

**PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY**  
**Administrative Guideline 11.03.99.P0.G1**

**Independent Study**

**Office of the Provost**



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## PURPOSE STATEMENT

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This document outlines the guidelines and procedures for Independent Study courses within Prairie View A&M University (PVAMU), allowing students to pursue self-directed educational experiences beyond the regular curriculum. Independent Study encourages academic exploration, research, and personal growth, aligning with our commitment to fostering individualized learning.

Independent Study courses cannot be used to substitute for a course in the student's major where they earned a failing grade, nor used to avoid taking a required course in the student's major. An Independent Study course may be considered for special conditions as warranted, such as a class time conflict.

These guidelines apply to all students enrolled at PVAMU who wish to undertake an Independent Study.

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## DEFINITIONS

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**Independent Study** - an educational approach in which students take responsibility for their own learning and pursue a course of study, research, or project outside the conventional classroom structure.

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## GUIDELINES

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### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 An Independent Study at PVAMU serves the following purposes:
  - 1.1.1 Academic Enrichment: It allows students to delve into specific topics or areas of interest that are not typically covered in standard courses.
  - 1.1.2 Research and Innovation: It supports independent research projects, enabling students to develop critical thinking skills and gain research experience.
  - 1.1.3 Personalized Learning: It provides a platform for students to tailor their educational experience, fostering self-motivation and self-direction.

### 2. KEY COMPONENTS OF AN INDEPENDENT STUDY

- 2.1 Self-Guided Projects – These courses involve self-directed projects or research under the supervision of a faculty member. Generally, the faculty member will be from the student's school/college, preferably with professional or personal experience to effectively guide, supervise, and evaluate the student's work.

- 2.2 Flexible Learning – It offers the flexibility for students to study at their own pace and on a schedule that suits them.
- 2.3 Independent Exploration – Students can delve into a specific topic or issue of personal interest.
- 2.4 Faculty-Supervised Inquiry – Independent study is a faculty-supervised opportunity for students to investigate areas of personal interest.
- 2.5 Coursework Beyond the Traditional Classroom Setting – Independent study encourages students to engage in coursework that extends beyond the boundaries of the traditional classroom, promoting self-directed learning and exploration.

### 3. ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES

- 3.1 Eligibility
  - 3.1.1 Any enrolled student in good academic standing may apply for Independent Study.
  - 3.1.2 Independent Study opportunities are typically offered for courses categorized at the 3000 level and above (with the exception of ARTS and DGMA independent study studio courses, which are offered at the 2000 level).
  - 3.1.3 An upper-level Independent Study course should not be offered as a substitute for a lower-level course. For example, a 4000-level Independent Study course should not be offered as a substitute for a 1000-level regular course.
  - 3.1.4 The department should have an Independent Study course available within its course inventory, such as ARTS 3399, CHEG 4399, BIOL 5399, or JJUS 7399.
  - 3.1.5 The creation of a new Independent Study course must follow the University curriculum governance process.
  - 3.1.6 Students must consult with the faculty and/or department head to discuss their proposed Independent Study project and ensure it aligns with their academic goals.
- 3.2 Proposal and Request Form Submission
  - 3.2.1 Students are required to submit a formal written proposal for their Independent Study project to the proposed instructor of record. The [Proposal Submission Form](#) is appended to the guidelines.
  - 3.2.2 If the proposal is approved, the [Request for Independent Study Form](#) must be completed by the student and the instructor of record.

- 3.2.3 This form must be approved by the department and submitted through the dean's office to the Office of the Registrar with a copy of the syllabus attached to each request.
- 3.3 Instructor of Record
  - 3.3.1 Each school/college will establish the obligations of the instructor of record.
  - 3.3.2 Each Independent Study project must have an instructor of record assigned who is knowledgeable in the subject area.
  - 3.3.3 The instructor of record, in consultation with the relevant department head, should approve the proposal and monitor the student's progress.
  - 3.3.4 The instructor of record will work closely with the student, providing guidance, support, and feedback throughout the project.
  - 3.3.5 For interdisciplinary projects spanning multiple departments, a student supervised by a faculty member from one department/school/college should collaborate with faculty from another department/school/college at PVAMU or another educational institution. This approach facilitates gaining experience from diverse fields and promotes a more comprehensive educational experience.
- 3.4 Credit and Grading
  - 3.4.1 The number of credit hours for Independent Study will be determined based on the scope and depth of the project. Generally, not to exceed 3 SCHs per course; however, exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis for up to 6 SCHs maximum.
  - 3.4.2 The student's project/material submissions will be graded, and the grading criteria should be established at the beginning of the course in the course syllabus.
  - 3.4.3 The final grade will be recorded on the student's academic transcript.
- 3.5 Progress Reporting
  - 3.5.1 Students must submit periodic written progress reports to their instructor of record as specified in the project timeline.
  - 3.5.2 The instructor of record will assess the student's progress and provide guidance as needed.
  - 3.5.3 The instructor of record and the student may agree to meet periodically to review progress as needed.
- 3.6 Final Presentation and Evaluation

- 3.6.1 At the conclusion of the Independent Study, students are required to present their work, which may include a written report, presentation, or other relevant forms.
- 3.6.2 Following the submission of the student's work, the instructor of record will evaluate the project based on its content, quality, and adherence to the proposal.
- 3.7 Maximum Independent Study Credits
  - 3.7.1 Students are limited to a maximum of six (6) semester credit hours of Independent Study credits that can be applied toward their graduation requirements.
- 3.8 Independent Study Course Registration Process
  - 3.8.1 The Office of the Registrar completes the course setup once the department submits an approved [Request for Independent Study Form](#) for each student. The Office of the Registrar reviews the request for independent study, verifies that an approved course has been designated for the department to use, and completes the registration for each student. The department is promptly notified once the process is complete.
  - 3.8.2 The instructor of record is responsible for submitting a Course Substitution Form following the completion of the approval process to prevent the student from receiving a CPOS letter from Financial Aid and to alert the Office of the Registrar of the course requirement that is satisfied by the Independent Study.

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**FORMS**

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[Request for Independent Study Form](#)

[Proposal Submission Form](#)

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**CONTACT OFFICE**

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Office of the Provost

(936) 261-2175

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