

# Initiative 1: Research Framework

## *DRAFT*

**Goal:** Develop and implement an equitable framework for research policy, practice, shared governance, and evaluation

**Overview:** The campus will create and implement campus wide policies, practices, and evaluation metrics to clearly define, reward, and incentivize research and creative activity. We will align research-active faculty workload, appointments, promotion reviews, and reporting structures in a manner that increases the percent effort allocated for research activity that honors disciplinary variation. We will engage in regular policy and practice review to ensure accountability and bias-free implementation. We will use shared governance to advance and define the research agenda.

### **Key Measure of Success**

- Continuation of the UCCS “High Research Activity” R2 designation.
- Established system of shared governance with all units connected: Department - College - Committee on Research - Faculty Assembly – Research Faculty Advisory Board – AVC-R -Provost - Chancellor’s Cabinet
- Increase in numbers of new graduate programs considered
- Improved graduate student experiences working with their faculty mentors
- Increase in research active faculty
- Research active faculty have more time for research
- Wider variety of research activity valued and rewarded at UCCS.
- A culture of trust, respect, inclusion and belonging within research and creative spaces.

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*Objective 1.1: Use shared governance to define, advance, and implement the research framework by creating a transparent, responsive, input process that informs all decision making.*

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**Completed Deliverables:**

- a. Created new Faculty Assembly standing “Committee on Research”.
- b. Created an organizational chart that outlines the leadership and key stakeholder structures for accountability and implementation.
- c. Ongoing: College Research Councils are charged with mission to oversee and create college level research policy, processes, and incentive programs. One member from each of these Councils serves on the campus Research-Faculty Advisory Board (R-FAB) that reports to the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research.

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*Objective 1.2: The campus will create and implement campus wide policies, practices, and evaluation metrics to clearly define, reward, and incentivize research and creative activity.*

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**Completed Deliverables:**

- a. Aligned annual review documents with relevant Regent Law updates
- b. Each department has stand-alone annual review criteria
- c. Expanded the role of the current Committee on Research to include an explicit mission to:
  - i. Oversee and advise on campus level research policy, process, and incentive programs.
  - ii. Create a process to solicit and evaluate ideas for new centers that ideally involve cross-collaborations across colleges, schools and programs and demonstrate compelling new, innovative directions and external funding possibilities
- d. Created a new “undergraduate research” course number (9499) for each department with individual faculty sections and variable credit (0-3 hours). All units now have this new course number except for College of Education.
- e. Updated and publicized the process for colleges and campuses to propose new graduate programs <https://uccs.edu/provost/policies>
- f. Now on-going: The Graduate School conducts a biannual survey on graduate student needs, mentoring, and experiences to inform student and faculty-advisor development.

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*Objective 1.3: Faculty will have more time in their workload for research*

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**In-Progress Deliverables:**

- a. By 2030 the campus will have moved to a 2-2 load per academic year for all research active Tenure-Track Faculty.
- b. By 2023 all new tenure and tenure track hires will have at most a 4-course teaching load per academic year prior to comprehensive review.
  - iii. Colleges will continue to develop the role of Instructor positions as top-notch teaching talent including the creation of an additional level of promotion and increase in base salary.
  - iv. Colleges, where necessary, will reduce the number of lecture positions teaching core areas of a major curriculum.
  - v. In the absence of a College or Campus policy, Departments will create a unit level “workload” policy that defines post-tenure research active faculty with appropriate differentiated workload.
  - vi. Trackable metrics for research active faculty
- c. A new FRS annual process will be created or integrated into Watermark that includes attention to aligning faculty member’s workload with policy, definitions, and expectations.
- d. Trackable increase in undergraduate student research activity with faculty

**Action Steps**

1. Completed: Research Workload Task Force, reporting to the Provost, submitted recommendations for consideration in May 2022.
2. In Progress: Supporting the development Differentiated Workload Policy
3. Not yet started: Deans will include research impacts in any requests for new lines. The VCAF will consider research impacts when allocating new lines. Provost and VCAF will create process to approve hiring faculty in the RTF that includes research mission alignment.

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*Objective 1.4: Ensure accountability and bias-free implementation of research related policies, incentives, and programs.*

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**Completed and On-Going Deliverables:**

- a. Led by Project CREST, annual review documents were created in all colleges. They are posted on the Provost website.
- b. Led by Project CREST, research related awards underwent review for improvement to ensure intersectional equity across all fields recognizing the wide variety of research approaches, activities, and funding level realities. Recommendations reviewed by the Committee on Research and shared with campus leadership.

- c. On-Going: Led by Project CREST, UCCS is adapting evidence-based “RPT Bias Literacy” training for DCRC and VC review committee and PUECs. Sustainability planning under way.
- d. On-Going: Created and updates a new reference guide that compiles and shares information on bias and equity issues within research See website

# Initiative 2: Infrastructure Improvement

## *DRAFT*

**Goal:** Increase university investment in research faculty, research, and sponsored program support significantly above growth and inflation margins

**Overview:** Every faculty member will have access to trained dedicated pre-award specialists and post-award specialists and support from OSP and the Controller's Office. Pre- and post-award research administrative staff will provide personalized grant writing support and project management support to faculty, students, and staff engaging in sponsored program activity. The Controller's Office and OSP will grow proportionally with sponsored program award rates.

### Key Measure of Success

- Significant increase in research and creative outputs, funding, productivity, and impact
- Significant increase in research administration staff

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*Objective 2.1: Researchers will receive better and more pre-award support*

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### Deliverables:

- a. Complete: Campus will support the hire of a new Contract Specialist to assist in writing and reviewing contracts, NDAs, subcontracts, etc.
- b. In-Progress: Campus will support a second pre-award specialist to assist researchers with sponsored program submissions.
- c. In Progress: Campus will sustain the currently soft-funded Research Development Coordinator position to assist faculty with pre-award professional development.
- d. Complete: Campus will support the hire of a new Institutional Grant Writer who can take the lead to coordinate, draft, and prepare large grants especially those that support students and infrastructure growth.
- e. Not yet started: Campus will increase pre-award support within academic units.

### Action Steps

1. The AVC-R and team secured temporary funding via the CU System Foundation to support the new and sustained hires and new software through FY 26.
  - a. Complete
2. AVC-R will lead procurement team for request for purchase for software vendors
  - a. Compete: Call for proposals posted, team reviewed submissions, and vendor selected (Cayuse).
  - b. Complete: Start-up funding identified and confirmed supported by VCAF

- c. In-progress: Configuring the software to replace the initiation, routing, document storage, and reporting functions. Beta testing initiated in Spring 2024.
3. AVC-R and team will draft job descriptions for the positions, form search committees, and select final candidates.
  - a. In-progress: Train, support and retain pre-award staff
  - b. Forthcoming: Research Development Coordinator position and all other new soft funded hires ends FY 26, will seek sustained funding at that time and AVC-R is saving reserves.
4. AVC-R and COR will collect data on impact and outcomes and then make request through budget governance structures to sustain funding in FY 26

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*Objective 2.2: Researchers will receive better and more post-award support*

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**Completed and On-Going Deliverables:**

- a. Not yet started: Campus will support a new staff position in the sponsored project accounting controller's office.
- b. Not yet started: Campus will support a new Quality Assurance Research Compliance Specialist within OSPRI to proactively improve and support the quality of the IRB review process, including PI document retention, reviewer consistency, and compliance with federal regulations.
- c. Not yet started: Campus will sustain the soft-funded (part time) staff for Research Security Compliance within ORI who provides direct services to principal investigators and project teams with all aspects of information systems and/or network operations including setup, accreditation documentation, continuous monitoring, enhanced security safeguarding, instructional training, disaster recovery, cyber incident investigation/reporting and disposition of materials/data at the completion of a project.
- d. Not yet started: Campus will support a new OIT Security Assessment position to support assessments, certifications, and other equipment and system set-up for PIs with federally required clauses to support their cybersecurity research, research with HIPPA or FERPA regulations, export controls, etc.
- e. In-progress: The Office of Research and Graduate School will partner to grow the responsible conduct of research program. First RCR mini-conference in August 2023 was a success.
- f. In-progress: The campus will seek software solutions or technology tools to better assist faculty in managing their sponsored research and associated finances.

**Action Steps**

1. The program director of sponsored project accounting will put forward a “wish list” and proposal to seek funding from campus budget governance groups to fund a new position and lead the search process
  - a. Not yet started

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*Objective 2.3: Researchers will receive better and more non-funded research support*

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**In-Progress Deliverables:**

- a. Campus will provide robust statistical support to our faculty.
- b. Campus will sustain the Research Development Coordinator past FY 26 as this position provides wrap-around research and creative work support for all research activities, not just sponsored program activities. <https://research.uccs.edu/research-development-coordinator>
- c. Campus will sustain the Heller Resident Scholar Program

**Action Steps**

1. The AVC-R will submit a CU President Infnitive proposal to fund statistical core on campus.
  - a. Complete: Funding proposal submitted but not approved.
  - b. Complete: AVC-R will reach out to CU Anschutz to explore relationship with their biostats center.
  - c. Complete: Funding will be on a direct-case basis, with support from the Dean of Beth-El Johnson and with temporary funding from Office of Research
  - d. In-Progress: AVC-R will track use and cost of the direct-support
  - e. Complete: AVC-R will work with stats experts on campus to pilot test a resource page and start an advisory committee.
  - f. Complete: Office of Research and Committee on Research will create a website and publicize the new pilot program
  - g. Not yet started: apply for IUSE NSF funding for statistical hub
  - h. Not yet started: partner with KFL on a data center
2. AVC-R will collect data on impact and outcomes of the Research Development Coordinator and report to COR and then make request through budget governance structures to sustain funding in FY 26.
  - a. In-Progress: Tracking underway
3. The AVC-R will temporarily fund the Heller program for three years and partner with them to fundraise for permanent funding.
  - a. Complete: Director of Heller will draft an MOU

- b. Complete: AVC-R will dedicate reserve budget
- c. Not yet started: evaluation of impact



# Initiative 3: Research Culture Improvement

## *DRAFT*

**Goal:** Foster a diverse research culture and strengthen the recruitment and retention infrastructure

**Overview:** To recruit and retain faculty we will match our aspirational peers in amount of start-up packages, salary, office space, lab space and equipment, and administrative staff support. We will inventory campus research space usage and revise space policy to prioritize and be responsive to short- and long-term research space needs. We will fund and implement a faculty research mentoring program. We will hire additional media writers and fund dissemination of research achievements in national media outlets. We will nominate faculty and students for research awards and highlight successful research active alum in local and national media.

### Key Measure of Success

- Increased national reputation for research and creative works
- Significant increase in research and creative outputs, funding, productivity, and impact
- More interdisciplinary research and centers on campus
- Retention of research active faculty
- Increase in the proportion of marginalized and minoritized faculty and staff on campus

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*Objective 3.1 We will create new lines and hire additional Tenure Track faculty who add depth and diversity to campus research strengths.*

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### Deliverables:

- a. Not possible yet: Campus will start a new Office of Faculty Affairs that will work closely with the VC for DEI Office. This was not funded.
- b. Not possible yet: Campus will develop a cluster hire program.
- c. Not possible yet: Campus will develop a partner hire program.
- d. In-progress: Campus will sustain the Rising Star Program. Funding from the Provost Office to support 10 more awardees.
- e. In progress: Campus will report metrics of success for the Rising Star Program.
- f. AVC-R, Provost, and Institutional research will track and report retention of research active faculty
- g. In-progress: The campus will grow the SPAN (sponsored program administrator network) staff mentoring and support group with additional learning circles and professional development opportunities.

## Action Steps

1. The Provost will submit a CU President proposal to try again to fund faculty affairs
  - a. Not yet started: Funding proposal developed
  - b. Complete: Hire new faculty records staff to support workflow in Provost Office
  - c. Not yet started: hire a faculty fellow and/or enhance the position of the VCRC chair to include faculty success advising and project management directly related to research
2. Campus will select an HLC Quality Initiative for major improvement of the campus in 2025 that connects with research
  - a. Not yet started: COR should meet with Susan Taylor, David Moon and David Weiss who are leading this effort to discuss ideas and options
3. COR and VC for DEI and Provost will petition budget governance structures to maintain the funding for the Rising Star Award (which runs out of funding in 2024)  
<https://research.uccs.edu/rising-star-diversity-grant>
  - a. Not yet started: COR will review and vote on a draft proposal
  - b. Not yet started: COR will present proposal to UBAC or other governance groups

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*Objective 3.2: Nurture the talents of staff and faculty members by providing relevant information and advice through proactive mentoring, networking, and coaching (see also policy 200-017).*

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## Deliverables:

- a. Not yet started: Campus will support “Entering Mentoring” or similar workshops to train faculty and staff on how to be effective mentors.  
<https://cimerproject.org/facilitating-entering-mentoring/>
- b. Complete: Campus will continue funding the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD) <https://diversity.uccs.edu/facultydiversity>.
- c. In-Progress: Campus will develop department chair training.
- d. In-Progress: Campus will sustain the Minimizing Bias in the RPT Process workshops
- e. In-Progress: Campus will support on-going research administration staff mentoring

## Action Steps

1. The COR will submit a proposal to the Provost for new and continued funds to meet faculty and chairs mentoring needs
  - a. Hire a faculty fellow to lead mentoring for faculty/chairs and RPT trainings
  - b. Track use of NCFDD and impact by academic unit
  - c. Track use and impact of RPT workshops (currently evaluated via Project CREST)
  - d. Based on usage, the Provost will write a request to continue to support the NCFDD (in collaboration with FAWC and FEIC and the Graduate School)

2. Sponsored Programs Accounting will partner with OSPRI and others on campus to enhance training for departmental administrators who manage post-award.
  - a. In progress: Enhance website with mentoring and training
  - b. In progress: Start a new “professional development award” for SPAN to support their travel to NCURA
  - c. Not yet started: Offer bimonthly NCURA watch and discussion lunch/learn sessions
  - d. Not yet started: COR to work with Controller to write proposal to increase funding for NCURA memberships/travel to support professional development of research admin staff
  - e. In-progress: Offer templates during on-boarding of new staff who deal with post-award
  - f. Not yet started: Informational session with chairs and deans so they understand the role of SPAN versus SPA.

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*Objective 3.3: Grow the local, national, and international reputation of research and scholarship at UCCS.*

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**Deliverables:**

- a. Create a database to connect research and creative work modeled after the CU Denver Colorado PROFILES <https://profiles.ucdenver.edu/Home/default.aspx> .
- b. Campus will continue to invest and grow the social media presence of research and creative work via various mediums, including the Associated Press videos, YouTube, webinar series, podcasts.
- c. Campus will include research-writing as part of the job description for a staff member in the UCCS marketing and communication team
- d. Deans will dedicate budget to fund open access fees for publications

**Action Steps**

1. In-progress: COR will partner with marketing and communication and the faculty records coordinator to create an action plan for collecting faculty’s expertise in one searchable format.
  - a. Marketing and communication sent over survey with possible action plan
  - b. Input forthcoming by COR and RFAB
2. AVC for Marketing and Communication will work with CU partners to secure Associated Press Access
  - a. Proposal submitted and approved – no status update.
  - b. Proactively find research stories to feature
3. COR will make official recommendation to Deans to support open-science fees.
  - a. Complete: AVC-R will partner with KFL to create process to vet open-access requests
  - b. Complete: AVC-R will pilot test open access process in FY 22  
<https://research.uccs.edu/open-access>

- c. In progress: AVC-R will track use
- d. Not yet started: COR will submit recommendation to faculty assembly for endorsement and sustainability of funding model based on usage reports
- e. Not yet started: COR will work with FA leadership to implement recommendations if approved

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*Objective 3.4. Create intentional schedules that allow for uninterrupted time for faculty and staff to work on research and creative tasks.*

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**Deliverables:**

- a. Institutionalize ‘meeting free Monday mornings’ and ‘project time Friday afternoons’ (as much as possible depending on teaching schedules) to promote time for research and unscripted collaborations.

**Action Steps**

1. Complete: Academic Affairs supported a pilot test in summer 2022, supported by the Chancellor
2. Not yet started: COR will make official recommendation to faculty assembly to consider this proposal for the Cabinet to make permanent
  - a. Draft proposal
  - b. Present to FA for endorsement

# Initiative 4: Student Research

## *DRAFT*

**Goal:** Significantly expand support and research opportunities for undergraduate and graduate student research especially among marginalized, minoritized, and first-generation students.

**Overview:** We will increase resources to support a full time Graduate School Dean who has the base budget to support and grow graduate student enrollment, graduate student tuition waivers, and graduate student stipends. We will increase faculty-student collaborative projects, significantly increase the funding for the Undergraduate Research Academy, and ensure students are supported in meeting their research and work goals.

### **Key Measure of Success**

- Significant increase in the real value of funding and resources for undergraduate and graduate student researchers
- Greater student research engagement, which is a high impact practice
- Trackable increase in undergraduate student research activity working with faculty
- Improved graduate student experiences working with their faculty mentors
- Increased recognition for mentoring student researchers
- A culture of trust, respect, inclusion and belonging within research and creative spaces.
- Trackable metrics for tuition waivers and graduate student research

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*Objective 4.1: Campus will improve funding and resource support for graduate students*

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### **Deliverables:**

- a. Complete: Campus will fund a full time Dean of the Graduate School
- b. In-Progress: Campus will significantly increase funding for graduate student tuition and stipends
- c. The CU System will expand who qualifies for in-state tuition
- d. The Graduate School will collect data biannually to inform resource support needs of graduate students.
- e. Creation of a new Graduate Research Academy

### **Action Steps**

1. Complete: official recommendation for a full time Graduate Dean to faculty assembly leadership approved and position hired to start in Spring 2024
2. Complete: Academic Affairs will submit proposal for CU President initiative to increase graduate student tuition/salary support
  - a. Complete: Proposal submitted and approved for \$1Million.
  - b. Complete: Grad school distributed funds to campus units.
- g. Now on-going: The Graduate School conducts a biannual survey on graduate student needs, mentoring, and experiences to inform student and faculty-advisor development.
3. In progress: Dean of the Graduate school will explore options to expand in-state tuition, and make a proposal to the CU System.
4. In progress: Dean of the Graduate school will explore incorporating benefits into research assistant contracts.
5. In progress: Dean of the Graduate school will explore options to include benefit on sponsored programs that include graduate students.
6. Complete: The CSR Director and Graduate School Dean will partner to design and implement a Graduate Research Academy and a Graduate Aspirational Peer Mentoring Network
7. Implementation: Tracking metrics for Humanities RA Program

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*Objective 4.1: Enhance Direct Financial and Mentoring Support to undergraduate student research assistants, especially those from marginalized or minoritized communities.*

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**Deliverables:**

- a. In-progress: Increase the number of first year students exposed to student research
- b. In-progress: Increase in the number of undergraduate research academy stipends overall
- c. In-progress: Improve the proportion of minority and first-generation students in the URA
- d. Complete: Implement a new Humanities RA Program
- e. In-progress: Increase the number of students enrolled in 9499 “undergraduate student research and creative works”
- f. Not yet started: Fund more students to travel to research conferences
- g. In-progress: Establish a new aspirational peer mentor program for research assistants

**Action Steps:**

1. Complete: Develop and offer new GPS course that introduces students to the ideas of research, research integrity, creative works, and the benefits of research

- literacy, design a mini-project, (including shadowing URA students or others doing research).
- a. Students enrolled in Fall 2022 and in Fall 2023 GPS class taught by CSR Director
  2. In-Progress: Currently have stable funding for ~15 students @ \$3,500. Increase to 20 by partnering with Colleges and Cybersecurity Program to subsume their student-research funding programs under the URA umbrella.
  3. Complete: Write proposal to increase the funds to \$5000 per student 15X additional \$1500 = \$22,500. Proposal submitted but not funded.
  4. Complete: Write proposal for gift funding to support 5 additional URA students who will be first gen, or from marginalized or minoritized backgrounds. Funding approved for \$25,000 in one time funds for 2022.
  5. In-Progress: Stand up a new program to support training of undergraduate students in the humanities in partnership with Kraemer Family Library.  
<https://studentresearch.uccs.edu/humanities-research-assistant-training-program>
    - a. Advertise the program
    - b. Work with humanities department chairs to encourage participation
  6. Not yet started: COR will explore with financial aid and registrar office how to create a lottery to support up to 10 students per semester who will be randomly drawn from students enrolled in any 9499 Undergraduate Research course and their tuition will be covered for 3 credit hours
  7. In progress: The Center for Student Research Director will work with advising and student success to advertise 9499. In Spring 2023 76 students were enrolled.
  8. Not yet started: The COR will work with the College of Education to explore possibility of offering 9499 (they are only college without it).
  9. Not yet started: Increase the number of Undergraduate Travel Awards to \$1500 for students to travel to conferences or attend professional development activities
  10. Complete: Set up a new Graduate Student Peer Mentor Program through the Center for Student Research which includes funds to support a graduate student to serve as an aspirational role model for undergraduate students involved in research experience. <https://studentresearch.uccs.edu/graduate-peer-mentors>
    - a. Continue to advertise the program
    - b. Ensure students are valued for their mentoring role

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*Objective 4.2: Improve the Center for Student Research infrastructure*

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**Deliverables:**

- a. Not yet started: Triple the Director allocated time (currently \$6000 at .10FTE)
- b. Not yet started: Create a new Assistant Director of the Center for Student Research: A faculty fellow or research faculty fellow who will develop content, lead initiatives, and help track and evaluate impact.
- c. Not yet started: Improved undergraduate student readiness for graduate school.

- d. Complete: Improve Graduate Student support for writing and finding funding with new professional development webinars and in-person writing retreats

**Action Items:**

1. Not yet started: Start a new Summer Research Opportunity Program that will fund a faculty fellow to help students develop applications for SROPs around the US as well as Fund student travel to tour the SROP site
2. Not yet started: Write a proposal to fund Graduate School Visitation Travel for helping students pay for the travel and boarding cost to visit potential graduate schools if not covered by the host school

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*Objective 4.2: Create a culture whereby undergraduate and graduate student research mentoring is highly valued in faculty evaluation structures*

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**Deliverables:**

- a. Compete: Student research mentoring is explicitly recognized in most unit's annual review criteria
- b. Not yet started: Student research mentoring will be explicitly recognized in RPT criteria
- c. In-Progress: Campus will write workload policy that allows faculty to bank student-credit hours for 9499 or thesis/dissertation credits that will be used for course-buy outs.

**Action Items:**

1. Complete: Project CREST will assist department chairs with creation of annual review criteria that clearly values student research mentoring.
2. Not yet started: Project CREST in partnership with the new RPT FA subcommittee (yet to be formed) will offer template language to value student research mentoring, especially students from marginalized or minoritized backgrounds, within RPT criteria.
3. Complete: The AVC-R will advocate that campus policy on RPT include mention of valuing research mentoring and include DEI activities as appropriate materials to include in the dossier
4. In-progress: Differentiated workload policy team is aware of the desire to include banking 9499 and thesis/dissertation credits for uncompensated mentoring