

**PHD IN EPIDEMIOLOGY
PHC 7918 INDEPENDENT STUDY**

GUIDELINES TO DETERMINE IF AN INDEPENDENT STUDY IS APPROPRIATE

An Independent Study may be appropriate in the following situations:

1. When a student wants to increase or expand knowledge or skills in a particular area relevant to epidemiology that is not redundant with material covered in the epidemiology curriculum.
2. When a student needs to strengthen identified weaknesses through direct 1:1 mentorship in one or more academic or professional areas.
3. As a means for the student to create/contribute to time-limited study projects that lead to quality publication submissions or accomplish clearly defined professional objectives that advance the student's career portfolio.

An Independent Study is NOT appropriate in the following situations:

1. Using the same work or part of the same work used in another course. Students may not receive credit more than once for the same work or part of the same work (e.g., assignments, papers, projects, etc.) For instance, if a paper is written as an assignment for a different course, an Independent Study may not be used to finish, revise, or publish that paper.
2. Using or working on a paper that is already under review at a journal. Students may not receive Independent Study credit for any submitted work.
3. Editing or revising previously completed work. Students may not receive credit for previously completed work or revisions to previously completed work.
4. Completing a project for which the majority of work has been completed. Students may not receive credit for completion of projects for which the majority of work had already been done prior to proposing the Independent Study. (Please note, however, that students may use previous projects as a springboard to create new projects.)

GENERAL INFORMATION/INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONTRACT COMPLETION

1. In order to participate in PHC 7918, the student must complete an *Independent Study Contract* with a graduate faculty member.
2. An Independent Study may be arranged with any graduate faculty member with the appropriate approvals (reflected by signatures on the *Independent Study Contract*).
3. Prior to finalizing the contract, the student must meet with the proposed Independent Study instructor to discuss and reach agreement on the project objectives, proposed deliverables, respective due dates, and credits.
4. The faculty member's signature on the contract represents his or her agreement to supervise the project as described in the final contract.
5. The student must complete the *Independent Study Contract* and secure all approvals prior to initiating the project.

6. The contract must include all final work the student is required to produce and the respective due date for each final product required.
7. Although subcomponents (e.g., individual sections of a paper, project outlines and drafts, lab notes, etc.) of the final products are not required on the contract form, the instructor and student must be clear on all sub-tasks/subcomponents of the final deliverables and their due dates within the semester. The subcomponents serve as checkpoints to support project progression during the semester towards completion of the final products. The instructor and student are encouraged to create a contract addendum including all subcomponents and interim due dates to reflect expectations throughout the semester towards final completion of all work.
8. The number of credits for the Independent Study is determined by the instructor based on the hours required and the deliverables to be produced. The credits shown in the table below are typical for commonly selected Independent Study activities. However, final determination of credits is based on duration and complexity of the project involved and types of deliverables expected.

Examples of number of credits	Examples of appropriate deliverables*
1 credit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of a scientific presentation (poster or oral presentation) • Preparation of a literature review
2 credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of a complete grant
3 credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of a complete manuscript
*These are not the <i>only</i> options for deliverables. Other work may be proposed as an independent study in consultation with the instructor and Research Mentor and with the approval of the Program Director.	

9. Final approval of the *Independent Study Contract* rests with the Program Director. If the Program Director disagrees with the instructor regarding number of credits or project acceptability, he or she will discuss with the instructor to try to resolve any differences. The student may be asked to clarify project objectives or provide additional project details as part of this discussion. However, the Program Director must consider the appropriateness of the Independent Study in the context of the student’s overall academic progression, professional conduct, and program needs and, therefore, has final authority.
10. Students will receive a grade of S or U for the Independent Study. The grade will be assigned once all work is completed or the deadline for submission of all deliverables has passed based on University of Florida grading timelines each semester.
11. Please consult the following table regarding grading and when it is appropriate for the instructor to consider an incomplete grade:

Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Incomplete*
The student has satisfactorily completed all agreed-upon work by the agreed-upon due dates.	The student has not completed all agreed-upon work by the due dates set in the contract or the quality of work is unacceptable.	The student has completed a major portion of the agreed-upon work with a passing grade, the student is unable to complete agreed-upon work because of documented circumstances beyond his or her control, <i>and</i> the student and instructor have discussed the situation prior to the due dates (except under emergency conditions).
*If the instructor determines an incomplete grade is warranted, an <i>Incomplete Grade Contract</i> must be completed before the incomplete grade is assigned.		

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To be completed by the student:

Student: _____ UFID: _____ Term: _____ Credits (1-3): _____

1. List all final products to be produced. Additional pages may be attached if needed.

Final product(s) – Be specific	Due date	Date complete	Instructor initials

2. No part of the above work has previously been submitted or proposed for course credit. Initials: _____
3. Other courses enrolled in this semester:

Course Number and Name	Credits

To be completed by the instructor:

Instructor: _____ UFID: _____

1. I agree to meet with the student *at least biweekly* until the completion of the above work. Initials: _____
2. In the event a meeting needs to be canceled, my plan for making up the time with the student is as follows:

	Signature	Date		Signature	Date
Student			Research Mentor		
Instructor			Program Director		

Students: Make a copy of this contract and return it to the Academic Assistant. Keep the original until all work is completed; then return the original to the Academic Assistant.