Guidelines For Independent Study Proposals

Proposals for independent study courses should be submitted to the Academic Dean’s Office by the dates specified on the form.

Courses numbered 295, 395, and 495 may be developed by students in subject areas not ordinarily offered at the college. The distinction among levels depends on the focus of the proposed course, the amount of previous work done in the field, and the extent of student independence; the higher the number, the greater the expectations.

Independent Study courses may not be used to meet major, program, or liberal education requirements. A maximum of one independent study course may be used to fulfill the requirements of a minor. Students will be charged appropriately by the business office when Independent Study is taken other than during the fall or spring semester.

The following guidelines will help you respond to the questions on the proposal form.

1. and 2. Self explanatory
3. and 4. Specify the subject and level of study, e.g., Art 295, French 395, Biology 495. Normally a 295 course requires one course of previous college-level study or the equivalent in an appropriate area, a 395 course requires two courses of previous college-level study or the equivalent, and a 495 course requires three courses of previous college-level study or the equivalent.
5. Indicate the number of credits you expect to earn.
6. Choose a title that is brief but sufficient to convey the nature of the course.
7. List previous course work in this subject that qualifies you to undertake the study. The level of independent study (295, 395, 495) should be commensurate with the amount of preparation.
8. State the objectives in concrete terms, i.e. the facts you want to know, the theories you want to apply, or the skills you want to develop.
9. Specify the methods of learning you will use to reach your objectives, e.g., reading, conferences, surveys, skill application, laboratory experiments, etc. If the course requires field study, describe the research situation in detail.
10. What special facilities or resources will you need to achieve the goals of the study? List in bibliographical form the prime resources, tapes, films, or other materials you expect to use in the course.
11. Describe the evaluation procedures that will be used to reveal the extent to which you attained your objectives. List in detail the types of exams, papers, projects, etc., that you expect to submit to your faculty supervisor for evaluation.
12. Specify the number of contact hours per week between the student and the faculty supervisor.
13. Specify the number of study hours per week you expect to devote to this course.

Note: Added together, the number of hours specified in 12 and 13 should equal at least the number of credit hours multiplied by three. For example, a three-credit course should require a minimum of nine hours each week. The usual formula for a 3-credit course is 1 hour per week of contact time and 8 hours per week of study time.
14. Obtain faculty supervisor’s approval and the department chairperson’s/director’s signature. Submit the form to the Academic Dean for final approval. Proposals for Independent Study should be submitted by the deadline listed on the form. No proposal will be accepted after the third day of classes of the fall and spring terms.