

## Recruiting students, Rewarding Faculty: Increased Research Participation at Smith

This proposal argues for the need to ensure that every Smith student will undertake a significant piece of original intellectual work prior to graduation. We use the most catholic definition of "original work" possible – from a conventional honors thesis to a performance, installation, or website. What is important is that every student be encouraged to identify and act upon an intellectual passion under the guidance of a faculty member.

If that conception is agreed upon, however, it will place significant additional demands on an already overstretched faculty. IN effect, the current system does little to encourage or reward faculty for the intensive demands involved in supervising students doing original out-of-classroom work. While many argue that the freeing of faculty time for such undertaking was the impetus behind the move to a 2-2 course load, such a load does not realistically reflect the commitment of faculty time (at least for Div 3).

We propose that a system be put ion place that would allow faculty directing original work to bank credit for such activity. Like Green Stamps, faculty that had directed some number of students (a number to be agreed upon) would then be allowed to cash in those credits for a course release (and/or some other tangible acknowledgement of the effort and time involved). We argue that such acknowledgement will likely motivate additional faculty to sponsor independent research projects, but still allows those faculty unwilling or unable to direct such work to opt out without penalty. In the absence of this or some other way of rewarding faculty involvement in sponsoring student original work we risk creating an unfunded mandate for an already overstretched faculty.

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