



UNIFORMED SERVICES UNIVERSITY OF THE HEALTH
SCIENCES

COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES
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College of Allied Health Sciences
Office of the Dean
CAHS-DPM-004-2022

March 30, 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR FACULTY, STAFF, AND COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH
SCIENCES STUDENTS

SUBJECT: Independent Study Policy

A. Reissuance and Purpose. This College of Allied Health Sciences (CAHS) Dean's Policy Memorandum (DPM) reissues 006-2018, "Independent Study Policy" (*Reference (a)*) and will establish the Uniformed Services University (USU) CAHS policy concerning Independent Study.

B. References. See *Enclosure 1*.

C. Applicability. This DPM applies to students enrolled in CAHS Programs and provides guidance to faculty and staff.

D. Policy. Independent Study offers undergraduate students an important opportunity to pursue areas of inquiry not regularly offered through courses. Such courses build on students' knowledge and encourage undergraduates to apply their academic experiences to particular intellectual and practical concerns. Faculty members at the CAHS regard Independent Study courses as valuable forms of learning at the heart of academic inquiry. Students who undertake Independent Study are expected to be self-motivated and largely self-directed.

Requirements – The requirements for student participation in an Independent Study course at the CAHS are as follows:

a. The role of final examination for an Independent Study course may vary based on the intended outcomes for the course. The Associate Dean may approve a nontraditional final examination in such cases (*e.g., a portfolio of the student's work, a thesis or substantial paper, a take-home examination*).

b. A single faculty member is responsible for supervision of an approved Independent Study course.

1) The duration of the Independent Study will conform to CAHS Curriculum Committee guidelines. The grade of "I" (Incomplete) will be issued only upon advanced request of the student. Two weeks is the maximum allowable period for conversion of a grade of "I" to a letter grade. A grade cannot be changed after the final grade is posted.

c. The number of students a faculty member may supervise in an Independent Study course should be restricted to no more than two students at any given time.

d. All Independent Study courses require completion of an Independent Study Course Request form (*Enclosure 4*) and will utilize an Independent Study Learning Contract (*Enclosure 5*). Both are to be completed between the instructor and student prior to commencement of the course. The Independent Study Learning Contract will stipulate:

- 1) Independent Study start and end dates;
- 2) The number of hours per week of work expected from the student;
- 3) Outcome objectives and assessment information A basic work plan including meetings, assignments; and deliverables/assessments;
- 4) Specification of how the final grade will be determined.

e. Registration for an Independent Study course must be completed after the learning contract has been approved by the Associate Dean, and before Independent Study begins.

f. Students may enroll in a maximum number of Independent Study credits counted toward degree completion as follows:

- 1) Associate Degree – 6 semester hours
- 2) Bachelor Degree – 12 semester hours
- 3) Graduate degree – 12 semester hours

E. Definitions. *See Enclosure 2.*

F. Effective Date. This DPM is effective immediately.

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3/30/2022

(Date)

Lula Westrup Pelayo, Ph.D., RN, FAAN
Dean, College of Allied Health Sciences
Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences

Enclosures:

1. References
2. Definitions
3. Independent Study Course Request form
4. Instructions for Independent Study Request Form
5. Independent Study Learning Contract & Course Stipulation

REFERENCES

(a) CAHS DPM-006-2018, "Independent Study Policy", date April 20, 2018 (herby canceled).

(b). Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation, Middle States Commission on Higher Education; Standard I: Mission and Goals, Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience, and Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment, <https://msche.box.com/shared/static/6upfla8coxa663p0j10u3gatow38jel.pdf>

(c). CAHS-DPM-002-2017 Curriculum Committee Policy, Current Version, date December 1, 2021.

DEFINITIONS

I. Independent study: “independent study” defines a specific type of course. Independent Study denotes courses that provide a mechanism for a student to work on a specific topic with a faculty member for academic credit. Typically, the topic is focused rather than general, is not usually pursued in scheduled courses, and involves the pursuit of a topic of interest by a student (*generally in the major or minor*) under the supervision of a faculty member with expertise related to the topic.

a. Workload expectations are equivalent to those of a traditional didactic setting according to the Federal definition of a credit hour and CAHS Curriculum Committee policy.

b. The Independent Study course prefix will reflect that the course is an Independent Study course, INDS. For example, INDS 4496 would be a 4th-year course of four semester hours.

**Uniformed Services University - College of Allied Health Sciences
Request for Independent Study Course**

The directions for requesting, registering for, completing, and recording an Independent Study course are on Page 2 of this form.

Independent Study Policy:

- 1) All Independent Study courses will utilize an Independent Study Learning Contract.
- 2) Registration for an Independent Study course must be completed *after* this Independent Study request form and an Independent Study Learning Contract have been approved by the Associate Dean, and *before* Independent Study begins.
- 3) The grade of "I" (Incomplete) will be issued only upon advanced request of the student. Two weeks is the maximum period for conversion of an "I" to a letter grade. A grade cannot be changed after the final grade is posted.
- 4) A maximum of 6, 12 & 12 credits may be counted toward graduation for AS, BS, and Graduate degrees respectively.

I have read, been advised of, and understand the CAHS Independent Study policy:

Student signature & date

Advisor signature & date

Student Information:

Name:		ID:
Address:	City:	State & Zip:
Email:		Phone 1:
Degree:	Major:	Phone 2:

Request Information:

Course Prefix & Number	Course Title	Credit
e.g. INDS 3396		3

Dates of Independent Study: ____ - ____

Faculty: _____
(Name, signature & date)

Associate Dean: Approved Disapproved

(Name, signature & date)

USU Office of the University Registrar (OUR):

The identified student has been registered for the identified Independent Study course.

Date Received: _____ Date Processed: _____

Signature: _____
(Name & Signature)

Instructions for Independent Study Request form

1. The student will discuss the Independent Study policy with an advisor. The advisor will ensure the course supports the approved degree plan.

The student and the advisor must sign and date the Independent Study request form.

2. The student will provide all indicated student and request information. The student will identify a supervising faculty member. The faculty must be an approved instructor for the Independent Study content area.

The student will discuss and agree to the specifics of the Independent Study with the faculty. The faculty will allow the same amount of time to complete the Independent Study as allowed by CAHS Curriculum Committee practices.

The supervising faculty must sign the Independent Study request form and forward to the CAHS Associate Dean for review. The Associate Dean must approve or disapprove the Independent Study request form and the Independent Study learning contract; the Associate Dean must sign the Independent Study request form. If approved, the Associate Dean will submit to the USU Office of the University Registrar (OUR) for processing.

3. The USU OUR will create the course in the appropriate term and register the student in the course and notify the instructor that the student is registered.

The USU OUR must sign the Independent Study request form and include as part of the student's permanent record.

Independent Study Learning Contract & Course Stipulations

1. Independent Study Start date: _____ Independent Study End date: _____

2. Number of hours per week of work expected of the student: _____

3. Outcome Objectives and Assessments. By the end of this Independent Study the student will be able to (at least five outcomes):

Objectives	Assessments
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

4. Work plan:

Meeting	Meeting date, time & location	Assignment(s)	Deliverable(s)/Assessment(s)
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			

5. The Final Grade will be determined as follows: _____