

**GRADUATE (MBA) INDEPENDENT STUDY  
GUIDELINES & APPLICATION  
School of Business, Ithaca College**

**NATURE AND PURPOSE**

An independent study is designed to allow students to pursue academic topics in greater depth than the coverage of the topic in a class. It normally involves formal, academic study resulting in a substantial, written paper as the final product. An independent study may cover a wholly new subject matter or it may greatly expand the subject matter coverage in regularly offered course. In either case, it must delve deeply into the subject matter and may not be used in lieu of a regularly offered course. Independent studies projects may vary by topic and student.

**APPLYING FOR AN INDEPENDENT STUDY**

To promote successful completion of the Independent Study and a quality outcome, the application process is divided into three stages: (1) defining the research/study question; (2) developing a formal proposal; and (3) completing and submitting the final paper.

**I. Proposing the Research/Study Question**

- Student develops the following and submits in written form to a potential faculty sponsor:
  - Concise statement of the research/study question
  - Preliminary literature review on which independent study will be based
  - Course review citing the specific coverage the topic has received in each applicable course student has taken
  - Statement of the research/study outcomes anticipated by the student
  - Student develops a reading list of other research journals and other sources that he/she expects to integrate into the study
- Faculty member establishes expectations and grading criteria.
- Faculty sponsor reviews, and accepts or declines to be the sponsor.
- If the faculty member accepts the sponsorship of the student, that faculty member submits the proposal to the MBA Program Director for preliminary review.

**II. Developing the Formal Proposal**

- Student, working with the faculty sponsor, refines the research/study question
- Student refines and extends the literature review
- Student refines the research/study outcomes section
- Faculty sponsor writes a review of the feasibility of the research/study and details the structure for successful completion.
- Student and faculty discuss and commit to the process for the conduct of the research/study, including regular meeting times for discussing readings and writings, timetable for submission, review and revision of research, and deadlines for submission of preliminary drafts and final submission. The study should entail a minimum of 45 hours of work per credit hour.
- Student and faculty sponsor jointly submit the independent study proposal for review and approval by the MBA Program Director.
- Upon approval, the MBA Program Director will register the student in the proper course.

**III. Completing and Submitting the Final Paper**

- Upon completion of the independent study, the student submits a final copy of the paper to the faculty sponsor and to the MBA Program Director.
- Faculty submits a grade (Pass/Fail not an option).

**APPLICATION FOR GRADUATE (MBA) INDEPENDENT STUDY**  
**School of Business, Ithaca College**

**Application Checklist:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Application form with signatures  
\_\_\_\_\_ Formal Proposal

Number of credits proposed for this study: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of credits completed *prior* to this study: \_\_\_\_\_  
Which semester will this ind. study be taken? SP FA SU \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Independent Study Course # \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Local Address \_\_\_\_\_

Local Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please list MBA courses that explicitly relate to the proposed study:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Faculty Sponsor for this independent study \_\_\_\_\_

**REQUIRED SIGNATURES**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty Sponsor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Sponsor Comments (if applicable):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**MBA Program Director Review: \_\_\_\_\_ approved \_\_\_\_\_ denied**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Program Director Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Dean Review: \_\_\_\_\_ approved \_\_\_\_\_ denied**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_