



## INDEPENDENT STUDY COURSE POLICY

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### **Policy:**

Independent studies are individualized, directed studies taken without classroom instruction. The student is required to plan with the professor an individualized schedule of reading, research, study or other academic activities which results in specified deliverables within the semester for a grade at the end of the course.

Expectations concerning student outcomes, assignments, deliverables and contact hours with the instructor should be recorded in a formal syllabus. The independent study syllabus should stipulate the same information that appears on a syllabus for a regular lecture or seminar course (i.e., learning outcomes, effort expected, meetings with the instructor, assignments and due dates, grading information, etc.). The student should meet at least once weekly with the faculty member and is expected to spend another 8 hours per week working on the project for a three semester hour credit course. In the case of variable credit independent studies, the typical expectation will be 2 hours of student work each week for each semester hour of credit in addition to the weekly meeting with the faculty member. At a minimum, three deliverables (papers, projects, exams, productions, etc.) that will be graded are required.

The syllabus should be approved at the departmental level by at least the chair. If the department chair is the instructor then the dean should approve the syllabus. The completed and signed syllabus should be filed in the department office and with the registrar.

It is up to departments to determine the workload that independent study courses impose on a faculty member and how this figures into the teaching load, but usually, independent studies are not considered in the teaching load. However should they be considered, maximum teaching load reduction due to teaching independent studies courses may not exceed one-fourth of the faculty member's teaching load during a regular term. While it is up to the sponsoring faculty member (or the department) to determine how much time the faculty member will spend in advising the student on his or her independent work, faculty must meet at a minimum once a week with an independent study student.

The standard course numbering system should be followed for independent study courses so that they can be identified in the course scheduling system. Programs wishing to utilize an independent study should propose a course through Academic Standards and Curriculum. The course description should read:

The independent study in any department is individualized study directed by a faculty member and undertaken by a student without regular classroom instruction. The student is required to plan with the professor an individualized schedule of reading, research, study or other academic activities which results in specified graded deliverables within the semester culminating in a grade at the end of the course.

No student may complete more than 9 hours of independent study in completing the undergraduate degree. Honor's thesis and special topics courses are not included in this maximum.

Adopted: The 21<sup>st</sup> day of March 2014

Effective Date: This amendment becomes effective upon adoption by Board of Trustees.

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Debra B. Miller, Chairman  
WSSU Board of Trustees

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Vivian H. Burke, Secretary  
WSSU Board of Trustees

**INDEPENDENT STUDY SYLLABUS  
COURSE ID and Credit Hours:**

**I. Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Student ID:** \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Instructor:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Office:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **e-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Scheduled Meeting Dates and Times:**

**III. Primary Resources:**

**Additional Resources:**

**IV. Course Description:**

The independent study in xxxxx is individualized study directed by a faculty member and undertaken by a student without regular classroom instruction. The student is required to plan with the professor an individualized schedule of reading, research, study or other academic activities which results in specified graded deliverables within the semester culminating in a grade at the end of the course. **Specifically, (Student Name)** will be expected to .....

**V. Course Learning Outcomes:** Upon completion of this course the student will:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**VI. Activities to Accomplish Learning Outcomes:**

Learning Outcome	Key Learning Activities To Address the Outcomes	Major Assessment (s) described more fully in VII.
1.		
2.		
3.		

**VII. Assessment of Learning:**

**Deliverables:**

- A.
- B.
- C.

**Grading of Learning/Deliverables:**

Final Grade Appeal Policy located on the For Students page at the WSSU website.

**VIII. Additional Course Requirements:**

**IX. Course Timeline**

The information presented in this syllabus is agreed upon by the sponsoring faculty and the student.

FACULTY SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

CHAIR OR DEAN: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have a documented disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services in 217 Anderson or by phone at 750-8658. No accommodations can be made without notification from the Office of Disability Services.