member to be designated as mentor and awarded 1 teaching unit. Other faculty members interested in the project may participate freely but will have none of the duties of a mentor and will not accrue teaching credit.
5. It is recommended that the course equivalent be taken at the time of at least 4 concurrent or completed supervisions. In small departments with few seniors to supervise, the course equivalent may be concurrent with only 1 or 2 supervisions. Subsequent course equivalents will not be awarded until 6 additional teaching units have been contracted or earned.
6. Course equivalents and supervision should be concurrent. That is, as soon as possible after 6 teaching units have accrued, or are concurrent, the faculty member should take the course equivalent. Credits may not be saved or "banked" for the purpose of covering a semester's leave.
7. If a faculty member supervises a project during the summer term, he/she must be available to the student to fulfill all of the responsibilities of supervision and evaluation. There is no financial compensation for summer supervision; however, such work does count towards accrual of course equivalents.

Tracking Project Narrative Evaluations: Mentors are responsible for reporting mid-term and end-of-term evaluations for St. Mary's Projects to both the department chair and the students they supervise. Department chairs should ensure that students receive the mid- and end-of-term evaluations to aid student progress.

Policy on St. Mary's Projects for Transfer Students: For the 2008-2009 academic year, project requirements for transfer students will be determined by the department chair of their major.

Policy on St. Mary's Projects for Double Majors: Some students may wish to do their entire project within a single discipline, even if they are double majors. Both departments must approve this plan, and work closely with the student to ensure that they understand what they must do to fulfill the senior seminar or other senior experience in the second major.

Some students may wish to complete a St. Mary's Project that combines both majors. In these cases, students may divide the 8 semester-hours of their St. Mary's Project between the 2 disciplines. The St. Mary's Project proposal should indicate the semester-hour distribution. Double majors should work closely with departments to ensure that both departments are aware of the proposed distribution. Double majors may combine their disciplines to do their St. Mary's Project, but they may not do 2 St. Mary's Projects and get a total of 16 semester-hours. In other words, each student may get credit for only one 8-semester-hour St. Mary's Project.

Award of Grants to St. Mary's Projects: Each student should work with the mentor to develop a budget and fill out an **SMP budget projection form**. This form is signed by the student, mentor and department chair and is kept by the department chair to project costs for the coming year. Each student is expected to contribute \$200 of his or her own funds to support the 8-credit project. For further expenses, a grant is available with department approval.

Individual Student Grants

Students must apply for these grants. The usual procedure will be for students to incur expenses and present receipts for reimbursement by submitting an **SMP expenditure reimbursement form**, detailing their own \$200 contribution, to the **department chair**, after it has been approved by the mentor. Students will submit **one** expenditure form **with all receipts**, at the end of the project. Department chairs should forward each signed SMP expenditure form with receipts attached to the fiscal associate in their building at the end of the semester when the project is completed. If the student is unable to afford the initial expense, an advance grant can be arranged. In these instances, the faculty mentor should carefully review the student estimates of expenses to ensure that they are reasonable.

Examples of supportable student costs for projects include: travel to libraries, museums, and research centers; purchase or development of appropriate research tools, such as questionnaires; attendance at conferences relevant to the project; purchase of supplies and small items of equipment; and costs associated with the public presentation of the project. (Automobile expenses should be budgeted at the College rate of .585 per mile, and photocopying costs at .10 per page.) Books are ordinarily not supportable through grants, but they may be included in the budget as part of the student's \$200 contribution. It is a responsibility of the faculty mentor to certify that a particular expenditure is necessary for carrying out a project.

Departmental Grants

Each department is eligible for St. Mary's Project support for students doing a project within the department. Money is transferred to the department budget as a block grant to support general costs associated with projects (such as art supplies, videotapes, test tubes and other laboratory supplies, etc.) The remaining amount of the support money would then be available as direct grants to students for their reimbursable expenses. Department chairs will provide the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs with a list of students doing projects as well as ID number. An easy way to determine this number is to count the number of students enrolled in the 493 course in the fall. In the following semester, departments should report any additional first time students who register for 493 and report the number of students who have dropped their SMP.

Coordinating the Schedule of Presentations for the Projects

We will continue to use online forms for coordinating the schedule of presentations for the projects. The goal is to move the scheduled enrollment of SMP presentations up to March and we will coordinate a Department Chair training session to aid enrollment. Each **Action Plan** now asks students to decide at the beginning of the final semester of the project how they plan to present their work.

ENROLLMENT ISSUES

1. A consistent numbering system for all SMPs in all departments will be followed. The first four credits will be numbered XXXX 493, and the final four credits will be numbered XXXX 494. The Office of the Registrar will be charged with overseeing the consistency in numbering.
2. In order for a student to register for SMP at registration [November for spring semester, April for fall semester], he or she must know the number of credits.
3. All registrations prior to the final one will be for generic SMP (i.e., “XXXX 493 or 494: St. Mary’s Project”) and will be sectioned by faculty member. Only the final registration will show the title of the project (which will be taken from the last Action Plan), and this title will be entered on the student's transcript.
4. By the end of the drop-add period [the first two weeks of classes], the student must turn in an **Action Plan** for the **first** semester of registration for the SMP. All proposals for SMPs will be handled within the department or cross-disciplinary minor. The Action Plan form has been changed to incorporate features of the old proposal form. In all subsequent SMP registrations, an **Action Plan** must also be turned in. It is the mentor's responsibility to monitor that this step occurs. Students turn in their Action Plan to the Office of the Registrar. It is very important that students submit these documents in a timely fashion. We will not impose any fine for missing this deadline at this point, but hope to see strong voluntary compliance and mentor encouragement.

GRADING ISSUES

1. As in the past, no more than 8 hours of SMP will receive credit.
2. Grading by semester: For 2008-09, we will continue to allow different grades for each of the two (or more) semesters of SMP, assuming appropriate feedback is given to students at the required points [mid-term and end-of-semester], by the faculty mentor. At the end of 493 fill out the project narrative evaluation form and give a copy to the student when he/she returns for the next semester. Although different grades may be given, students will continue to receive an IP grade on the SMP until all eight credits are completed for most departments. The following departments have elected to submit final grades for the first four credits of the SMP (493) after these credits have been completed: MUSC, PHIL, RELG and TFMS. The remaining departments continue to submit an interim grade for the SMP after the four credits have been completed. If a student has a SMP 493 IP and would otherwise meet the requirements of the Dean’s list, the Registrar’s Office manually indicates on the student’s transcript that the student is on the Dean’s list. They wouldn’t receive a letter from the Provost’s

Office, but the Dean's list is noted on their transcript. This is only if the 493 is IP, not if there is an incomplete for the 494.

3. **Mid-term and end-of-semester evaluations** of SMPs are important, and should be completed by mentors for each student under their mentorship. The Registrar will distribute forms for these evaluations along with mid-term and final rosters. Mentors should ensure that each student receives a copy of their evaluations.
4. If a student abandons a SMP in one discipline in order to initiate one in another discipline, he or she may request a W for the first project. If the major does not require the SMP and the student abandons it in favor of another senior experience requirement, he or she may withdraw from the SMP. If the department no longer offers senior seminar, the department may specify an alternative that is an equivalent senior experience.
5. Students who complete one semester of SMP and then abandon it after the deadline for withdrawal from a course would ultimately receive an F (if they have not properly withdrawn from the course), but may petition the Academic Policy Committee for a late withdrawal. Decisions on whether to grant the late withdrawal are on a case-by-case basis, dependent upon the strength and persuasiveness of the student's petition.
6. Students may elect to repeat SMP for a better grade. They can repeat four credits [493 *or* 494] or 8 credits [493 *and* 494].

FINAL PROJECT ISSUES

The deadline for submitting the SMP to the **mentor** is **November 21 and April 13**, three weeks prior to the final archive deadline, to permit students to make corrections to the project following mentor feedback. Deadline for submitting the final written archive copy of SMP on CD-R or DVD-R and/or, if appropriate, an artifact (for example, an audio CD, film on videotape or DVD-R, or collection of images) to the **Office of the Registrar** is the **last day of classes**. The archive copy must include two files: a) an **abstract** of no more than 250 words and saved as a text or Microsoft Word file; and b) the written project itself, saved as a single comprehensive document in PDF format, or as a Microsoft Word file. Students may not retrieve their archive copy for further revisions after it has been turned in to the Office of the Registrar. No grade will be assigned until the archive copy is submitted. At the time of submission students will sign a release form. The current **Release Form** must be signed by the student and mentor. Please discuss issues of proper citations and/or permission for use of others' materials you may wish to include in your SMP.

SMP presentation days are officially **May 4 and 5**. In the final semester of the SMP, the student will indicate on the Action Plan what their planned form of presentation will be. Students may only present **one time** during SMP days. Public presentations will take place on both days. The SMP poster presentation period will be Tuesday, **May 5** from 9 AM to noon. Students will be assigned a 1 ½ hour slot when they are expected to be present at their poster. Posters will go up at 8:30 AM and stay up until 1 PM so that faculty members can review posters.

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