

**INDEPENDENT STUDY CONTRACT**  
**Oakland University - School of Business Administration**

Return signed copy (signatures 1-3) of this contract to the appropriate office for advising approval and registration in an independent study course.

I. Student degree level (mark with an X) \_\_\_ Graduate \_\_\_ Undergraduate

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ G Number \_\_\_\_\_

Term: Winter / Summer / Fall \_\_\_\_\_ Year: 20 \_\_\_\_\_

Course \_\_\_\_\_ CRN \_\_\_\_\_ Credits \_\_\_\_\_

Major/Program \_\_\_\_\_ Current GPA \_\_\_\_\_

Term Credit Hours (current credit hours enrolled, including independent student credits) \_\_\_\_\_

II. Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Attach typewritten document describing in detail the following items:

- Description of learning objectives
- Description of the Independent Study that will be performed
- Description of final project and method of evaluation
- Timeline (meetings, due dates, etc.)

III. Approval Section

**Note:** Maximum cumulative Independent Study credits are 6 for graduate students and 8 for undergraduate students.

Obtain signatures in order listed.

- |    |  |       |
|----|--|-------|
| 1) | _____                                    | _____ |
|    | Student signature                        | date  |
| 2) | _____                                    | _____ |
|    | Faculty supervisor signature             | date  |
| 3) | _____                                    | _____ |
|    | Department chair signature               | date  |
| 4) | _____                                    | _____ |
|    | Program Coordinator or Adviser signature | date  |

## INDEPENDENT STUDY

The purpose of an Independent Study is to provide *highly motivated students* the opportunity to construct a *unique educational experience* that goes beyond the courses contained in the existing course catalog.

The basic rules for Independent Study are:

1. Student must have at least a 3.0 cumulative overall GPA (this requirement can be waived with approval of the faculty member and department chair).
2. Undergraduate students must have achieved major standing.
3. Independent Study **cannot** be used in lieu of a required course.
4. It is the student's responsibility to develop an appropriate area of Independent Study and to arrange for a **full-time** faculty member to direct the Independent Study,
5. Part-time SBA faculty members **cannot** supervise an Independent Study,
6. The Independent Study contract (Attachment A) must be completed by a student and signed by the faculty advisor, department chair, and the Coordinator of Graduate Business Programs or Coordinator of Undergraduate advising **prior to registering** for the course.
7. It is expected that the student will perform an amount of work equivalent to a regular course with the same amount of credits and that a substantive tangible output (exam, written paper, computer program, etc.) be developed.
8. Interdisciplinary cooperation is permitted and a non-SBA-faculty member may **co**-supervise the Independent Study. An SBA full-time faculty member must be the supervisor and is responsible for assigning a final grade.
9. The student must be made aware of the basis for grading prior to registering for an Independent Study.
10. Graduate students **cannot** register for Independent study if they have/are taking more than six cumulative credits of Independent Study unless an exception is agreed to by the Graduate Curriculum Committee.
11. Undergraduate students **cannot** register for Independent study if they have/are taking more than eight cumulative credits of Independent Study unless an exception is agreed to by the Committee on Instruction.

Specific Rules for Faculty:

1. It is the student's responsibility to initiate an appropriate area of Independent Study (faculty are not primarily responsible for developing Independent Study topics).
2. The contract must be signed by a faculty member and the respective representative from the advising staffs (Coordinator of Graduate Business Programs or the Coordinator of Undergraduate Business Programs) prior to registration.
3. The student should perform an amount of work equivalent to a regular course of the same number of credits.
4. It is expected a substantive tangible output (e.g., exams, written paper, and computer program) will exist.
5. Interdisciplinary cooperation is permitted, and a non-SBA faculty person may supervise the student's day-to-day progress in Independent Study and may recommend the grade. However, an SBA faculty person should be the nominal contract signer, and will have final approval over the grade.
6. Part-time faculty may supervise an Independent Study, with approval of the relevant department chair.
7. It is a faculty member's legitimate responsibility to supervise qualified Independent Study students during the regular academic year and during spring or summer if the faculty member is teaching.
8. Grading is up to the instructor who is supervising the work. Students should be made aware of the grading basis before beginning the independent study. Grades must be entered through the internet OU home page before the end of the semester.

Additional Rules for Graduate Students:

Before an Independent Study contract can be completed for a graduate student, the Graduate Program Coordinator must verify that:

1. The student has not taken more than six cumulative credits of Independent Study unless approved by a Petition of Exception, or
2. the Independent Study is not being used in lieu of any graduate course without prior approval of the Graduate Program Coordinator and relevant Department Chair (certain upper-division undergraduate courses [400 to 499] may occasionally be used in lieu of graduate courses, in which case the graduate student will enroll for an Independent Study and will be awarded three credits [not four]).
3. An Independent Study Contract initiated by the student and approved by the sponsoring faculty member must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Business Programs, who will process the registration.

Additional Rules for Undergraduates:

1. The faculty member may waive the 3.0 GPA requirement, but not major standing. GPA waivers must be noted on the contract.
2. The student must have a contract signed by all relevant parties and a note from an SBA adviser to register for an Undergraduate Independent Study.
3. No student may use more than eight cumulative credits of Independent Study to meet degree requirements.

Informal Faculty Guidelines:

1. Consider a student's preparation (skills, courses taken, grades, motivation) before agreeing to supervise an Independent Study. You need not agree if the evidence suggests that the proposed work will be beyond the student's capability, without inordinate assistance on your part. Recommend ways that the student can acquire the needed skills, or suggest a postponement if it would be appropriate to try again later.
2. Consider a student's motives for wanting an Independent Study. These credits carry a disproportionately high cost to SBA, as well as to you, because of the absence of economies of scale. The least persuasive reasons for wanting to take an Independent Study in lieu of other courses are "it's not offered this semester" or "the course I want conflicts with my work schedule." You should not feel pressured by these arguments. Send cases of genuine hardship to an undergraduate advisor or the Office of Graduate Business Programs.
3. The student must file a written contract with the SBA office approximately one week before registration. Enrollment will not be approved unless the contract is on file, or a signed original is submitted to the appropriate Advising Office. The contract should clearly spell out the goals, deadlines, extent and timing of interim progress reports, and basis for grading. If a question of interpretation should arise, the department chairperson will act as an arbitrator.