





# Independent Study Instructions for Students

## Before You Apply

An Independent Study course is an individualized course taken under the guidance of a Naropa faculty member. The faculty is required to meet with you at least three times: once in the beginning to help lay out the area of study, expectations, time line, and grading criteria; once in the middle to evaluate your work and give feedback; and once at the end to critique and grade your work. You must meet with the faculty member three times or one hour per credit, whichever is greater. Students should keep in mind that an Independent Study may prove to be more challenging than a traditional course and should be prepared for a significant amount of self-motivated work.

## How You Earn Credit

Independent Study is a semester-long course in which a student works with a Naropa faculty supervisor to present work reflecting the student's independent research and learning on a particular topic. The design of the project and its schedule for completion, including deadlines and meetings with the faculty supervisor, are required for approval of the project, and are the student's responsibility. The student is awarded credit based on following the proposed schedule, making and keeping appointments with the faculty supervisor, and on the quality of the academic work submitted to the faculty supervisor.

Neither approval nor credit may be given to a project retroactively. Regular per-credit tuition is assessed. The student must submit the Independent Study application with faculty supervisor, Academic Advisor, and School Director signatures by the deadline for Independent Study proposals. A student must be either a Graduate student or be in the junior or senior year of his/her undergraduate program to apply for an Independent Study. Non-degree students are not permitted to take Independent Study courses. Visiting Students may take Independent Study courses.

## Special considerations for those drawing upon a workshop, class or other experiential learning activity for their Independent Study.

Sometimes students wish to draw upon experience in a workshop, travel, or other scheduled activities for an Independent Study project. Such activities may be included as research material for an Independent Study but do not constitute Independent Study projects in themselves, and the student undertakes such activities on a purely volunteer basis, in no way affiliated with Naropa. Independent Study credit is solely earned through demonstration of a student's learning through a particular academic project to a Naropa faculty supervisor over the course of a semester. The primary form of assessment of this learning is through papers or presentations as pre-approved in the Independent Study proposal by the faculty supervisor and School Director.

Thus, an Independent Study project cannot depend upon a particular workshop or other scheduled event. If undertaken and approved, the project must be completed even if the event is cancelled or the student is otherwise unable to participate. Naropa University is not responsible for refunding tuition if the voluntary research activities do not take place as planned. Students are strongly urged to create a backup plan if their Independent Study will rely on external events. Naropa is not liable for expenses or any other consequences of travel, workshop, or activities that a student undertakes as part of his or her research for or participation in an Independent Study project.

A student cannot propose an independent study that requires human subject research unless they already have approval from the Institutional Research Board. Call Academic Affairs at (303) 245-4644 for information.

## Eligibility

Count the number of Independent Study credits you have earned. Independent Study credits don't count toward your major, minor or the core area requirements.

Major/Degree	Maximum I.S. Credits
Interdisciplinary MA or BA	9 Credits
Traditional Eastern Arts majors BA	No Maximum on IS taken through TRA Dept.
All other majors and degrees	6 Credits

*Only Juniors, Seniors and Graduate Students are permitted to take independent studies.*

## Important Deadlines

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Signed proposal with syllabus must be submitted to *School Director* by:

- **December 1** for spring Independent Study courses
- **May 1** for summer Independent Study courses
- **August 1** for fall Independent Study courses

Final, approved proposal must be submitted to Student Administrative Services (SAS) by the **last day of drop/add for the semester**. *Keep in mind that Academic Affairs must do a final review before your Independent Study will be registered.*

➤ *Count on at least one week between submission to SAS and seeing the Independent Study on your schedule.*

## Procedure for Approval

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To ensure that your proposal meets all of the necessary guidelines you must:

- Meet with your Academic Advisor to discuss the proposal and how it fits with your academic journey. Obtain the signature of your Advisor.
- Find a current Naropa faculty member (core or adjunct) who is willing to oversee your project. You must plan to meet with this person at least three times throughout the semester, plus one additional meeting for every credit over three.
- Write the proposed syllabus. Meet with instructor to prepare the final draft. Faculty member checks for clear language regarding specific expectations, assignments and delivery dates, grading, and consequences for failure to meet each expectation. Faculty member approves:
  - project description
  - proper learning outcome
  - research plan and resources (readings and videos, for example)
  - specific assignments, including length of papers (appropriate for number of credits)
  - timeline for assignments due
  - how grades are to be assigned (including consequences for late or incomplete work)
- The faculty member must sign and date both:
  - the Application and
  - the Proposal
- The School Director of the Independent Study's discipline must also approve the IS application and the syllabus. *This might not be the School Director for your major.* **You must submit the proposal to the School Director by the deadlines above.** Note that s/he may require further development or modification to the syllabus and/or return it for rewriting.
- Submit the IS form to Student Administrative Services by the last day of drop/add. SAS will register you in the course. (In some departments, the School Director will submit the form back to the Advisor to make copies. Check with your Advisor for proper procedure).

## Getting Registered

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- The Registration Office will confirm that the I.S. does not violate any policy and forwards the form to the Academic Affairs office.
- Academic Affairs reviews the IS Application and syllabus and approves, or suggests further modifications to the syllabus. If modifications are required, Academic Affairs returns the paperwork with proposed changes to the School Director, who returns it to the Advisor, who contacts the student. Once the student has made the necessary

changes, the Advisor then forwards completed modifications to the School Director, who forwards to Academic Affairs. Thus, **count on at least one week between submission to SAS and seeing the Independent Study on your schedule.**

- Registration, upon receiving a final, approved copy of the IS form and proposal, will register you in the Independent Study. You cannot register yourself in this class. You may check your class schedule on MyNaropa to confirm that the class has been added.
- If you decide you no longer wish to take the class, you must drop it via MyNaropa according to the standard drop/add withdrawal schedule

### **Paying the Bill**

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- Pay for your Independent Study with the Tuition Cashier -- the fee is the regular per-credit tuition. Naropa, in turn, pays the instructor.

# Independent Study Proposal Outline

To complete this form in Microsoft Word, download the electronic version here: <http://www.naropa.edu/registrar/forms.cfm>

Semester and Year	
Student Name	
Instructor Name	
Date Proposal Written	

**Description of the Project:** *a short overview of the project and its focus*

**Learning Goals:** *Describe the overall purpose and scope of the course and in, general terms, what knowledge and skills the I.S. is meant to provide. Use such action verbs as identify, describe, analyze, compare, define, etc.)*

**Research Plan:** *List research materials and sources. e.g., books, videotapes, lectures, films, interviews, articles, etc. Include page numbers and chapters. Keep in mind that research plans cannot entirely depend on an event such as a workshop or lecture. If the workshop or lecture is cancelled, the I.S. must still be completed.*

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**Description of the Assignments:** *Form of final project, paper or presentation topics, length, style, or other specifications of final work. Include specifics such as length of papers, journal entries, or video; number of art pieces, length of music composition etc. .*

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**Timeline**

Dates of planned student/instructor meetings. Plan at least three meetings plus one additional meeting for every credit over three:	1. 2. 3. 4.
Assignment(s) Due Date:	

**Grading Criteria:** Rubrics and percentages for final project grading:

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Student Signature	
Instructor Signature	

**An electronic version of this Proposal Outline is available at:**  
<http://www.naropa.edu/registrar/forms.cfm>