

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

INDEPENDENT STUDIES: Guidelines for Grad Students

Independent studies are a means for students to pursue graduate study in areas not covered by the department's regular graduate course offerings. Independent studies should be undertaken only with graduate English faculty and only when courses are not regularly offered in that specific area; typically independent studies will grow out of prior course work in a more general field. Because they are not intended as a substitute for regular graduate courses, independent studies must be approved by the Graduate Coordinator. Students with more than one incomplete may not pursue independent study.

For eligibility to apply for an independent study:

Master's and PhD students may take an independent study only after completing a year (i.e., two semesters) of graduate course work in the UNH English Department. Master's students may take no more than one independent study (in addition to English 998) toward their degree. PhD students may take two independent studies.

{CAVEAT: independent studies are distinguished from graduate internships, which have different requirements and require a different form and approval procedure }

For an independent study, you must first get a proposal approved by a faculty sponsor and the Graduate Coordinator. The purpose of an independent study proposal is, first, to provide specific, detailed information to the graduate coordinator about how you will earn academic credits, and, second, to encourage you to finalize the requirements of your independent study. A well constructed proposal is usually the key to a successful independent study. Construct your proposal in close consultation with the professor who will direct the study. Share a copy of these guidelines with your faculty sponsor and submit a complete draft of your proposal to her/him before you turn in a (revised) copy to the Graduate Office.

Obtain an Independent Study Proposal form from the English Graduate Administrative Assistant. Fill out the form completely. On attached sheets, your proposal should include the following:

1. Identification of the specific area of study and a short rationale for undertaking an independent study (What are the content, logic, and goals of the independent study? How will it further your general plan of study?);
2. A complete and substantial reading list (if you are carrying out an analytical study, what body of research exists in your field?);
3. A syllabus (how often will you meet with your faculty sponsor—weekly? biweekly? Will the course involve field work, reports, or something else? What topics and readings will you cover at each meeting? When will your written assignments be due?);
4. Specifics about the written work you will produce in the course of the semester (will you write a seminar paper, a series of short papers, or other writing assignments? How long will each paper be? Will your study include other projects or presentations, and of what sort and length?).

The proposal should be first approved by the directing professor (have him/her sign the independent study proposal form). It will then be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator for approval. NOTE: approval of the independent study by the directing professor does not guarantee approval by the Graduate Coordinator. Incomplete proposals and those that duplicate regularly offered courses will not be approved.

INDEPENDENT STUDY PROPOSALS ARE DUE AT TIME OF PRE-REGISTRATION: by the third week of November (for spring projects) or the third week of April (for summer or fall projects).

If your proposal is approved, you should register for ENGL 995, Independent Study, for the amount of credits approved.