



Policy AC029: Individualized Instruction and Independent Study

Recommended for Approval by: Scott E. Miller, Senior VP for Academic Affairs and Provost

Approved by: Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson, President

Effective Date: 07/01/2022

A. Intent

To define conditions and procedures for students to request an individualized instruction or independent study course.

B. Definition(s)

Independent Study: A special course requiring independent work/research by the student under the supervision of a faculty member. The area of study for the course would not already be captured by an existing University course.

Individualized Instruction: A form of instruction where the faculty member provides instruction to an individual student, rather than a class of students. Individualized instruction may apply to most courses that appear in the University's course catalog; exceptions would include internships, student teaching, and similar courses.

C. Policy

Individualized Instruction

Individualized instruction may be approved for a course that is not scheduled during the current semester. Such instruction may be used in cases where the student needs a required course to make necessary progress toward degree completion, and where there is agreement of the faculty member requested to offer the instruction.

The course must not be offered currently, and it should be shown as not scheduled for offering prior to the student's intended graduation. Exceptions may be granted in special circumstances through the academic dean over the course, and must follow the procedure in Article 26 of the APSCUF-PASSHE Collective Bargaining Agreement. The student and academic advisor should explore all other options (e.g., a suitable course substitution, PASSHE course sharing) prior to requesting an individualized instruction.

Independent Study

Independent study provides the opportunity for a unique academic experience (e.g., study of a special topic) not otherwise available through regular course offerings. A project description must be composed by the student and submitted as part of the request for an independent study. Independent study should not be confused with cooperative or internship courses, which provide job experiences.

D. Procedure(s)

1. A student seeking an individualized instruction or independent study must first meet with their academic advisor and the potential instructor of the course to determine the appropriateness of the individualized instruction or independent study, and availability of the instructor.
2. The student must submit the Request for Individualized Instruction and Independent Study form, with required approvals to the academic dean for review and approval. The form requires that the student provide justification for why the individualized instruction/independent study should be granted.
3. If approved, the student will be registered into the individualized instruction/independent study course.
4. The student will complete all assigned work to meet course learning objectives for assessment by the instructor, who will assign a grade.

E. Related policies

None.

F. Contact Information

For additional information, please contact the Office of the Provost, or the Office of the Dean for the appropriate college.

G. Policy Review Schedule

All policies will be reviewed every two years or on an as needed basis if a change in BOG, PASSHE or Pennsylvania law would create the need for an immediate change.