

HARVARD COLLEGE

Independent Study Guidelines

This petition must be filed *in duplicate* with the Senior Tutor. Two copies of this petition, properly signed by a qualified Adviser, must ordinarily be returned *with your study card* to your Senior Tutor's office on the first Thursday of the Fall term or first Tuesday of the spring term. Return to pick up your study card on the following day. (You may wish to make a third copy of this petition for your own use.)

Independent Study is designed to provide credit for field research, academic study not available in regular course work, or practice or performance in the arts. It is not suitable for group instruction, paid work, or activities outside the competence or concern of one of Harvard's departments. Studying the financial accounting system of a business firm might be an appropriate project, but working in an accounting office to gain business experience would not by itself merit academic credit. Investigating child development through observation in a day care center could qualify, but simply tutoring an underprivileged child would not. Analyzing the organization of a political group might be a suitable subject, but organizing a political campaign would not alone suffice. In each case what distinguishes the suitable project is the application of analytical skills to the object of the Independent Study, not the intrinsic worthiness or instructiveness of the experience itself.

Any Sophomore, Junior, or Senior whose previous record was satisfactory may petition to undertake Independent Study for non-letter-graded credit. A student may petition to take up to four half-courses total of Independent Study. Independent Study courses are subject to the same rules for dropping and withdrawing from courses as any other course.

A petition to undertake Independent Study, obtained in the student's Senior Tutor's office, requires two signatures: 1) a signature of a qualified Adviser, ordinarily a member of a Harvard Faculty, who must be an officer of the University, and whose professional competence is appropriate for the subject area of the Independent Study (in those exceptional cases where the Adviser is not a faculty member, for example, a teaching fellow, the petition must also be supported by an appropriate academic department or unit); 2) the signature of the Senior Tutor, which signifies that the proposal satisfies the guidelines and has been properly signed. (Senior Tutors will refer questions they have concerning guidelines to the Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Education.) The petition also requires an outline of the student's proposed project, and must be submitted to the Senior Tutor for approval, ordinarily in the first week of the term. In addition,

the Senior Tutor must sign the appropriate space on the study card. Any change-of-course petition which is filed to add, drop, or withdraw from Independent Study also requires the signature of the Senior Tutor. A separate petition properly completed must be filed for each half-course of Independent Study.

The Adviser will submit a midterm grade based on a preliminary written report by the student of his or her activities. At the beginning of the reading period, the student must submit to the Adviser an analytical paper concerning the term's work. (A simple description or report of the term's activities is not by itself adequate. In the case of artistic practice or performance evidence of substantial accomplishment should be supplied in lieu of written work.)

The granting of credit will be determined by the Adviser. (In those cases where the Adviser is not a voting member of a Harvard Faculty, the Chair or Head Tutor of the department, or equivalent officer, must review and approve the petition and the grade assigned by the Adviser. This person must be a voting member of a Harvard Faculty.) Independent Study is graded "Pass" or "Fail." *The Adviser will submit a copy of the student's paper and a brief statement about his or her work for inclusion in the student's folder in the Senior Tutor's office, ordinarily by the first day of the examination period.*

The Adviser will assist the student in the development of a plan for Independent Study and provide guidance but not regular instruction. Independent Study does not imply formal instruction and should not be confused with tutorials or House Seminars or with directed or supervised reading and research courses offered by several academic departments and committees. (These courses are generally numbered 91 or 910, and normally receive letter grades.) *A student enrolled in Independent Study must undertake to work independently. Classroom work and regular instruction are impermissible.*

Independent Study is not counted toward the Core requirement and is not normally counted toward concentration requirements. Students are reminded that they must complete, with letter grades of C- or higher, at least 10.5 letter-graded courses for the degree (12.0 to be eligible for a degree with honors). Ordinarily no freshman or sophomore may take fewer than three letter-graded courses in any term. Independent Study is never letter-graded.

PETITION FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY GRADED PASS OR FAIL

Please read the guidelines on the front of this form carefully before filing this petition.

1. NAME _____ CLASS _____
COLLEGE ADDRESS _____
COLLEGE TELEPHONE _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS _____
FIELD OF CONCENTRATION _____

I request permission to enroll in one half-course of Independent Study described below, to be graded "PASS" or "FAIL," in the Fall Term 20____ or Spring Term 20____.

In addition to the Independent Study I intend to take the following courses this term.

2. PLAN OF STUDY

Each of the following questions must be answered by the student.

a. Objectives: What specific educational objectives do you have for this Independent Study, and how do they relate in general to your education?

b. Content: How will you meet these objectives? List all activities that you will undertake, including any of the following that are applicable: comprehensive reading list, laboratory research, data collection, interviews, employment-related activities, organized social service activities, etc.

c. Submissions: What will you submit to the Adviser in connection with the Independent Study? Specify papers, their topics, and the length of each.

3. STUDENT'S SIGNATURE _____ Date _____

4. ADVISER'S NAME (please print) _____

(MUST BE AN OFFICER OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY AND MUST ORDINARILY BE A VOTING MEMBER OF A FACULTY OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY)*

I approve of the substance of this student's Independent Study, and I CERTIFY THAT THIS COURSE OF STUDY, IF SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED, SHOULD BE GRANTED ONE HALF-COURSE DEGREE CREDIT toward the 16 full courses required for the bachelor's degree from Harvard University. I agree to evaluate the submissions specified in "C" above, to submit a midterm grade based on a preliminary written report by the student of his or her activities, and to submit a final grade of either "Pass" or "Fail" no later than one week after the first day of the Examination Period, along with a brief statement about his/her work, to the Senior Tutor. (A copy of this petition will be sent to the Adviser prior to beginning of the Reading Period, at the address given below).

ADVISER'S SIGNATURE _____ Date _____

HARVARD ADDRESS _____

HARVARD TELEPHONE _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

HARVARD TITLE _____

Please circle the Faculty of which you are a voting member*:

FAS, Business, Dental Medicine, Design, Divinity, Education, Government, Law, Medicine, Public Health

**If Adviser is not a voting member of a Harvard Faculty, the Chair or Head Tutor of the Department (or equivalent Officer) must review and approve the petition (by signing below) and the grade assigned by the Adviser at the end of the term. This person must be a voting member of a Harvard Faculty.*

I approve of the petition described above and agree to review the grade assigned by the Adviser at the end of the term.

CHAIR, HEAD TUTOR, OR EQUIVALENT OFFICER'S SIGNATURE _____

NAME (please print) _____

HARVARD ADDRESS _____

HARVARD TELEPHONE _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

HARVARD TITLE _____

Please circle the Faculty of which you are a voting member:

FAS, Business, Dental Medicine, Design, Divinity, Education, Government, Law, Medicine, Public Health

5. ALLSTON BURR SENIOR TUTOR'S APPROVAL _____