Course Objective: To provide an on-campus academic framework within which students may engage in individualized study of biological topics, under faculty supervision.

Credits
Under normal circumstances, a maximum of three credit hours will be allowed per summer or semester of Special Topics in Biology. Four-year students will be permitted to earn a maximum of six credit hours in any combination of different BIO 495 projects. In special cases where a student is involved in an ongoing research project of increasing complexity and with permission from the research mentor, the academic adviser, and the Biological Sciences Coordinator, a student may be allowed to continue the same work related experience.

Type of Experience
1. Must be on-campus. BIO 495 must be used for on-campus learning experiences. Students may also use BIO 495 for work at Branch Research Stations and Extension Services as they are a part of the NCSU campus.

2. Must be a new experience each work period. For example, a second summer experience doing essentially the same thing as during a previous summer would not qualify, nor would continuation of the same duties performed during a previous semester.

3. Must relate to the student's academic program. The academic adviser will verify the appropriateness of the research experience.

Grading
S/U grades will be assigned. Grading will be based on the completeness and quality of the final report and evaluation by the research mentor/faculty supervisor, the academic adviser, and the Biological Sciences Interdepartmental Program (BSIP) Undergraduate Coordinator.

Responsibility of Student Participant
1. Student is responsible for arranging the project experience with the research mentor/faculty supervisor, completing the Memorandum of Agreement form prior to the beginning of the work experience, having the academic adviser review and sign the form, turning in the form prior to the beginning of the research experience, and submitting the final report at the appropriate time. (The BSIP will be responsible for reporting grades to the Department of Registration and Records.)

2. Student is responsible for carrying out all tasks set forth by the research mentor/faculty supervisor.

3. Student is responsible to insure that all aspects of the experience conform to the Code of Student Conduct.

4. For additional information, please refer to: http://ceres.cals.ncsu.edu/efdocs/ugres/index.cfm
Procedure for Participation in BIO 495 - Special Topics in Biology

1. Determine the research experience to be pursued. Consultation with the prospective research mentor/faculty supervisor as well as your academic adviser is mandatory.

2. **Research/work hours completed should equal 45 hours per credit hour awarded.** Thus for 3 credits of BIO 495, a student should work a minimum of 135 hours.

3. Obtain a copy of the Memorandum of Agreement for Training from the BSIP Undergraduate Coordinator's Office at 2717 Bostian Hall. Complete this form, and submit it to your academic adviser prior to the initiation of your project. **The academic adviser will be responsible for forwarding the signed form to the BSIP.**

4. BIO 495 is not accessible through TRACS. After the Memorandum of Agreement has been signed and submitted to the BSIP office, you will be registered for BIO 495.

5. Meet all requirements of the research mentor/faculty supervisor during the project period. Consult with your academic adviser as necessary.

6. Prepare the final report and submit it to your research mentor/faculty supervisor for review and evaluation, after which it must be forwarded to your academic adviser no later than the last day of classes.

7. Your academic adviser will then be responsible for approving the report and sending a copy of your final report along with the recommended grade (S or U) to the BSIP Undergraduate Coordinator. After the final report has been approved by the BSIP Undergraduate Coordinator, a grade will be assigned.

**Guidelines for BIO 495 Final Report**

Whenever practical, the Final Report should be written in research publication format. Additionally, include the following information:

1. State the hypothesis and/or objectives of your work experience: what were you trying to accomplish in your experience? (The objectives will vary in number and scope.)

2. What specific types of work did you perform? What equipment did you use? What new techniques did you learn? Did your level of expertise increase? Did you progress in your level of responsibilities?

3. What did you accomplish with your activity?

4. How did your project experience relate to your other course work? What knowledge and skills gained from previous classes were especially valuable for this experience? What other classes would have been helpful prior to your project experience?

5. Finally, tie it all together in a personal way. How did this influence your future career plans? Single out specific instances that were especially rewarding. How much have you grown professionally?

**Note:** These reports should be typed and double-spaced, as a copy of this report will be retained in the departmental files. The reports should be a minimum of five and up to ten typed pages in length.