

Explanation of the Undergraduate Independent Study Process

The Curriculum Committee discussed all suggestions made by faculty in the 11/18/11 faculty meeting and came to following conclusions:

1. Students should receive credit for taking courses. An Independent Study is a course where one student works with a professor towards a singular, tangible outcome. We do not support the idea of students “being paid with credits” for project work. If a student wants to volunteer to work on a project, then it should be a truly voluntary effort.
2. We recognize that there may be scenarios where a large number of students are interested in working on a large-scale project as an educational opportunity. We believe that there is merit in such an experience. To that end, a professor wishing to create such an educational experience should submit a course proposal to the school curriculum committee (if they wish to teach it as an experimental course), then to the college curriculum committee (if the experimental course moves to full “course” status).
3. We agreed with the other suggestions:
 - Students may take no more than two Independent Studies, within MDIA.
 - Reduction of number of students involved in an independent study project (*ONE*)
 - Reduction of number of Independent Studies a professor may have per semester (*FOUR*)
 - Independent Study Application Forms should be submitted during Advising Week
 - The Curriculum Committee will be responsible for the approval of Independent Studies
4. These procedures will go into effect at the start of the 2011-2012 school year.

On the following two pages, you will find the revamped Independent Study Process and the new Independent Study Application Form.

The Curriculum Committee unanimously supports this proposal, and we put it forward for a faculty vote.

School of Media Arts & Studies

Undergraduate Independent Study Process

In the School of Media Arts and Studies, an Independent Study (I.S.) should be seen as “a special opportunity”. It is not an experience that all students will have. In fact, it is a limited experience. An I.S. must not constitute repetition of a course in the curriculum. Rather, an I.S. should:

- Provide students with an opportunity that is not available in the normal course of study in MDIA
- Provide students with an opportunity to explore a topic previously introduced in a MDIA class, but at a more advanced level than they can experience from the regular curriculum

Policy

1. Students may take Independent Study courses in only their Junior or Senior year.
2. Students may take no more than TWO Independent Study classes in MDIA, and no more than two Independent Study classes outside of MDIA.
3. Only MDIA faculty may offer MDIA Independent Studies.
4. Faculty may not sign a student up for, or submit a grade for, an I.S. that is overseen by someone else.
5. Professors should not engage in multiple Independent Studies in a given semester. If more than eight students are interested in a topic, the topic should be presented to the Curriculum Committee as a course proposal. To that end:
 - An Independent Study should not involve more than **ONE** student
 - A professor should not oversee more than **FOUR** Independent Studies per semester.
 - If a group of students is working together on a single project, each student needs to have an individually identified element that is being graded and should each fill out their own individual Independent Study Form.

Process

1. All I.S.s will begin with a Student and Professor filling out an Independent Study form. All forms will be submitted to the MDIA office during Advising Week of the semester prior to when the Independent Study is being offered.
 - A tangible outcome must be identified on the I.S. form prior to filing.
 - An I.S. should begin and conclude within one semester. Independent Study credit should never be given for work done *prior* to the I.S. period, or in exchange for work that will supposedly be done *after* the I.S. period.
 - The number of hours of credit should reflect thoughtful agreement between student and professor and should not increase or decrease after the semester begins.
2. The Curriculum Committee will review the Independent Study forms each semester and, if the I.S. is approved, the Curriculum Committee will provide a Pink Slip to the student.

Media Arts & Studies Undergraduate Independent Study Form

Student Name: _____

Student PID: _____

- Check one: *This Independent Study provides the student with an opportunity that is not available in the normal course of study in MDIA*
- This Independent Study provides the student with an opportunity to explore a topic previously introduced in a MDIA class, but at a more advanced level than they can experience from the regular curriculum*

Description of Independent Study:

DEADLINES	
WK 1	_____
WK 2	_____
WK 3	_____
WK 4	_____
WK 5	_____
WK 6	_____
WK 7	_____
WK 8	_____
WK 9	_____
WK 10	_____
WK 11	_____
WK 12	_____
WK 13	_____
WK 14	_____
WK 15	_____

List of expected readings/research:

Tangible outcome (*paper, report, project, etc.*) to be accomplished; please attach additional sheet as appropriate:

- Check one: *This Independent Study will be graded (A-F)*
- This Independent Study will be for CREDIT only (CR or F)*

Explain the grading criteria for this Independent Study:

Credit Hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none">9 hours of work per week (for 15 weeks) constitutes THREE hours of credit. (135 total hours)6 hours of work per week (for 15 weeks) constitutes TWO hours of credit. (90 total hours)3 hours of work per week (for 15 weeks) constitutes ONE hour of credit. (45 total hours)

Approved # of Hours: _____

Faculty Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

Curriculum Committee approves does not approve; **reason:**

Date of review: