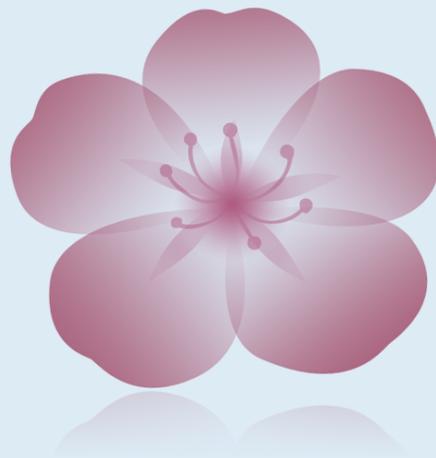


Undergraduate Independent Study

GUIDELINES & FAQ



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ABSTRACT

This document contains guidelines and FAQ for students interested in doing an Independent Study under my supervision and sponsorship.

Will you work with me?

I limit independent studies (IS) to students with whom I already have an established relationship as my advisees and/or as my students. As such, students are well aware of my expectations. Getting to know one another is best achieved in a classroom setting – preferably an upper-division course or senior seminar. I have yet to approve an IS project with a student I do not know. However, if the student comes ****highly**** recommended from a colleague, then I will consider and evaluate the IS proposal on its merits. **Lastly, I do not supervise IS projects in the summer.**

What kind of project is appropriate?

An IS that matches my own research strengths and expertise is an appropriate one to do under my supervision. The types of projects I have supervised thus far have varied and are often done in conjunction with preparing for completion of the LALS Department's Senior Exit Requirement (SER).

An in-person meeting during my office hours along with the submission of a short proposal is the best way for me to evaluate your project. The best way for you to assess if I'm the appropriate faculty person in which to do your IS project is by reading some of my published work and going through my website (<http://people.ucsc.edu/~smfalcon/>).

If you're interested in writing a senior thesis, then I urge you to email me about it immediately. Writing a senior thesis requires considerable advance planning.

What will you expect?

You should plan for IS well in advance of when you'd actually like to do the IS. In other words, you should have an initial discussion with me during office hours the quarter *before* you'd like to do the IS. Ideally, you will have a clear idea about your proposed project or area of study for our meeting. You should also begin to think about the literature you'll be reading during the quarter. We'll discuss your project during our meeting and I'll make a final decision shortly thereafter if I agree to the IS.

The expectations also are dependent on the number of units for the IS. You have the option of a 2-unit or 5-unit IS and the course work will be accordance with expectations associated with those units. Moreover, IS under my supervision as a general rule are taken as Pass/No Pass. If you're interested in taking the IS for a letter grade (which I will only consider for a 5-unit IS), then you need to explain the rationale for requiring a letter grade evaluation.

A 2-unit IS typically has the following requirements:

- Meeting 3-4 times per quarter for a progress report;
- Keeping a journal to document progress on project;
- 10-12 hours of field work or "outside" study;
- 4-6 page final paper;
- Reading list of 7-10 articles or 1-2 books; and
- Annotated bibliography or book reviews.

A 5-unit IS typically has the following requirements:

- Weekly meetings;
- Keeping a journal to document progress on project;
- 18-20 hours of field work or "outside" study;
- 8-10 page research paper;
- Reading list in syllabus format of 3-4 articles per week or selected books or book chapters; and
- Annotated bibliography or book reviews.

How do you evaluate the work?

I evaluate your work by assessing how well (or not) you met the criteria we agreed upon at the beginning of the term. Did you keep to the schedule of readings? Did you meet with me as required? I then evaluate the rigor of your written work and assignments. Therefore, your written work must be satisfactory in order to pass the course. Again, as a general rule, an IS under my supervision is taken as Pass/No Pass.

Can I get independent study credit for an internship?

Yes, this is possible. I encourage and support students to pursue these opportunities as much as possible as they can only provide you with great experience on multiple levels. It can also be a great way for students to apply and expand their classroom knowledge in a different setting.

Please note however, that you will still be required to complete an academic component in order to receive credit for an IS. In other words, just completing your hours at an internship site does not mean you have fulfilled the requirements for an IS under my supervision. You will still be required to do additional readings and written assignments to fulfill the requirements.