



The College of New Jersey

Section:	II.3.22
Title:	Independent Study-Undergraduate
Effective Date:	2004
Approved By:	Provost
Responsible Unit:	Academic Affairs (609-771-3080, academic@tcnj.edu)
History:	
Related Documents:	

I. INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the policy for an undergraduate student to do an independent study.

II. DEFINITIONS

N/A

III. POLICY

Distinction between independent study and special arrangement courses

There is a clear distinction between independent study and special arrangement courses. A special arrangement course is an experience in which the student covers the content of a regularly scheduled course through individual study under the guidance of a faculty sponsor. This approach is to be used only when scheduling difficulties would otherwise prevent the student from completing his or her program of study in a timely manner. Enrolling in a special arrangement course requires signed authorization by the chair of the department offering the course and the dean of that school. Permission for a special arrangement course will not be granted during a semester in which the regularly scheduled course is available.

Special arrangement courses will be designated as such on the student's transcript by the following statement: "Requirements for this course were met through individual study under the sponsorship of a qualified faculty member."

Independent Study: Statement of Purpose

Independent study should be used for individual pursuit of topics within or beyond a student's major field of study which transcend the regularly available curriculum. It will normally involve research, primary source reading, or field work. When planning for independent study, the student and his or her advisor should strive to maintain a balance between this mode of study and other elective courses. A disproportionate number of independent study courses will tend to prevent a student from taking other elective courses which are equally important to scholarly development.

Credit and grade point average guidelines and requirements

Matriculated students who have completed at least 14 course units are eligible for independent study. At least four of the course units must have been completed at The College of New Jersey. A minimum grade point average of 2.5 is required, subject to waiver by the departmental chair. The faculty sponsor is responsible for checking the student's grade point average and determining that the student has the ability to plan and execute a long-range project. Departments may establish additional criteria for initial approval of, and supervision of, independent study projects.

The independent study project

An independent study contract consists of two parts--the proposal and the enrollment form to be developed by the Office of Records and Registration.

The student will prepare a written proposal containing the following information:

- (1) a detailed description of the project,
- (2) the amount of time devoted to each major aspect of the project,
- (3) a description of prior course work or other experience which prepares the student for the proposed activity,
- (4) the frequency and duration of meetings with the faculty sponsor,
- (5) dates for completion of project milestones where applicable.

The methods by which the student's work will be evaluated must be clearly stated in the proposal. Some appropriate forms of evaluation include a paper, a performance, and/or a presentation.

To determine the number of credits, the guideline of a minimum of 12 hours of effort per week per course unit shall apply.

Credit hour limits

A student may enroll in no more than six credits of independent study in a given semester. A department may limit the number of independent study credits which a student is permitted to complete within that department's programs.

IV. RELATED DOCUMENTS

V. HISTORY

Passed by CUPPS: 10/13/93

Approved by VPAA: 9/94

Effective date: 9/1/95

(Modified through curricular transformation: 2004)