

William Paterson University Policy

Academic Policy

SUBJECT:	Independent Study	TITLE:	Independent Study		
CATEGORY: Check One	Board of Trustees <input type="checkbox"/>	University <input type="checkbox"/>	Functional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	School/Unit <input type="checkbox"/>	
Responsible Executive:	Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs		Responsible Office:	Office of the Provost	
CODING:	02-20-01-02-08	ADOPTED:	02/28/2017	AMENDED:	
LAST REVIEWED:					

PURPOSE

This policy provides a definition of independent study at William Paterson University, sets the criteria for use of independent study, and describes the procedure by which independent study applications are submitted, reviewed and approved.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Office of the Provost is responsible for enforcement of this policy

POLICY

Independent study at William Paterson is designed for two purposes: 1) Academically qualified students, under the direction of a faculty member, plan and carry out an academic project (research, scholarship or creative expression) and earn university credit for this project. This project must be related to the student's academic program and meet an academic need that cannot be met by an already existing course at the University. 2) In limited circumstances, students may engage in independent study to meet graduation requirements when a required course is not offered in the semester in which that student needs to complete that course in order to graduate. No more than three (3) credits of independent study may be taken in any one semester, and no more than nine (9) credits of independent study may be earned and applied toward degree requirements.

Independent studies are approved at the College Dean level, and are subject to meeting the academic standards stated above and below in this policy, and are also subject to budgetary requirements of the University.

DEFINITIONS

- Undergraduate independent study is coded as 4990 for an independent academic project and as 4995 for a required course substitution.
- Graduate independent study is coded as 7000 for an independent academic project and as 7005 for a required course substitution or NUR 7005/7045

PROCEDURE

For all independent studies:

- Undergraduate students must have completed at least 60 credits prior to the independent study; Graduate students must have completed at least 15 credits prior to the independent study
- Students must be admitted to a major program of study
- Students must be in satisfactory academic standing for the university and the academic program
- Requests with all final approval signatures must be completed and the final approved form submitted to the Registrar no later than the 5th day of the semester in which the independent study is taken
- Final approval is from the Dean of the relevant College

For independent studies leading to an academic project (research, scholarship or creative expression):

- Students must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 overall and in their major program of study
- An application form with a minimum one-page prospectus must be submitted by the student proposing the independent study to the cooperating faculty member and include at least the following:
 - Brief introduction and background
 - Objectives of the projects
 - Outline of the work to be completed
 - Timeline for completion of milestones
 - Precise product (i.e., paper, presentation, thesis proposal, grant proposal, piece of art, musical composition, etc)
 - Required resources (if already available or if funding required)
- Sponsoring Faculty will include the following at the end proposal
 - Rationale for Independent Project
 - Measureable Student Learning Outcomes from this Independent Project
- The application is reviewed, approved and signed by the cooperating faculty member, and is then submitted by the faculty member to the Department Chair. The Department Chair must also review, approve and sign the application, and then submit the application to the College Dean.
- Final review and approval for the independent study project is from the College Dean, with the exception of Honor College independent studies, which must be approved by the Honors College Executive Director. If the application for independent academic project is not approved, each Dean will prepare a response identifying the reason.
- There is no appeal of the decision of the College Dean
- The final approved form must be submitted by the student to the Office of the Registrar

For independent studies for required course substitutions to meet graduation requirements:

- A request for a required course substitution to meet graduation requirement independent study is submitted by the student to the cooperating faculty member
- An application form with a minimum one-page proposal must be submitted by the student proposing the independent study to the cooperating faculty member and include at least the following:
 - Brief introduction and background
 - Objectives for meeting the graduation requirement
 - Outline of the work to be completed
 - Exams, papers, products required
 - Timeline for completion of milestones
- Sponsoring Faculty will include the following at the end proposal
 - Rationale for Independent Study including why the course(s) required for graduation were not completed in a timely manner and how this activity will satisfy the graduation requirement
 - Measureable Student Learning Outcomes from this Independent Study
- The application is reviewed, approved and signed by the cooperating faculty member or program director, and is then submitted by the faculty member to the Department Chair. The Department Chair must also review, approve and sign the application, and then submit the application to the College Dean.
- Final review and approval for the independent study is from the College Dean. Prior to final approval, the Dean must verify that this graduation requirement may not be met in any other fashion than through an independent study.
- There is no appeal of the decision of the College Dean
- The final approved form must be submitted by the student to the Office of the Registrar

By Direction of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Date: 02/28/2017

