



## Guidelines for Independent Studies

### Number of Credits and Meeting Hours

Generally, independent studies are one, two, or three credits. The number of credits is determined by the amount of work to be completed and should be comparable to that of a classroom course. The number of credits also determine the meeting hours. While the days and times of the student's meetings with the instructor are "to be arranged," instructors and students meet for a minimum number of hours per semester, as follows:

- 3 credits: minimum 6 contact hours
- 2 credits: minimum 4 contact hours
- 1 credit: minimum 2 contact hours.

As in any other course, the student should come prepared for these meetings by completing readings and written work on time.

### Description of Study

Describe the general theme and scope of the independent study. The theme may be stated as a problem to be investigated, an issue to be explored, or an argument to be defended. The student might indicate where the s/he is starting and where s/he would like to get in terms of answering a question, exploring a phenomenon, understanding a theory, building a skill or other goal.

### Readings

Provide a reading list with authors and titles, even if tentative, along with the proposal. The list should be comparable to a similar classroom course list within these general guidelines:

- 3 credits: 6-10 books (or corresponding number of articles)
- 2 credits: 4-7 books (or corresponding number of articles)
- 1 credit: 3-5 books (or corresponding number of articles)

Readings may change during the semester as the study evolves, but the preliminary list should be appropriate for the number of credits. Proposals for creative or practical projects should include readings, as well.

### Work to be evaluated by the Instructor

Indicate the kinds of work (response papers, research essays, creative or practical work, etc.) which will be evaluated by the professor. Assignments should be comparable in extent to a similar classroom course:

- 3 credits: 25-30 pages over the course of the semester (or equivalent work)
- 2 credits: 15-20 pages over the course of the semester (or equivalent work)
- 1 credit: 10-15 pages over the course of the semester (or equivalent work)

Provide details about the work, including the number, length and type of work to be submitted (e.g., two research papers, one 10 pages and the other 15; five reading response papers of 2 pages each and a 20-page research paper; etc.). Ultimately, it is up to the student and instructor to determine the specific format of the work to be evaluated by the instructor. The work for the study should be submitted according to the schedule of due dates agreed upon at the outset, and as with a classroom course, late work may be penalized.