

Independent Study Policy

Purpose

Independent Study allows students to explore academic areas of special interest not provided by the existing curriculum. It is carried out under the guidance of a member of the faculty. Students are limited to 4.00 units of Independent Study in the baccalaureate degree, 2.00 in a graduate degree, and may not take more than one Independent Study in a single term.

Eligibility

Independent Study is available only to matriculated junior, senior, and graduate students who have a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.00. When the Independent Study is a required part of the academic major for all students in the department or program, the grade point average requirement is waived.

Contracts

For all Independent Study programs, a contract must be completed in detail and approved by the supervising instructor and the department chair. In summer, the summer session program administrator's approval is also required (Jones 212). The contract is submitted to the Office of the Registrar at the time of registration. The student's contract must:

1. Show preparation and competence to do independent work and to address the proposed topic.
2. Present an outline of proposed study which indicates an amount of work equivalent to the lecture and study time devoted to a regular class. This equates to a minimum of 150 hours for 1.00 unit, 75 hours for 0.50 unit, and 37.5 hours for 0.25 unit. The proposed study must include a résumé of the unique character of the course activities, the educational value of the proposed study in the student's total program of study, the specific objectives, and the justification for taking an individual study program. When any student with limited or no previous experience in the subject area of the department of proposed study applies for Independent Study, or when a regular course is proposed to be taken as an Independent Study, the student must secure approval by petition through the Registrar's Office to the Academic Standards Committee.
3. Provide the bibliographic references and resources which will be part of the Independent Study. Interviews planned or other resources should be specified. While substitutions and additions may be made as the study progresses, resource planning is an integral part of the contract.
4. Provide a schedule for meeting with the instructor, for completing assignments/progress reports, for the submission of the final paper or project, and for the criteria used to assign a grade (including specific values if the grade will be based on more than the final paper or project). Regular conferences with the supervising instructor are expected so the student and instructor should both be on campus. It is possible to make other arrangements provided the work can be supervised and adequate reasons are given.
5. Independent Study is expected to be graded. However, at registration, a student may select pass/fail grading provided the instructor has not restricted the course from pass/fail grading.
6. Designate the course number to be used. For undergraduate students: 495 or 496; for graduate students: 595 or 596; and for graduate degree candidates, 695 or 696. Each of these may be taken more than once, but no more than 4.00 units are acceptable toward a baccalaureate degree or 2.00 units toward a graduate degree. No more than one Independent Study may be undertaken in a term. The 495, 496 numbers are available for all departments wishing to use them. The 595, 596, 695, and 696 numbers are available to all departments, subject to Curriculum Committee approval prior to the beginning of the term in which the Independent Study is taken.
7. Determine the amount of credit. A minimum of 150 hours of work is expected for a 1.00 unit Independent Study, a minimum of 75 hours for 0.50 unit, and a minimum of 37.5 hours for 0.25 unit.