



**RICHMOND**  
School of Professional  
& Continuing Studies™  
**Guidelines for Independent Study**

**Student Information:**

An Independent Study (IS) course is a course taken with faculty supervision for knowledge enhancement beyond the courses offered in a particular area of interest. In rare cases, when scheduling or other conflicts exist, a regular course may be taken as an independent study.

A student who has completed at least 60 semester hours of academic work toward a bachelor degree may elect to take a course through Independent Study. Independent Study courses may be used in the in the Areas of Study and General Distribution area and may be used to enhance courses in the major. No more than twelve semester hours may apply to the baccalaureate degree. Students who have completed 30 semester hours of academic work toward the associate degree may take no more than six semester hours toward the associate degree. Students in master's degree programs of 30 hours or more may take no more than six semester hours toward their degree. Prior permission of the Senior Associate Dean is required.

**Requirements:**

1. All Independent Study projects must be submitted to the Director of Student Services, reviewed by the Academic Program Chair or assistant chair and approved by the Senior Associate Dean before work begins.
2. A faculty member must be designated by the Academic Program Chair or assistant chair and approved by the Senior Associate Dean. If the independent study is in a liberal arts subject area, the student must confer with the Liberal Arts Program Coordinator prior to the selection of a faculty member. The student will be notified when the subject matter and the faculty member have been approved.
3. The student must submit a written learning contract detailing the expectations and requirements for the completed independent study project, including the number of credits to be earned and a time-line for completion agreed upon with the faculty member before the work begins. A sample learning contract will be provided.
4. **The course approval and registration process must be completed by the regular registration deadline.** Payment for the course is due by the end of the first week of classes. Registration will be completed by SPCS office and confirmed in writing by letter or email.
5. Students are expected to meet at least weekly with the instructor. Students should expect to spend at least the same amount of time for an Independent Study course as he/she would spend for an in-class course.
6. The supervising faculty member must be within the department sponsoring the independent study, and must have appropriate expertise in the area.

**Approval of the Director of Student Services, Instructor, Student, and the Senior Associate Dean must be received prior to registration for or beginning work on an Independent Study project.**

**How to Apply:**

Address a letter of request to:

Director of Student Services  
School of Professional and Continuing Studies  
University of Richmond, VA 23173

In your letter, include the following:

1. Your full name, University ID number and complete address.
2. Rationale for Independent Study.
3. Statement regarding topic to be studied and number of semester hours credit to be earned.
4. Faculty member with whom you plan to study. Has the individual been approved in accordance with #2 of the **Requirements** above? Have you spoken with this faculty member?

### **Faculty Information:**

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### **Faculty Obligation:**

1. The student must obtain written approval of both the independent study project and the faculty member from the Senior Associate Dean before work begins. (This can be by letter or email.)
2. The faculty member is expected to meet with the student at least once a week and to insure that the work of the student is at the same level of quality and quantity as any course offered for the same number of semester hours credit. Meetings may be in-person, by phone or email.
3. Prepare a detailed Learning Contract (statement of expectations and requirements, including the number of credits to be earned, method to determine progress, as well as a time-line for completion, and a description of what the finished product will be) A sample is provided. You and the student agree upon the contract before the project begins. Send a copy of the contract signed by you and the student to the SPCS Office to be included in student's file. The contract must clearly spell out the number of credits to be earned.
4. **The course approval and registration process must be completed by the regular registration deadline.**
5. Roll/Grade Sheet
  - A. The independent study course is set up by the SPCS Office and the student is registered during the regular registration period. Registration will be completed by SPCS and confirmed by letter.
  - B. The Registrar's Office will forward an electronic roster to faculty member. As with a regularly scheduled course, the final grade for an independent study is entered online using BannerWeb. (Instructions for using BannerWeb may be found in the Faculty Handbook and online at <https://bannerweb.richmond.edu>) The grade must be submitted during the regular semester-end grading period as published on the academic calendar
  - C. An Independent Study must be completed in the semester of enrollment. (An "Incomplete" grade is not acceptable.) This policy applies to both "Y" and "I" grades.

**Remuneration**

The salary will be a percentage (usually 60%) of the per credit hour tuition paid for the course.

**NOTE:** Faculty members who are directing independent studies in addition to teaching a regularly scheduled class will have their compensation distributed over the standard two or four pay periods of the semester. Faculty members who are being compensated for independent studies only will be paid on the first regular pay period after the grade has posted to the student record. The payroll deadline is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month for payment on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the following month. When grades are not posted until the 15<sup>th</sup> or later, payment will be delayed one month.

*The following is only one possible format for an independent study learning contract. You may use whatever format works best for your situation. However, every contract must include both the student and faculty member's signature. You may detach the last page of this sample, affix signatures and return it with your formal learning contract or create your own signature page providing spaces for the required signatures.*

**Sample Learning Contract**  
**Independent Study**  
**School of Professional & Continuing Studies**  
**University of Richmond**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **URID:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructor:** \_\_\_\_\_ **URID:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of credits to be earned:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Study Overview:**

The purpose of this independent study is for the student to gain understanding of the “glass ceiling” phenomenon and to explore its causes and effects. The study will begin with a broad, conceptual unit covering the underlying psychological process involved in creating a culture where the “glass ceiling” can occur. After this the focus will narrow to an examination of the prevalence of the glass ceiling, its causes, and its consequences to individuals and organizations. Finally, the student will draw conclusions and make recommendations regarding the issue. The student will earn (indicate number) credits for this work.

**Goals:**

Three specific goals will be emphasized in the study:

1. To learn about psychological processes involved, including stereotyping, norms, gender role development, and prejudice.
2. To gain understanding of the glass ceiling effect by examining the literature regarding causes and effects of, and solutions to the glass ceiling effect.
3. To explore applications of the above material to the "real world".

**Assignments:**

The chart below delineates activities and evaluation modes associated with the above goals.

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Product/Evaluation</b>
1) Learn about psychological processes	Read four chapters selected by the instructor	Multiple Choice Exam
2) Understand the glass ceiling effect	Conduct literature search; select, read and annotate 8-12 articles	Annotated Bibliography
3) Explore applications	Conduct interview and write summary paper	Term Paper

## **Requirements and Grading:**

The student's performance will be evaluated based on three areas:

1. **Multiple Choice Exam (1/3 of grade).** After reading the chapters below, the student will complete an objective examination on the material. Readings include the following four chapters:

Forsyth, D. (1995). "Prejudice", in *Our Social World*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole. pp. 233-271.

Matlin, M. (1993). "Women and Work" and "Gender Stereotypes", in *The Psychology of Women*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. p. 152-191 and pp. 233-283.

Santrock, J.W. (1995). "Gender", in *Psychology*. Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown Publishers. pp. GG3-GG27.

2. **Annotated Bibliography (1/3 of grade).** The student will conduct a literature review of business and psychology journals in order to identify 8-12 articles which together comprehensively cover these topics: description of the glass ceiling, research regarding its prevalence, discussion of the causes, discussion of effects on both individuals and organizations, and suggested resolutions.

The student should present the list of select readings to the instructor for approval prior to beginning reading. The student will read the articles and write an annotated bibliography consisting of 1-2 pages (double spaced, typed) per article. The page should include the citation, a brief summary of the articles and a critique. Bibliographic entries should also make reference to other articles in the series and to the "big picture".

3. **Final Paper (1/3 of grade).** After the research, the student will interview an individual woman who has encountered the glass ceiling. The goal of this will be to relate a real person's experience to what the student has read. The paper written after the interview should integrate the academic material with the real life experience. Second, the student should also use the paper as an opportunity to draw personal conclusions regarding the glass ceiling effect and to make recommendations for the future.

## **Time Frame:**

The independent study is to be completed by the end of the spring semester. The student has permission to begin study in early December. The student is free to progress at her own pace as long as the last assignment is submitted at least one week prior to the end of the term. The responsibility for initiating contact with the instructor and for communicating about progress and for completing work belongs to the student. It is expected that the student will contact the instructor on a regular basis to discuss progress and to arrange time to meet.

**The signatures below indicate agreement to the above.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Instructor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Reviewed by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Academic Program Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Approved by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Senior Associate Dean

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date