

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

SCHOOL OF INFORMATION

Guidelines for Independent Study Courses for all Undergraduate Students

DEFINITION:

Independent Study – Student works independently to accomplish an approved objective under the guidance of a member of the iSchool faculty, or an adjunct instructor approved by the Undergraduate Program Coordinator.

Students may only count a cumulative total of six credit hours of Independent Study or Research Experience courses toward the BA/BSI degree. More than that requires the consent of the Undergraduate Program Coordinator.
(Prerequisites: Upper-division standing and consent of the faculty member who will supervise the study.)

CRITERIA:

An Independent Study course should not be authorized unless it satisfies at least one of the following criteria:

- A. The course will be an in-depth study of a problem or topic not offered in a course within the iSchool or another academic unit of the University, and for which no feasible substitution can be made.
- B. The faculty sponsor must determine that the need for the course stems from some special circumstances or opportunity. Acceptable proposals will provide specific information about the proposed study; whether the student is enrolling for one (I 178I), two (I 278I), or three (I 378I) credits; and the outcome, which should be a written report or other scholarly product.

GUIDELINES:

- A. A student accepted for an Independent Study should be in good academic standing.
- B. The work hours involved should be equivalent to those of an upper-division course of equivalent credit hour value, e.g., circa 125 – 150 hours for the three-credit Independent Study I 378I. Evaluation standards are comparable to those for standard class work.
- C. The product(s) resulting from an Independent Study course must evidence a scholarly approach, demonstrate critical and/or creative thinking, and be in a style and form acceptable to the faculty sponsor.
- D. Prior to the registration period and before the registering for an Independent Study course, the student must:
 1. Consult with his/her undergraduate advisor to ascertain the appropriateness of such a course to the student's total program.
 2. Consult with the proposed faculty sponsor of the study to develop a proposal that the faculty member agrees to supervise.
 3. Prepare a proposal using the attached form and additional sheets as necessary; negotiate the proposal with the faculty sponsor; obtain the signature of the faculty sponsor; and submit the form to the Graduate Coordinator. If the proposal is approved, the iSchool Course Administrator will then register the student for the Independent Study during the next open registration period at the beginning of the appropriate semester.
- E. In ordinary circumstances, faculty members should limit supervision of Independent Study courses to a maximum of five (5) per semester.

REGISTRATION:

1. The faculty sponsor must approve and sign the proposal.
2. Upon this approval, submit this form to the iSchool Course Administrator (aaron@ischool.utexas.edu) to complete registration.

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Proposal for Undergraduate Independent Study

Instructions: The proposal must be approved prior to the last day of registration for the semester in which the study is proposed. Most good proposals are one to two double-spaced pages long, c. 250 – 500 words. The student should secure the signature of the faculty sponsor and submit this form to the Course Administrator to complete the registration process. If the proposal requires work in or cooperation of an organization outside the school, the student should ask the faculty sponsor to request a letter with details of the agreement from a person authorized to speak for the agency. This letter should be obtained before this proposal is submitted.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

UT EID: _____ EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

SEMESTER: _____ YEAR: _____

COURSE (mark only one): I 178I (1 credit hour) I 278I (2 credit hours) I 378I (3 credit hours)

FACULTY SPONSOR: _____

BRIEF PROPOSAL TITLE: _____

PROPOSAL

State: (1) the proposed objective, (2) the methods to be employed, and (3) the expected culminating product(s). Attach additional sheet(s) as necessary.

Faculty Sponsor

Date

Distribution: 1) Student 2) Faculty Sponsor 3) Course Administrator