

BIOC 290 – Laboratory Project

Procedures for Biochemistry Students Only

BIOC 290 is intended to provide an opportunity for undergraduate students to receive academic credit for supervised ***laboratory research projects*** conducted under the direction of a Biochemistry or MCB faculty member. Biochemistry majors who wish to enroll for BIOC 290 credit with Biochemistry or MCB faculty must submit the BIOC 290 Learning Agreement form to Room 200 Burrill Hall. BIOC 290 is used as a precursor for BIOC 492 (senior thesis research & thesis). The student will usually stay in the same lab for both 290 and 492. Publishing a paper is not required.

Biochemistry students desiring to enroll in BIOC 290 must first identify a Biochemistry or MCB faculty supervisor. For information on faculty research interests, students should refer to the Biochemistry website (<https://mcb.illinois.edu/departments/biochemistry/directory/faculty>). **NOTE:** if you choose a non-MCB faculty lab 290 projects must be biochemical in nature. The faculty member and student must then prepare and sign a detailed written BIOC 290 Learning Agreement form in which the learning outcomes, specific activities, and expectations of the student are delineated and the means of evaluation and credit to be awarded (1-5 hours per semester) are specified. Biochemistry major students cannot enroll in BIOC 290 without first presenting a completed and signed 290 Learning Agreement form to a School of MCB Advisor in Room 200 Burrill Hall. Students who have received departmental enrollment approval will be given the instructor's CRN in order to officially register for the course. Registration is expected by the 10th day of classes but may be allowed up until the 8th week of classes, depending on the circumstance. If you plan to do research over the summer, there is one more incentive to find a research lab. There are several Summer Fellowships available (\$3000+ each). You will need to apply for these fellowships and have a letter of support from your research advisor. See Alison Neff, Undergraduate Program Coordinator for details. *NOTE: A student is not allowed to volunteer in a lab. You must get paid or receive research credit.*

Steps to follow:

- 1) Use the biochemistry website (<https://mcb.illinois.edu/departments/biochemistry/directory/faculty>) and other SMCB websites to identify an undergraduate research supervisor and laboratory project.

Select 3 or 4 potential laboratories after reading the information describing research projects. Do not send a blanket email to all biochemistry department faculty, you should tailor each email to individual faculty based on their research and your interest. ***See sample email below.*** Please let faculty to whom you have sent messages know if you decide that you no longer wish to meet with them.

- 2) Complete, with the help of your research supervisor, a detailed BIOC 290 Learning Agreement form. Forms submitted with incomplete information will be returned.
- 3) Submit your signed Learning Agreement form to room 200 Burrill Hall or email hantak@illinois.edu. You need only one form for all semesters doing research unless you change labs.
- 4) The Department will then authorize the student to add BIOC 290 (via CRN) to their schedule in UI Integrate Self-Service Registration. *Credit hours will default to 1. You will need to change the variable credit hours to what you have been approved for, manually via the "Schedule and Options" tab in Enhanced Registration.*

Sample solicitation email to faculty

(attach your resume or the link provided from your SMCB on-line student profile, <https://go.mcb.illinois.edu/UGRprofile>):

Dear Professor Smith,

My name is Jan Jones and I am a sophomore in Biochemistry. I am looking for a lab and your research in "SSNMR" really interests me. My interests lie in gene expression and purification of proteins and feel I would match up well in your lab. Do you have room for an undergraduate in your lab this fall? I'd like to arrange a meeting, at your earliest convenience, with you or one of your grad students, if that works better for you, about joining your lab. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, Jan Jones

Other tips: If you are available for parts of breaks or summer, say so in the email. Faculty appreciate it when students are available when there is minimal class intrusion. Also, contact potential professor (or Grad Student) 2 – 3 times. If still no response, move on to another set of professors.

Finally, once a student joins a lab they should go through "Laboratory Safety" training at <https://www.drs.illinois.edu/#>. Keep in mind you can count up to 7 hours of BIOC 492 for advanced technical electives in the major.

LEARNING AGREEMENT -- BIOC 290 – Laboratory Project

Biochemistry Students Only

Only 1 form is necessary to cover all semesters in a lab unless you switch labs.

[please print]

Student Name: _____ UIN: _____

E-mail address: _____ Phone #: _____

Expected graduation: _____ GPA: _____

Are you considering senior thesis (BIOC 492) as part of your research experience?

Circle one: Y N Don't Know

Faculty name (first and last): _____

Faculty department: _____ Faculty email: _____

CRN: (from BIOC department) _____

Fill out this section only if in a **lab outside the School of MCB**

Lab Project/Activities (*to be completed by both faculty lab supervisor & student*): _____

Fill out this section only if in a **lab outside the School of MCB**

Means of Evaluation (*to be completed by faculty lab supervisor; be specific*): _____

Credit Awarded: _____ (1-5 credit hrs) Semester: _____
(# of Credit Hours requested) (Fall, Spring, or Summer + YEAR)

Typically, faculty expect 5 hours of work in lab per week for each credit hour for which you register.

NOTE: use "Schedule & Options" tab to manually change credit hours

Approved: _____
(Student Signature) (Date)

(Faculty Lab Signature) (Date)

(Dept. Signature) (Date)

Return completed form to room 200 Burrill Hall (enter through room 101 Burrill Hall)

or email to Alison Neff at hantak@illinois.edu.