Independent Study Guidelines

FIT is committed to offering its students an education that is as relevant to those students’ individual needs as possible. In order to encourage this, FIT makes independent study opportunities available to full-time day students. Independent study refers to individualized instruction, which is provided in a tutorial manner outside a regularly offered class. Students can undertake advanced work in a particular subject, pursue an individual project or combine both of these activities on a one-to-one basis with a faculty member.

The following conditions have been established for offering independent study:

A. Availability To Students
   1. Independent Study cannot be used to substitute for courses listed in the FIT Catalogue.
   2. Independent Study can only be used for an elective. Consequently, two-year AAS and MA students will be able to take independent study only in the third or fourth semester. One-year AAS students will only be considered eligible for independent study in the second semester of their program. BFA and BS students will be eligible in any upper level semester.
   3. Students will be allowed a maximum of three credits of independent study as electives in any degree program.
   4. Independent study will be limited to the regular fall and spring semesters.
   5. Independent study requests must be initiated by students and must be made in the semester prior to their pursuing this option. Students must complete, sign and submit their portion of the Independent Study Proposal, Agreement and Evaluation form by November 15 for the spring semester and by April 15 for the fall semester.
   6. Independent study may be done off campus, but must be done at a site or sites that have been approved by the instructor in advance of initiating the project. Independent
7. study cannot be work performed for the benefit of the faculty member whether as an academic instructor or a business entrepreneur.

8. In order for a student to be enrolled in independent study, the student’s independent study proposal must pass through a three-tiered approval process involving the instructor, the department chairperson, and the dean of the school, at which time the credit value and supervisory schedule of the independent study project will be determined.

9. Only students with a GPA of at least 3.5 will be eligible for independent study. The chair of the department is responsible for verification of the student’s eligibility, such as GPA and any prior Independent Study.

10. The instructor will suggest that students who have been unable to make satisfactory progress towards completing their independent study by the midpoint of the project request a withdrawal.

11. An incomplete grade should be given in only those rare instances when seriously extenuating circumstances prevent the student from submitting the paper/project when due. The School Dean must approve incomplete grades.

B. Faculty Involvement

1. Full-time faculty generally oversee independent study. However, qualified part-time faculty are also permitted to oversee independent study.

2. Evaluation of students enrolled in independent study will pass through a two-tiered process involving the instructor and the department chairperson. Additionally, the instructor must complete the evaluation section of the Independent Study Proposal, Agreement and Evaluation form. The instructor will discuss his/her grade with the chairperson prior to assigning a final grade.

3. Independent study instructors will schedule regular appointments with the student. These appointments may not be scheduled during regular office, teaching, or common hours.
4. In order to appropriately remunerate faculty for this activity, the compensation scale will reflect a maximum of five students per instructor:

   a. For instruction of
      one student: $450.00
      two students: $600.00
      three students: $800.00
      four students: $1,000.00
      five students: $1,200.00

   b. No faculty member will be permitted to supervise independent study of more than five students per semester.

   c. Faculty will be compensated for a half semester for a student who withdraws at mid-term.

   d. Independent study will not count toward AOP seniority.

   e. Independent study will not count toward calculating a full-time teaching load.

   f. The amount of time a faculty member is involved in independent study will not count toward hours that a faculty member may teach beyond a full load.