

## **FNH 497 (A, B, E) Directed Studies Guidelines**

### **General Course Description**

This course provides a means for individual students to undertake customized projects with a supervising faculty member, to develop and strengthen research skills and to accommodate special research interests that cannot be met through other FNH courses. The course may be taken for between 2 and 6 credits and the letter designation on the course code indicates the number of credits (FNH 497A = 2 credits, B = 3; E = 6). There is no set/synchronous meeting time for this course. Instead, the work plan is arranged and agreed to by the student and the supervising faculty member. Students will be expected to spend approximately 50 hours of work per credit (e.g. a 3-credit directed studies course would require approximately 150 hours).

### **Course Registration**

Admission to FNH 497 is arranged through the course coordinator, and must be recommended by the faculty member who will be supervising the work that the student is to undertake. Students interested should contact the individual faculty member(s) with whom they are interested in conducting a project well in advance of the beginning of the academic term to explore whether it may be possible to complete a Directed Studies project with that faculty member. For example, students should approach potential supervisors in summer regarding directed studies projects to start in September. Opportunities for conducting projects are limited.

**Formal registration into the course requires submission of the registration form** (attached as an appendix to this document) **to the course coordinator.** If the project to be conducted is associated with a summer or part-time, paid or volunteer position held by the student, care must be taken to ensure that any hours of work on the directed studies project are over and above those required by the related position. The supervisor must be satisfied that this requirement has been met. Normally, a minimum of 50% of the work required for the course must be conducted during the session in which the student is enrolled in the course. Exceptions to this requirement may be requested in advance where its application would result in a course overload, unnecessary delay in time to graduation, or the imposition of extra fees.

### **Course Deliverables (After Registration)**

All of the course deliverables are clearly described below, and must be submitted through the course Canvas site. The Canvas site also includes helpful resources for supervisors and students. Examples of each required submission are provided on Canvas as a guide, but the specific structure and content may vary for different projects. Each submission should be created by the student in consultation with their Directed Studies faculty supervisor. Students must upload all submissions according to the instructions, and by the deadlines posted on Canvas. The required submissions are listed in the table below with typical deadlines.

Item to Submit on Canvas	Due
Copy of the Course Registration Form	Start of the course
Project Timeline	Within 4 weeks of the start of the course
Progress Update*	Mid-point of course
Final Report	End of course

\*If applicable, the name of a faculty member who will serve as a second evaluator for the written report should be stated in the progress update.

The **project timeline** should clearly summarize the work plan and is arranged and agreed to by the student and the supervising faculty member. It must be set out in writing and is generally no more than two pages. Typically, the work plan includes time spent on literature search, design of experiments, experimental work and generating reports and presentations. A regular schedule of consultations should be pre-arranged between the supervisor and the student in order to monitor and discuss progress and time spent by the student on the project. If the project is to be conducted totally, or in part, at a location other than UBC, the supervising faculty member will make appropriate arrangements for regular monitoring of student progress and project timeline. This may entail appointment of an on-site co-supervisor.

The **progress update** is typically a brief (max two pages) written progress report that is shared with the project supervisor approximately halfway through the term. The document should also include the name of a second evaluator for the written report if the report is worth 40% or more of the final grade. If the written report is worth 39% or less, a second evaluator is encouraged but not required. This document should be viewed as an opportunity to reflect on the work plan and adjust as needed. Typically, it will include a short description of the progress to date, a comparison of progress against the originally proposed timeline, any significant changes in the aim or approach for the project, and the remaining experiments that are expected to be completed.

### Grade Breakdown

The precise breakdown of how the student will be evaluated must be agreed upon by the student and faculty supervisor and included in the course registration form. The grade breakdown must follow the requirements in the table below. Examples of evaluation schemes for FNH 497 can be found on the course Wiki page ([here](#)). The evaluation scheme must include a final written report (worth 20%-85% of the final grade) and one or more additional forms of assessment. Other forms of assessment may include an oral presentation, evaluation of lab (or project) work, a research poster, or another form of assessment appropriate for the particular project. Note that the final written report does *not* need to follow the same format as a thesis, but the expectation for what is required should be made clear by the supervisor. Often, though not required, one of the other assessments is an oral presentation, and a 3-hour time slot will be

reserved during the final examination period for supervisors that would like to provide students with a venue to present to their peers and other faculty members.

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Weight</b>
Project Timeline	2.5%
Progress Update	2.5%
Final Written Report*	20% - 85%
One or More Other Assessments (e.g. lab work, poster, oral presentation)	Determined in consultation with supervisor

\*If the final report is worth less than 40% of the overall grade, a second evaluator for determining the grade is not required.

### **Student Responsibilities**

- Reach out to potential faculty supervisor(s) who they are interested in working with
- Complete the course registration form in consultation with faculty member supervisor and submit to course coordinator
- Allocate appropriate time to the course (based on the number of credits)
- Complete course requirements by the designated due dates (submit via Canvas)

### **Supervisor Responsibilities**

- Select an appropriate research project in conjunction with the student
- Discuss the project objectives, assessment methods and rubrics, and grade breakdown with the student prior to the student completing their course registration form
- Provide suitable laboratory supplies and equipment to perform the work
- Review the student's project timeline and mid-course progress update
- Provide guidance on experimental design, data analysis, and presentation of results
- Schedule regular meetings with the student (e.g. weekly or biweekly)
- Provide feedback on the student's draft of their final report in a timely manner
- Assess student work and provide feedback

### **Course Coordinator Responsibilities**

- Make sure all required information is correctly included in the course registration form
- Advocate for students to promote a valuable learning experience
- Submit approved forms to LFS Student Services to enrol students
- Monitor Canvas course to ensure students have fully submitted the required activities
- Coordinate final presentations during the exam period

## Frequently asked questions (FAQ)

*How does FNH 497 differ from a thesis (FNH 499)?*

A thesis requires that a student spend 6 credit hours conducting research, write a formal thesis, and deliver an oral presentation of the project findings. FNH 497 also includes a written report but the structure is more flexible, and a presentation may or may not be required in addition to other possible deliverables. Note that FNH 497 cannot substitute for FNH 425 for students required to complete FNH 425 or FNH 499 in order to graduate.

*What are some examples of directed studies projects?*

Examples include conducting a:

- Literature review on a topic
- Project with industry or community partner
- Smaller-scale research project that only requires 2 or 3 credit hours instead of 6 like a thesis

*How do I enroll in FNH 497?*

- First, contact the faculty member you would like to work with, to see if they have the capacity to supervise you in a Directed Studies project in the term in which you would like to complete FNH 497.
- If a faculty member agrees to supervise you, develop a plan for an appropriate Directed Studies project through discussion with them.
- Fill out the registration form in consultation with your faculty member supervisor and submit it to the course coordinator.
- The course coordinator will send it to LFS Student Services who will enroll you in the course.
- After being enrolled you will have access to the Canvas course where you will submit your required course activities.

*Can a 6-credit FNH 497 be conducted in 1 term?*

Yes, you can complete a 6-credit FNH 497 project in one term but be prepared to dedicate twice as much time to your project. It is important to consider the nature of your project and whether 3-months is enough time to collect/analyze the data.

*Can a 6-credit FNH 497 start in W2 and finish in S1?*

Unfortunately, you cannot sign up for a 6-credit FNH 497 that starts in Winter Term 2 and finishes in Summer T1.

**APPENDIX**

**FNH 497 (A, B, E) Directed Studies Registration Form**

<b>Student Name:</b>	
<b>UBC Student #:</b>	
<b>Term(s):</b>	
<b>Credit Level:</b>	
<b>Start Date:</b> (if other than the start of term)	
<b>End Date:</b> (if other than the end of term)	
<b>Project Site:</b>	
<b>Site Supervisor:</b> (if applicable)	
<b>Faculty Supervisor:</b>	

<b>Approvals</b>	<b>Electronic Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Student</b>		
<b>Faculty Supervisor</b>		
<b>Site Supervisor (if applicable)</b>		
<b>Course Coordinator</b>		

***Project description and grade breakdown must be provided on the following page***

## Project Description and Evaluation

Please fill in each of the sections below. Example project descriptions, grade breakdowns, and evaluation rubrics can be found on the [course Wiki page](#).

### Learning Objectives for Student:

### Project Description and Student Role:

### Grade Breakdown:

### Rubrics for each Assessment Method: