

Frequently Asked Questions about Independent Study

I am interested in setting up an independent study, where do I start?

If you have a topic or proposal in mind, the first step is to identify a fulltime faculty member with expertise in that field. Schedule an appointment with the professor to discuss your idea for the project and to determine whether the professor has time to supervise you and, if so, what his/her/their expectations are for the project.

How do I determine how many credits my independent study is worth?

You and your supervising faculty member will determine the number of credit hours to be earned for the independent study, up to three credits. The number of hours and amount of work required by the independent study should be substantially equivalent to the requirements of a course offering of the same number of credit hours. At a minimum, you must perform at least 42.5 hours of work per credit earned.

I've met with my faculty supervisor and agreed on the project and the number of credit hours, now what?

Complete the [Independent Study form](#) on ASA's website in the Forms section. You must complete all required sections, including a description of the proposal. Select your supervising professor from the drop down menu on the form and submit. Your supervising professor will receive a copy of the form and will reply to our office confirming approval of the independent study as described on the form.

Once the form is approved, how do I register?

ASA will register you into the independent study. Please note that the registration process can take some time, so you may not immediately see the independent study on your transcript.

What is the deadline for submitting the independent study form?

You have until the Add Deadline for upper-level courses to submit your independent study form. Late forms will only be accepted if the delay was unavoidable and with permission of the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs.

How many independent study credits can I earn?

Unless approved by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, you may not earn more than a total of six (6) credits of independent study, and you may not earn more than three (3) credits of independent study in any one (1) term.

Keep in mind that independent study credit counts as “non-in-class credits.” It is your responsibility to track your credit allotments and to ensure that you are not exceeding limits set for your class. You can view graduation requirements, which include information about in-class and non-in-class credit caps on [ASA’s website](#).

Will serving as a TA, RA, LF or participating in Moot Court or Law Review for credit count against my six credit independent study cap?

It depends on when you began your JD program.

If you started prior to fall 2020, credits earned as a Research Assistant (RA) or Teaching Assistant (TA) will also count as independent study credits and are subject to the six-credit cap.

If you entered in fall 2021 or after, TA and RA credits do not count as independent study credits, but you may earn no more than two (2) credits for each experience.

Regardless of your entering year, credits earned for Moot Court, Law Review and for serving as a Lawyering Fellow (LF) do not count as independent study credits, but credits earned for each are non-in-class credits and are subject to the caps set for your particular class. You can view graduation requirements, which include information about in-class and non-in-class credit caps on [ASA’s website](#).

May an adjunct faculty member supervise my independent study?

No. Only fulltime faculty may supervise the independent study. All eligible faculty supervisors are listed in the drop down menu on the Independent Study form.

I’ve heard I can get credit for an internship or continued work at my co-op placement if I route it as an independent study. Is that true?

Not exactly. In order to receive credit for the independent study, you must devise an academic project that is separate and distinct from what you are doing as part of your internship, such as a research paper that is inspired by something you encounter at the placement or that is a further academic exploration of some research you started at the placement. You may not earn credit simply for working at the placement. The independent study must culminate in a written paper, exercise or examination, on which your supervising professor will evaluate you. Your supervising professor may also incorporate into your evaluation feedback from your internship supervising attorney.