PROV-015

Criteria for Establishing Research-Only Courses

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Status Final

Last Revised Tuesday, July 28, 2026

Policy Type Executive Vice President & Provost

Contact Office Executive Vice President and Provost (Office of the)

Oversight Executive
Executive Vice President and Provost

Applies To Academic Division and the College at Wise.

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Reason for Policy

Research-only courses provide a framework for ongoing graduate-level research throughout the course of a graduate student's career. Criteria have been established to define research-only courses offered at the University.

Definition of Terms

Terms

Description There are no terms that require definition.

Policy Statement

Research-only courses, offered at both the master's and doctoral level, are intended to provide a framework for ongoing graduate-level research throughout the course of a graduate student's career in creating knowledge. To be classified as research-only, the course must meet all of the following criteria:

1. Must be graduate level and enrollment must be limited to graduate students.
2. Must be taken on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis (may not be taken for a grade).
3. Requires supervised research under the guidance of a faculty supervisor.
4. Does not require formal classroom instruction (although some students, particularly those working on research in the sciences, may be required to participate in regular meetings related to their research project,

such as regular lab meetings, while they are enrolled in research-only courses).

5. Does not require student to complete faculty-defined course assignments during the course of the semester (although faculty members supervising research courses may ask students to read particular publications related to the students' research activities or impose explicit timelines or requirements during the course of a semester, particularly when a student has not demonstrated evidence of adequate progress in their ongoing research).

Research-only credit hours qualify for a reduced tuition rate.

1. **Independent Study Courses:**
   Courses which require formal classroom instruction (including intermittent meetings throughout the semester) or which require students to complete faculty-specified readings or assignments during the course of the semester may not be classified as research-only courses. Such courses may be classified as independent study and do not qualify for a reduced tuition rate.

2. **Offering a New Course or Reclassifying an Existing Course as Research-Only:**
   Schools wishing to reclassify existing classes or offer new courses as research-only must submit a request to the University Registrar, certifying that the course meets all the criteria outlined in this policy. Schools may determine that courses meeting the criteria of this policy should not be designated as research-only courses.

Procedures

To reclassify an existing course or to offer a new course as research-only, the Dean's Office submits a written request to the University Registrar. The written request must certify that the course meets all the criteria as specified in this policy.

Major Category Executive Vice President & Provost Policies

Next Scheduled Review Saturday, July 28, 2029

Revision History
Confirmed 7/28/26.

Approved By Executive Vice President and Provost

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