

**GUIDELINES FOR  
PREPARATION OF UNDERGRADUATE INDEPENDENT STUDY PROPOSALS  
IN LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES  
Effective Spring 2004**

Variable credit may be granted for undergraduate Independent Study projects of qualified students for subject matter not available in current courses and building upon previous study in the regular curriculum. A student may take up to 15 credits of any combination of Fieldwork and Independent Study toward the 120 credits required for graduation.

Responsibility for creating a course proposal rests with the student and the faculty sponsor. The student must present the faculty sponsor with an up-to-date student transcript, which will be attached to the proposal. The chair of the academic department in which the course is to be offered is responsible for reviewing the qualifications of the student and the content of the course in accordance with the guidelines given below. If the course is approved by the faculty sponsor and the chair, the Associate Dean will review the written proposal and, if appropriate, interview the student or faculty sponsor.

All projects will be evaluated by the Faculty Sponsor in writing at both the midterm and final exam periods and given to the student.

Forms for the submission of proposals are available in the Dean's office (JFT 610) and through the LA&S Web site. They require the approval of the faculty sponsor, the chair of the department offering the Independent Study and the faculty associate dean.

There are three separate types of Independent Study projects available in Liberal Arts and Sciences. The guidelines for each are described below.

**(1) Independent Study courses based on Readings:**

- a) Students must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 and a grade point average of 3.0 in subjects taken in the major department, and have completed 60 credits toward the degree.
- b) The proposal must explain the content of the assignment in detail. Reading and writing requirements must be stated precisely, and a bibliography of readings must be attached.
- c) The proposal must include a clear statement regarding the number of times per semester the student will meet with the faculty sponsor.
- d) The proposal must describe specifically the method by which the faculty sponsor will grade the student. The faculty sponsor must provide the student with a written evaluation of progress in the project by the midterm date and again at the end of the semester.

**(2) Independent Study courses based on Research:**

- a) Students must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 and a grade point average of 3.0 in subjects taken in the major department.
- b) The proposal must be accompanied by a detailed description of the research project and the student's responsibilities in terms of hours of work and kind of work required. The student may be working on the faculty sponsor's research or conducting their own. The student and

faculty sponsor must identify the books and articles to be read, the paper or papers required, and the method of evaluating the student's work so that a grade may be assigned.

- c) The student's progress must be evaluated in writing by the faculty sponsor by the midterm date and again at the end of the semester.

**(3) Independent study courses designated under Assistantship:**

- a) Students must have completed 75 credits toward the degree with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 and a grade point average of 3.0 in subjects taken in the major department (and in the department offering the assistantship, if they are different.)
- b) Undergraduate students are not to be used to correct other students' papers nor do any other work (such as proctoring) involving tests, quizzes, examinations, or grades.
- c) Student assistants may help set up labs, guide other students in research design and analysis, lead discussion groups, tutor small groups or individuals, and help to train students on particular equipment or assist them in learning software necessary for course work.
- d) The student's work must be evaluated by the faculty sponsor in writing by midterm date and again at the end of the semester.

**(4) Independent study courses designated under Other:**

- a) Students must meet the minimum requirements listed under Readings, although, depending on the project, a bibliography may not be required.
- b) If this project is primarily involved with working at another organization, please use the field work form instead of this one. If you are not sure whether the project falls under independent study or field work, contact the associate dean.