

Independent Study Process and Procedure Overview

1. Student inquires about Independent Study at CAS.
2. CAS staff reviews course and student eligibility and provides overview of process.
 - Considerations:
 - Availability of seats in classroom course option (Directed Study)
 - Course not offered at NSCC (Contract Learning)
 - Matriculation
 - GPA
 - Pre-requisites
 - Student rationale
 - Instructor availability

INDEPENDENT STUDY Syllabus:

3. Student initiates Independent Study Request.
4. CAS staff communicates with appropriate Department Chair/Program Coordinator to discuss viability of Independent Study option and identify a potential instructor.
5. CAS staff communicates with instructor and forwards Independent Study Overview
6. Instructor contacts student to discuss course, meeting times and dates, signs request form, and creates Independent Study syllabus to CAS electronically.
 - Considerations:
 - Meeting/telephone dates and times ... assignment due dates.
 - "Checkpoints" to clarify standards/provide guidance for improvement.
 - The number, type, depth and scope of assignments.
 - Evaluation policy.

REVIEW and APPROVAL of LEARNING PLAN:

7. CAS forwards Independent Study Request form with attached Independent Study syllabus for review by Department Chair, Division Dean, Director of CAS and VP for Academic Affairs. Reviewers sign approval and send to next signatory. If concerns are noted request form is returned to CAS.

CONFIRMATION, REGISTRATION and COMPLETION:

8. Once the Independent Study Request form and syllabus are approved, CAS informs student and instructor by email and registers student for the course. Final Syllabus is scanned and sent to instructor and student.
9. **Course work begins***. Instructor submits mid-semester progress reports and final grades in the same manner as for classroom students.
10. CAS pays instructor for Directed Study once final course grade is submitted.

****Note Learning plans must be approved prior to the start of students work***

**** Excerpts from North Shore Community College Curriculum Committee Handbook***

DIRECTED STUDY

Pre-requisites: Matriculation, GPA: 2.5, CAS/Institutional approval.

Students may request a faculty-directed study for catalogued courses. Faculty supervises, monitor and evaluate activities designed to meet course objectives as defined in an individualized Directed study syllabus. Approval of the request and the official Syllabus are based upon guidelines for student eligibility, availability of an instructor and adherence to CAS policies and procedures.

Eligibility: The student must be matriculated in a program of study, have a CQPA of at least 2.5, and must be able to validate one of the following circumstances via college records or written documentation:

1. NSCC catalogued course required for NSCC graduation (a) is not offered in current semester and (b) is not projected to be offered in any semester prior to the student's planned graduation.
2. Course is offered solely via Directed Study method: faculty agreement on file.
3. An individualized situation or irresolvable conflict exists: The student writes a detailed rationale for the Directed Study and provides necessary documentation.
4. Other circumstances beyond student control preclude his/her taking the course in classroom format.

CONTRACT LEARNING

Pre-requisites: Matriculation, GPA: 2.5, 12 college-level credits, CAS/Institutional approval.

Students may propose advanced-level individualized courses not offered in the college catalogue using learning environments/settings such as work, volunteer, research, international study, special seminar. Faculty meet with the student to develop an individualized contract learning syllabus, supervise, monitor, and evaluate activities designed to meet course objectives. Approval of the request and the official contract learning syllabus are based upon guidelines for student eligibility, availability of an instructor and adherence to CAS policies and procedures.

Eligibility: Any matriculated student in good academic standing (2.5 CQPA or higher) who has successfully earned 12 or more college-level credits may propose a Contract Learning plan.

1. Application Deadlines

All preliminary planning and documentation should be completed by the end of the first week of the semester in which the Independent Study will take place. All forms must be completed and submitted to the Center for Alternative Studies and Educational Testing by this date.

2. Course Registration

Based on student eligibility and approval of the official independent study syllabus, the student is registered by the Center for Alternative Studies and Educational Testing. Credits are transcribed with a letter grade or "Pass/Fail" in accordance with the grading mode of the course. Official College withdrawal policy applies.

3. Payment

The College's current cost per credit (tuition and fees) applies. Students pay Student Financial Services in the usual manner and must abide by college policy regarding deadlines for financial aid.

4. Evaluation Criteria:

Regular NSCC grading policies apply - including withdrawal requirements, IP and F grades. Faculty receive class lists for students enrolled in Directed Studies and are responsible for entering early and mid-term alerts as well as end-of-semester grades.

5. Credit Awards:

Directed Study credits are transcribed as the NSCC catalogued course (Section DS) with a letter grade or "Pass/Fail" (in accordance with the grading mode of the course). Credits are used to fulfill degree requirements. Directed Study credits apply to the 15-credit residency degree requirement.