

Students, please copy this version and edit your own copy.

Independent Study in Astrophysical & Planetary Sciences

Purpose of Independent Study

APS Independent Study is an opportunity for students to work with individual faculty members on a topic of mutual interest in APS. Students are expected to have the requisite knowledge to pursue work on the chosen topic. Independent study is intended for work in areas in which the APS Department does not normally offer course work. It is not intended to be used by students to take a course not being offered that semester. To take a course not offered in a particular semester, the student should consult with Continuing Education about courses by consultation.

Acceptable Independent Study Activities

1. Acceptable activities may involve laboratory work or study of an APS topic not covered in a course.
2. Volunteer work - *May* be acceptable if it is part of and germane to the rest of the independent study project. This will be determined by the faculty sponsor and the department independent study coordinator.
3. Work in business - *May* be acceptable if it is part of and germane to the rest of the independent study project. This will be determined by the faculty sponsor and the department independent study coordinator.
4. Extra work performed in association with a regular class - *May* be acceptable if all procedures in setting up the independent study are followed prior to the work being started. This will be determined by the faculty sponsor and the department independent study coordinator.

Unacceptable Independent Study Activities

1. Internship type experiences - Prohibited by College policy.
2. Work in a University department - Prohibited by College policy.
3. To meet College List or Core Requirement - Prohibited by College policy.
4. Substitute for regular course work - Prohibited by College policy.

Contract

Students, their faculty sponsor, and the associate chair of the department (the Independent study coordinator) must each sign an APS Department Independent Study Contract (available from the Undergraduate Program Coordinator), which outlines the requirements for independent study.

The minimum expectation per hour of independent study credit is 30 hours of work on the project. This may include laboratory work, library research, and consultation. The topic of the

project, the expected product of the project, such as a term paper, exam, oral presentation, and the schedule for the start and completion of the project are included in the contract.

Semester hours of credit allowed

The **maximum** hours of credit allowed in independent study by College policy are as follows:

- 16 total hours towards a degree
- 8 hours in any one department
- 6 hours in any single semester

Eligibility

Any student, regardless of major, may take independent study in the APS Department with the approval of a faculty sponsor and the independent study coordinator. Independent study may not be done retroactively. The contract for an independent study must be completed, signed, and approved prior to the initiation of the project. Independent study should be enrolled for the same time as other courses. The deadline for enrolling is the course deadline (usually about two weeks after the start of the semester) although late requests MAY be considered. See the Registrar's website for this date.

Procedures

Students should make arrangements with an individual faculty member to pursue independent study. Students may register for **ASTR 2840, (lower division), ASTR 4840 (upper division)**, or ASTR 5920 or ASTR 7920 (Graduate level). Students must present a completed APS Department Independent Study Contract, including the three required signatures, in order to receive the appropriate registration form. A copy of the signed contract will be kept by the student, the faculty sponsor, and the department independent study coordinator.

APS Department Independent Study Job Descriptions & Qualifications and Responsibilities of Independent Study Coordinator

(The Associate Chair of the APS Department unless the Chair appoints someone else)

- Be a regularly rostered faculty member in the department at the rank of instructor or above.
- Ensure correctness of the department's independent study information sheet and contract.
- Monitor the academic value of independent study in the department.
- Make sure that independent study projects comply with College policies.
- Ensure that all requests are authorized in writing by the appropriate sponsor.
- Review all student requests for independent study to determine that:
 - The correct course number is used.
 - The sponsor is qualified.
 - The correct number of hours of credit is awarded
 - The content meets academic standards.

- The “product” is appropriate and conforms to what was approved in the contract.
- Monitor independent study enrollments as posted on SIS each semester
- Decide the appropriate action, in cooperation with the faculty sponsor, if substantive changes occur in:
 - Proposed independent study projects prior to their completion.
 - Train faculty sponsors and clerical staff about independent study policies and procedures.
 - Establish and monitor independent study record keeping procedures for the department

Faculty Sponsor

- Must be a faculty member in the department at the rank of instructor or above.
- Will work with the student to develop an academically appropriate independent study project that conforms to both College and department requirements.
- Ensure the academic quality of the independent study.
- Notify and work with the independent study coordinator if substantive changes to an independent study project occur prior to its completion.
- Review personal independent study rosters for accuracy.
- Personally complete and sign independent study grade reports in compliance with College grade integrity policies.

Staff Responsibilities

- Work closely with the independent study coordinator to ensure proper independent study registration and record keeping procedures are accomplished.
- Register (or provide call number for) students for independent study only upon presentation of a properly signed independent study contract.
- Distribute and collect grade reports and grade confirmation rosters.
- Ensure that final sheets for independent study are signed by the appropriate member of the faculty in compliance with College grade integrity policies.

Astrophysical & Planetary Sciences

Independent Study Contract

Today's Date: _____

Student Name: _____ Student ID Number: _____

Department: _____

School Term (Check one): ☐fall ☐spring ☐summer School Year: _____

Course Number: _____ Course Section #: _____ (Leave blank if unknown)

Credit Hours: _____ Faculty Sponsor: _____

REQUIREMENTS: The minimum expectation *per hour of independent study credit* is 30 hours of work on the project. This may include laboratory work, library research, and consultation. The maximum hours of credit allowed in independent study by College policy is as follows: 16 total hours towards a degree, 8 hours in any one department, and 6 hours in any single semester. **The independent study course work must be completed by the last day of a given semester.**

INDEPENDENT STUDY TOPIC (*you may attach specific information*):

Goal or expected product (term paper, exam, oral presentation, etc.):

Dates: first conference, due date for completion of project, etc.)

Student's signature: _____ Date: _____

Faculty Sponsor: _____ Date: _____

Associate Chair: _____ Date: _____

Staff only:

Forms entered _____ Date: _____ Initials: