

January 10, 2023
Expectations for 299 Special Study/Research Units
Sent to Academic Senate and Academic Federation Members

Dear Faculty,

As you know, most graduate students take from one to twelve 299 special study or research units each quarter. These units represent the academic activities related to the students' production of scholarly or creative works. The disruptions during the fall quarter have highlighted that it is a good practice to clarify expectations for 299 units at the start of each quarter.

Given the diversity of graduate programs and disciplines, it is difficult to define the nature of academic progress. However, faculty should develop and convey to students the expectations for the academic progress needed for a satisfactory 299 grade. The need for clear predefined expectations is comparable to the reasons we have syllabi for undergraduate courses.

The following may be topics to consider when formulating expectations:

- timing and duration of expected interactions between faculty and students (office hours, reading groups, lab meetings, etc.)
- participation in lab activities (presentations at lab meetings, etc.)
- academic outputs stemming from research in lab, field, archive, or other environments
- development of data analyses or progress in writing
- participation in scholarly events such as presentations at seminars, conferences, workshops
- quality of scholarly or creative works

By clearly setting expectations for 299 units at the start of each quarter, faculty may be able to avoid conflicts that lead to Incompletes or Unsatisfactory grades. The Office of Graduate Studies provides [several mentoring resources](#) to facilitate these conversations with your graduate students.

Sincerely,
Graduate Council