

Undergraduate Independent Research Courses  
in the Computer Science and Engineering Department  
CSCE 291/491 (and guidelines for CSCE 485)

*Procedures for CPSC, CECN, and COMP Degrees*

Undergraduate independent research CSCE 291 and 491 course designations are used for students pursuing a research project with a professor that exceeds the offerings of listed courses. This includes, but is not limited to, research projects under the Engineering Honors Program. The number of CSCE 291/491 courses that can be used on a CSCE-department degree plan normally is limited to one (3 credit hours) but two may be allowed if the student is in the honors program, completes the Undergraduate Research Scholars program (with thesis), and meets prerequisite/accreditation/degree requirements. Consult the undergraduate academic advisor for more information about where these courses can be used on the degree plan.

The steps necessary to add a CSCE 291/491 to your schedule are:

- ◇ The student should identify a faculty member who will supervise the research project and reach an agreement about what the project will cover. Supervision of CSCE 291/491 projects is limited to CSCE faculty who are eligible to serve as sole chair of graduate committees (CECN students should contact the advising office if they wish to work with an ECEN professor to see if that is possible).
- ◇ The student must prepare a research course proposal in conjunction with the professor. The proposal should be submitted in the form available from the CSCE Undergraduate Advising office and should
  - Indicate whether the proposal is for a CSCE 291 (freshman and sophomores) or a CSCE 491 (juniors and seniors).
  - Indicate the semester when the course will be taken and the number of credits.
  - Include the student's name and UIN and the professor's name
  - Describe the objectives of the project or course
  - Identify the deliverables for successful completion of the course
  - Include spaces for the signatures of the student, the professor, and the undergraduate academic advisor.
- ◇ The student should obtain the signatures of the student and the professor on the proposal.
- ◇ If the student is seeking Honors designation for the course, he/she is responsible for consulting with the CSCE department honors coordinators and obtaining/completing all necessary application forms for that office.
- ◇ The student should meet with a CSCE undergraduate academic advisor to turn in the signed research course proposal. The undergraduate academic advisor will review the materials to ensure that they meet departmental guidelines, signing the proposal after the review.
- ◇ Students whose major is not CPSC or CECN also will require approval by their home department's advising office. The student should obtain this approval before submitting the request to the CSCE advising office.
- ◇ The undergraduate academic advising office will handle the details for opening the appropriate course section, registering the student, making and routing necessary copies of the proposal for subsequent departmental review, and filing the proposal in the student's folder.

**CSCE 485 note:** CSCE 485, Directed Studies, is generally used for curriculum of a more directed nature than CSCE 291/491. Students requiring registration in a CSCE 485 section should follow these same procedures in preparing the course proposal.

The student needs to leave plenty of time for completing these steps. Last-minute submissions may not be able to be processed in time. Although specific timelines will depend on each student's individual case, a rule of thumb is that the student will need to meet with his/her faculty supervisor several times while preparing the proposal—a process likely to take several weeks. While the advising office's part of the process can be completed within a few days once an acceptable proposal has been prepared and agreed to by student and faculty supervisor, extra time may be needed to allow for the approval processes required before the course section to be created.

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