Department of Geological Sciences

Independent Study Contract

Independent study is provided only to fill a definite academic need to the student that cannot be filled by the regular curriculum. A document titled “Independent Study: Information & Policies” is attached and should be read before completing and submitting this form.

The following information must be completed and presented for approval prior to registration for independent study. All independent study in Geological Sciences must be approved within the first 10 days of the semester in which it is to be completed.

Student Address: ___________________________ Graduate: _____ GPA: ______
___________________________ Undergraduate: ______
___________________________ Overall GPA: ______ Major GPA: ______

Phone: ___________________________ Total Credits Completed: ______

Prior Number of Independent Study Hours: ______ Junior Senior (Circle one)

Qualified Faculty: Others Involved:

Sponsor: ___________________________ Position: ___________________

Rank: ___________________________

Briefly outline the problem to be investigated:

Outline the procedures to be followed in the investigation. Be specific and use a separate page if necessary. Explain the location of the study if it is not the Boulder campus.
Describe the expected results and the basis by which the student will be evaluated.

Due Date (Date by which all work must be completed)

Justify the requested number of credit hours.
(Note: CCHE guidelines require a minimum of 1500 minutes (25 hours) of student time investment for each credit hour generated.)

Applicant’s total previous credits in Geological Sciences
Prior applicable coursework

If an undergraduate, how has the applicant demonstrated the ability and background to perform the proposed study (sponsor must answer this question).

_____________________                      ______________________                           _____________
Print Student's Name                               Student's Signature                                        Date

_____________________                      ______________________                           ____________
Print Sponsor’s Name                              Sponsor’s Signature                                        Date

_____________________                       ____________________                              ____________
Ind. Study Coord. Name                             Ind. Stdy. Coord Signature                             Date

______________________                 _______________________                             ____________
Registered by                                          Signature                          Date
Purpose of Independent Study:

Independent study is an opportunity for students to work with individual direction from a faculty member on a topic of mutual interest in the geosciences. A student may propose an independent study to any qualified sponsor. If they agree that (1) the topic is worth investigating; (2) the student has sufficient background in the topic; (3) the topic is not covered (or not covered in sufficient depth) in departmental courses; and (4) they share enough interest in the topic to sustain the project, then they may sign an independent study contract. Faculty are under no compulsion to accept Independent Study students, but do so as their workload permits.

What is and is not acceptable for Independent Study Credit:

Most independent study projects are performed on campus and under the direct supervision of a qualified sponsor. These include both literature review and laboratory-related projects. Field or museum work done off campus can also be acceptable if the work is done under the guidance of a qualified sponsor and is germane to the independent study topic.

Some experiences are not appropriate for independent study credit, either by policy of the Department of Geological Sciences or the College of Arts & Sciences. These include:

1. Internship experiences (students should apply for internship credit instead)
2. Work for pay performed in connection with a job in a business or a governmental agency
3. Work for pay within the department
   - This includes any hourly, monthly, GRA or undergraduate assistant appointments
4. Substitutions for regular coursework
   - Independent study cannot be used for a topic that is covered in the regular curriculum, even if that course work is not offered in that particular term or academic year.
5. Projects to meet College list or Core requirements
6. Extra work done in conjunction with a regular course (student should do an independent study in a subsequent semester and build upon what they learned in the entire course)
7. Volunteer work, unless such work is part of and germane to the rest of the independent study project
8. Plan I Master’s thesis hours (students switching from Plan I to Plan II may subsequently do independent study on the original thesis topic, but thesis hours do not convert)
9. Work of any nature begun and/or completed prior to the signing of an independent study contract

Description of the Independent Study Contact:

A contract between the student, the faculty member supervising the independent study, and the Department must be agreed to before the independent study is begun.

1. The contract must explain the topic, the nature of the project, the type of work the student will do, and the specific outcomes (paper, presentation, map, field or lab notes, etc.).
2. The contract must confirm the students eligibility for independent study.
3. The contract must specify the exact number of credit hours that will be earned in accordance with CCHE policy (a minimum of 25 hours of time per one semester hour of credit).
4. The contract must be presented on the form designed for this purpose and available from the Departmental office.
5. The contract must be signed by the student, the supervising faculty member, and the Department’s Independent Study Coordinator.
Semester Hours of Credit Allowed:

Each independent study in Geology can be worth one, two or three semester hours of credit. The exact amount is determined by CCHE policy (a minimum of 25 hours of time per one semester hour of credit). A student may take no more than three semester hours of independent study in Geology in any one semester.

In accordance with College policy, undergraduates may use no more than 8 semester hours of independent study in Geology toward graduation, and no more than 16 hours from all units toward their degree. Graduate students may have no more than 25% of their required course work as independent study.

Eligibility:

Independent study in Geological Sciences is available to all undergraduate and graduate students. The only limitation on graduate students is that their GPA must be greater than 3.3.

At the undergraduate level, independent study is not restricted to Geology majors, but majors and non-majors both must be able to demonstrate sufficient background to make their project meaningful. There are no specific course requirements; determination of sufficient background is at the discretion of the faculty supervisor. Undergraduates must have completed at least 60 semester credit hours (i.e., junior or senior standing) and have an overall GPA greater than 2.7.

Procedures:

In order to enroll in independent study, the following procedures must be followed:

1. Student discusses his/her ideas for an independent study with a qualified sponsor and requests that sponsor’s supervision.
2. Student obtains an Independent Study Contract from the Departmental Office.
3. Student and qualified sponsor complete their respective portions of the contract and sign it.
4. Student turns the contract into the Department for approval by the Independent Study Coordinator.
5. Independent Study Coordinator reviews the contract and either approves or rejects the contract.
   - If approved, the coordinator (working with departmental staff) will see that an appropriate course number is assigned and that the independent study is added to the student’s schedule of courses.
   - If rejected, the coordinator will return the contract to the student with an explanation for the rejection. If appropriate, a new, revised contract can then be written by the student and his/her supervisor and resubmitted.

The deadline for submitting an Independent Study Contract to the Independent Study Coordinator is 10 days after the start of the semester in which the independent study is to be performed.

There are no exceptions; independent study cannot be added thereafter.

All of these procedures are also to be followed before the independent study is begun.

No Independent Study Contracts will be approved after the work has begun or after the work has been completed.
Rules for Independent Study:

1. All units granting independent study must have the following three documents on file in the Dean’s Office:
   A. Independent Study Information Sheet
   B. Independent Study Contract
   C. Job description for faculty and staff involved in independent study credit

2. Once approved, any substantive changes made to any or all of these documents must be approved at the Dean’s Office.

3. These three documents as well as this listing of the College policies for independent studies and a copy of the administrative policy on grade integrity must be on file in the unit office.

4. All units granting independent study credit must have an independent study coordinator. The independent study coordinator must be a regularly-rostered faculty member in the unit at the rank of instructor or above.

5. Independent study sponsors must be faculty members at the rank of instructor or above. Graduate students may not sponsor independent studies.

6. Independent study credit may not be awarded under any circumstances:
   A. For internship-type experiences
   B. For work in University departments
   C. As a substitute for a regular course
   D. To meet College List or Core requirements

7. Independent study credit normally may not be awarded:
   A. For volunteer work unless such work is part of and germane to the rest of the independent study project
   B. For work in business unless such work is part of and germane to the rest of the independent study projects
   C. For extra work in a regular class unless the procedures to set up the independent study are followed prior to the work being started
   D. For work completed elsewhere (e.g. out of state) unless approved by the unit awarding credit

8. College maximums for undergraduate independent study credit are:
   16 hours toward degree
   8 hours in any one department
   6 hours in any single semester

Departments are free to set lower limits on the last two of these maximums.

9. Graduate School rules specify that independent study cannot exceed 25% of the coursework required by the department. Departments may specify less than this.

10. Requests to add independent study credit after census date, like any course, must go through the petition process and a copy of the signed contract must accompany the petition.

11. As with all courses, department chairs are responsible for monitoring credit hour and grading trends for independent study courses.

12. Repeated or excessive errors or unauthorized activity involving the awarding of independent study credit must be reported to the Dean’s Office for referral to the appropriate agency (e.g. BFA Committee on Faculty Responsibilities, State Personnel Office).
Qualified Sponsors

All regular faculty and research professors in the Department are qualified sponsors of independent study. Their names and general areas of interest are provided below. Some adjunct, adjoint, attendant-rank and instructors can also supervise if they are listed below (check with the Graduate Program Assistant in the Geology Office). Otherwise, persons holding such ranks can assist with an independent study, but their involvement must be under the supervision of a qualified sponsor.

**Qualified Sponsor General Areas of Interest**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sponsor</th>
<th>Areas of Interest</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lon Abbott</td>
<td>geoscience education, structure and tectonics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob Anderson</td>
<td>geomorphology, mechanics and timing of landscape evolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leilani Arthurs</td>
<td>geoscience education, hydrogeology, geochemistry</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Budd</td>
<td>sedimentology, sedimentary petrology, sedimentary geochemistry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karen Chin</td>
<td>paleontology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jaelyn Eberle</td>
<td>vertebrate paleontology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lang Farmer</td>
<td>radiogenic isotope geochemistry, petrogenesis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rebecca Flowers</td>
<td>geochronology, thermochronology, tectonics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shemin Ge</td>
<td>geohydrology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brian Hynek</td>
<td>planetary geology, Mars, astrobiology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bruce Jakosky</td>
<td>planetary processes, remote sensing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Craig Jones</td>
<td>geophysics and tectonics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sebastian Kopf</td>
<td>geomicrobiology, stable isotope geochemistry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Kraus</td>
<td>fluvial sedimentology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kevin Mahan</td>
<td>structural geology, tectonics, metamorphic petrology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tom Marchitto</td>
<td>paleoclimatology, paleoceanography, carbonate geochemistry,</td>
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<td>Giff Miller</td>
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<td>Steve Mojzsis</td>
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<td>Peter Molnar</td>
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<td>Karl Mueller</td>
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<td>Irina Overeem</td>
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<td>Julio Sepulveda</td>
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<td>Anne Sheehan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carl Simpson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eric Small</td>
<td>surface hydrology, water-plant-soil interactions, climate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joe Smyth</td>
<td>mineralogy, physics, chemistry of inorganic solids</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katie Snell</td>
<td>geobiology, geochemistry</td>
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<td>Jen Stempien</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chuck Stern</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alexis Templeton</td>
<td>low temperature geochemistry, geomicrobiology, Environmental Biogeochemistry</td>
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<td>Kristy Tiampo</td>
<td>tectonics, remote sensing, geophysics</td>
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<td>Lizzy Trower</td>
<td>sedimentology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greg Tucker</td>
<td>landscape evolution, geocomputation, geomorphology</td>
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<td>Paul Weimer</td>
<td>seismic and sequence stratigraphy, petroleum geology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jim White</td>
<td>stable isotope geochemistry, global climate change</td>
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<td>Mike Willis</td>
<td>current and future contributions of land based ice changing to sea level</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boswell Wing</td>
<td>isotope geochemistry, biological evolution, ore deposition</td>
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