

Independent Study Guidelines

I. Definition

Independent study is a course in which the student engages in individual or small-group projects. The projects may be of the nature of research or study in a selected area of interest.

Prerequisites: Completion of application and approval of supervising faculty member, department chair, or dean of the school, chair of the department in which the proposed study is to be completed, and the provost.

II. Typology

Independent study courses may be categorized into the following types:

- A. **Required independent study** is a course that is listed as a required course in the catalog and on the curriculum guides.
 1. Required independent study refers to a course a student must satisfactorily complete to fulfill his/her graduation requirements. It is assumed that due to special circumstances the student is not able to take that particular course by the end of his/her senior or final year, and that a special arrangement (independent study) must be made to assist the student in fulfilling his/her graduation requirements. Such activities should be rare and should not become routine.
 2. Before a required independent study is approved, the following criteria must be met:
 - a. The student must be in his/her senior or final year.
 - b. The regular course is not and will not be scheduled or is scheduled in conflict with another required course before the student's graduation.
 - c. The department chair, faculty advisor, and key advisor have examined the reason for the student not having taken the course during previous scheduled semester(s).
 - d. A faculty member must consent to supervise the required independent study (Appropriate approvals must also be attained, see I above).
 - e. The course syllabus (which should be similar to the syllabus prepared for the regular course) shall be submitted with the independent study application.
- B. **Elective independent study** is a course not required for the student's graduation.
 1. Types of elective independent study include:
 - a. Courses listed in the university catalog but listed as electives or as recommended courses on curriculum guides and in the catalog.
 - b. Study or research in an area that is not listed in the in the university catalog.
 - c. Exploratory study in a selected area.
 - d. Advanced study in a selected area.
 - e. Research-oriented project that requires establishing an hypothesis.
 2. Before an elective independent study is approved, the following criteria must be met:
 - a. The student must be a junior or senior and must have a GPA of 2.7 or higher.
 - b. A faculty member must approve the study/project and must consent to supervising it.

Note: All undergraduate independent study courses will carry the 399 number (e.g., ART-399, ACCT-399, ENGL-399, and all graduate independent study courses will carry the 599 number.) The section designation will be 99R (required independent study) or 99E (elective independent study).