

College of Natural and Social Sciences

Supervisory Course Policy

DEADLINES: Faculty expecting to teach s-factor courses in an upcoming semester shall inform their department chair before the end of the preceding semester. Signed s-factor approval forms must be received by the Dean's Office at least four (4) weeks prior to the start of the semester.

Prior to faculty asking any student to enroll in supervisory courses, faculty will consult with the Department Chair, who must ensure that faculty requests are within available resources. For those supervisory courses that the Chair determines fall within available resources, the Chair must secure prior approval from the Dean before a student can enroll in any supervisory courses (e.g., independent study, directed study, thesis courses, etc.). Approval to enroll in these courses is not automatic.

To obtain approval, the following conditions, subject to budgetary constraints, shall apply:

1. The maximum number of semesters that a faculty member can claim S-factor for working with a specific undergraduate student will be 2 semesters. The maximum number of semesters that a faculty member can claim S-factor for working with a specific graduate student will be 4 semesters.
2. The units claimed by each faculty member for workload credit each semester will be based on non-redundant student headcounts, and not the number of units or number of different s-factor courses in which a student enrolls with that faculty member as the faculty of record in a given term. In AY 25-26, exceptions for student engagement in highly distinct activities will not be made.
3. Faculty workload credit for s-factor courses will be calculated at 0.5 WTUs for each graduate student per semester, and 0.33 (1/3) WTUs for each undergraduate student per semester (unless otherwise indicated on the approved course proposal).
4. The maximum number of s-factor WTUs/academic year that any faculty member can claim as part of their workload is six.
5. Students must have successfully completed preparatory courses (e.g., introductory content courses in the major; statistics/analyses courses; methodology courses; technical writing; laboratory courses).
6. Undergraduate students must have completed at least 75 units.
7. The student must be provided the course syllabus and have a clear understanding of expectations and deliverables for success. A copy of the syllabus, as with all courses, must be on file in the Department Office.

Types of S-Factor Courses Generally Approved by the Dean

1. ***Thesis/Project Supervision*** – S-factor units for thesis/project supervision shall be given to the faculty instructor of record for the student enrolled in the s factor course. Graduate Research (5970) and Thesis (5990) courses may be approved.

2. ***Directed Study*** – Requests for faculty to receive workload credit for supervision of students signed up for Directed Study courses (4990 and 5980) may only be approved for students who are doing research, or faculty supervised field experience, or graduate-level directed readings for which a course equivalent is not available. This mechanism is not intended as an alternative to an otherwise low-enrolled regular course offering.
3. ***Field Experience/Community Service*** – Requests for faculty to receive workload credit for the supervision of students signed up for Field Experience or Community Service work may be approved according to college procedures and program requirements.
4. ***Undergraduate Honor's Thesis*** - Requests for faculty thesis chairs to receive workload credit for supervising students signed up for undergraduate honor's thesis courses may be approved.

Operational Details

1. All approved s-factor courses must be assigned to the faculty member doing the work.
2. Students may only enroll in s-factor courses for the purpose that was requested by the Chair and approved by the Dean.
3. Faculty may not agree to supervise a student and then request s-factor units retroactively; all supervision courses must be approved by the Dean prior to both the faculty member and student performing the work.
4. The requesting faculty must complete the appropriate s-factor paperwork available from their department and submit it to their Department Chair by the corresponding deadlines for their review and forwarding to the Dean's office.
5. To support interdisciplinary directed study/s-factor courses that involve students from degree programs outside of NSS and faculty within NSS or vice versa, until an MOU has been negotiated with each College, NSS will pay for S-factor for NSS faculty as instructors of NSS Department prefix S-factor courses.
6. Given resource constraints, NSS will prioritize s-factors for students enrolled in NSS degree programs first and in the following order: graduate students, then undergraduates completing honors, then undergraduate seniors, and then juniors.

FERP Appointments

1. The number of s-factor units/academic year that can be claimed as part of a FERP workload will be determined by multiplying the proportion of a full workload that they are working by 6 semester units. For example, a FERP faculty member who is working the maximum of 50% of a full-time load can claim up to 3 semester units ($50\% \times 6 = 3$) of supervisory workload.
2. Faculty with FERP appointments may use up previously banked s-factor credits, but may not accrue (i.e., bank) s-factor credits. Any new s-factor courses should be part of their term workload.