

# BLA | MLA INDEPENDENT STUDY

## REQUESTING APPROVAL FOR AN INDEPENDENT STUDY

### L ARCH 499 | L ARCH 600

UPDATED: 9/2024

#### QUICK INFO

- If you would like to do an independent study, you need to start the process early. The process usually takes several weeks with several rounds of edits. You will need to develop a proposal, meet with your advisor for feedback, refine the proposal, find a faculty sponsor to work with, refine the proposal based on their feedback, and submit a form for approval by the Program Coordinator no later than Week 7 of the quarter prior to the Independent Study.
- Course numbers - Undergraduates use LARCH 499 | Graduate students use LARCH 600
- Academic credit for independent study counts as Elective credits for both BLA and MLA students

#### WHAT IS AN INDEPENDENT STUDY AND WHY WOULD I PURSUE ONE

Independent Studies provide an opportunity for students to explore a topic of their interest under the guidance of a faculty member. Students are expected to work independently and lead their work for the independent study. Students will need to determine the subject or focus, learning objectives, assignments, expected outcomes, and schedule. The process usually takes several weeks with several rounds of edits.

#### WHEN SHOULD I START PLANNING

Students are encouraged to discuss options with their advisor and potential faculty sponsors 1-2 quarters before planning to start an independent study. Students should expect to meet with faculty sponsors multiple times to develop the independent study focus and plan. We advise developing a preliminary proposal before meeting with potential faculty sponsors. The proposal should include a description of focus of the independent study, a list of learning objectives, a description of the workload (assignments and expected outcomes) and schedule for completing the work including key deadlines. Essentially, you are putting together a syllabus for your independent study.

#### WHEN IS THE DEADLINE TO SUBMIT AN INDEPENDENT STUDY REQUEST FORM

An Independent Study Agreement signed by the faculty sponsor must be submitted **by week 7 of the quarter prior** to the start of your independent study for approval by the Program Coordinator.

#### HOW DO I CALCULATE THE NUMBER OF CREDITS I CAN EARN

Independent studies are typically taken for 1-3 credits. The number of credits is a direct reflection of the amount of hours/work spent on the project. Independent study credits should be equivalent to other courses, ie, the workload of a 3 credit independent study should equal the workload of a 3 credit seminar. In general, independent study credits are calculated using this ratio: 1 credit = 3 hours/week or 30 hours/quarter of academic work

Calculating Credits		
# of credits	Workload per student (hours/week)	Workload per student (hours/quarter)
1	3	30
2	6	60
3	9	90

With permission of the Program Director, a student can register for more credits than the above ratio (up to a total of 10 credits for graduate students and up to 9 credits for undergraduate students) if the student needs additional credits to meet the minimum required to maintain full time status. In this situation, the additional credits will be “for registration purposes only” and will not be counted toward degree requirements.

## HOW ARE INDEPENDENT STUDY CREDITS APPLIED TO MY DEGREE

BLA Students: since the BLA degree does not require open electives, students should meet with the Program Advisor to determine if the credits can be used to fulfill degree requirements. Up to 3 credits of independent study may be applied towards fulfilling Departmental Honors requirements. Otherwise, independent study credits may help balance your credit load to meet the minimum requirement to be a full-time student for funding/financial aid purposes.

MLA Students: independent study credits can only fulfill Open Elective credits. Independent study credits can not be taken in lieu of required courses or used to fulfill selective course requirements.

## GUIDELINES

- Independent study can be during autumn, winter, or spring quarters. As faculty are off-contract during summer quarter, independent studies are only approved for summer quarter under special circumstances.
- Students should coordinate with their faculty sponsor to determine their weekly schedule and length of study.
- Credits per quarter should be calculated based on the total hours worked during that quarter.
- Students are expected to lead their independent study.
- Typically, independent studies are done by 1 student, however independent studies can be collaborations with multiple students but the number of credits should reflect workload of a single student.

## GENERAL RESTRICTIONS

- **BLA and MLA students may earn a maximum of 6 credits in one quarter for degree credit.**
- **BLA students: LARCH 499 credits can be used to help balance credit load and only in certain circumstances can be approved to fulfill degree requirements.** Independent study credits may not be used to replace a studio requirement.
- **MLA students: LARCH 600 credits can only fulfill Open Elective credits and only a maximum of 6 credits can be applied for Open Elective credits.** Independent study credits may not be used to replace a studio requirement, required course or selective requirement.
- BLA Students will receive a numeric or Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) grade as indicated on the form.
- MLA Students will receive a grade of Credit / No Credit (CR/NC).
- Students can do more than 1 independent study while in the program.
- Students must submit a separate Independent Study Agreement form for each independent study. However, if an independent study will continue for more than 1 quarter, students can submit a single form but should note the full length of the independent study.

## GET STARTED

### STEP 1: Meet with your Program Advisor or Program Director to discuss your plans

- BLA students: Jennie Li (BLA Advisor) or Ken Yocom (BLA Program Director)
- MLA students: Jennie Li (MLA Advisor) or Julie Parrett (MLA Program Director)

### STEP 2: Develop a Preliminary Proposal

Your preliminary proposal should outline the focus of your study, learning objectives, expected outcomes, a schedule for completing the work, and any student or other collaborators.

### STEP 3: Identify a Faculty Sponsor

Discuss your plans and preliminary proposal with faculty who you are interested in working with to determine if they are interested and available to serve as your faculty sponsor. Remember that overseeing independent studies is an additional workload for faculty. Each meeting is an opportunity to show faculty that you are capable of organizing and completing independent work.

### STEP 4: Meet with your Program Advisor or Director

Meet with your Program Advisor or Director to discuss your revised proposal, credit load, and other details.

### STEP 5: Complete the Independent Study Agreement Form and Get Faculty Sponsor's signature

Revise your proposal based on your conversations with faculty and review with your faculty sponsor. Complete the Independent Study Agreement Form and have your faculty sponsor sign the completed form. Their signature indicates they approve the plan as written and agree to be your sponsor. Download the form before completing.

- [BLA Independent Study Agreement - LARCH 499 Credit Request form](#)
- [MLA Independent Study Agreement - LARCH 600 Credit Request form](#)

### STEP 6: Submit your Signed Form for approval.

BLA Students: Submit your completed form to the Program Adviser (Jennie Li, [jencyli@uw.edu](mailto:jencyli@uw.edu)).

MLA Students: Submit your completed form to the Program Director (Julie Parrett, [parrettj@uw.edu](mailto:parrettj@uw.edu)).

Once your Independent Study is approved, you will receive email notification, a copy of the signed Agreement, and you will be registered for LARCH 499 or LARCH 600.

### STEP 7: Confirm that you have been registered for LARCH 499 | LARCH 600 with your faculty sponsor

After you receive notification that your independent study is approved, the Program Adviser will register you for the approved number of credits with your Faculty Sponsor. Double check that your registration is correct.

### STEP 8: Submit all work outlined in the Agreement

To receive academic credit for your internship, you must complete all assignments and work as outlined in the Agreement. Once all is submitted and reviewed by your faculty sponsor, they will assign a grade (CR/NC for MLA; as indicated on the form for BLA). It is not unusual for changes to be made to the parameters of an independent study as it progresses. You do not need to submit an updated Agreement, however, you should document all updates with your faculty sponsor in writing.