



International Affairs Program

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

Independent Study Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

1. An independent study is intended to give well-prepared students specialized and individualized research experience and information on a particular International Affairs topic not covered in the regular curriculum. Students are presumed to have had all the previous pertinent work in the subject matter leading up to the chosen topic. Faculty members are under no obligation to accept independent study students, but they may do so as their other teaching commitments permit.
2. Some experiences are **not** appropriate for independent study. They include:
 - a. Internships where a student gains hands-on, practical work experience. This is prohibited by both College and program policy. Internship credit is available through the IAFS internship class (IAFS 4930).
 - b. Work in a University department.
 - c. Substitutes for standard required courses (e.g., the senior seminar IAFS 4500).
 - d. Work to meet A&S General Education requirements.

Research may be done outside of Boulder or Colorado. Volunteer work, work in business, and extra work performed in association with a regular class may all be acceptable, if the work is part of and germane to the rest of the independent study academic work.

3. Independent study requires at least the same number of hours of work as a regular course -- i.e., a minimum of 25 hours (1500 minutes) of time is required to each semester hour of credit. An appropriate paper must be produced by the student as a partial justification for receiving academic credit for independent study. The topic/nature of the paper is to be determined with the sponsoring faculty member and must be detailed in the independent study contract.
4. Not more than 3 semester hours of Independent Study may be credited toward the credit hour minimum for the requirements of the International Affairs major. College of Arts and Sciences policy allows a maximum of 16 credit hours of Independent Study toward the degree and the maximum of 6 credit hours in any one semester.
5. The prerequisites for signing up for independent study credit are:
 - a. Upper division standing (completion of 60+ hours)
 - b. Overall GPA of 3.0 or better
 - c. Successful completion with C or better of all lower division courses (11 hours) and at least 6 upper division hours required for the International Affairs major
6. **Submission of an Independent Study Contract does not guarantee approval of Independent Study.**
7. **Students may request that up to 3 credit hours of IAFS 4900 fulfill Geographic Concentration on the independent study contract. This request does not guarantee approval.**

FACULTY SPONSOR QUALIFICATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The faculty sponsor must:

1. Be a faculty member on the International Affairs Program Committee.
2. Work with the student to develop an academically viable independent study project that conforms to College and International Affairs Program requirements.
3. Ensure the academic quality of the independent study experience.
4. Notify the IAFS Director if substantive changes to an independent study project occur during its completion.
5. Review personal independent study rosters for accuracy.
6. Verify the accuracy of independent study grades.

PROCEDURE

1. After a student approaches a Faculty Sponsor to request an Independent Study, the faculty member will send them the Independent Study Contract DocuSign PowerForm (link available on the [IAFS Faculty and Staff Resources page](#)).
2. The student completes the Independent Study Contract. The form requires the faculty sponsor information, a brief proposal of the project, a current unofficial transcript and additional information.
3. The Independent Study Contract PowerForm will route to the Faculty Sponsor, IAFS Director, and to the IAFS Program office.
4. The student will be manually registered in IAFS 4900 for 1-6 credit hours by the IAFS program once the **approved** Independent Study Contract is received.
5. **Plan ahead!** It is the applicant's responsibility to be registered for the independent study course within the University's published registration deadlines.