

University of Richmond

Independent Study Guidelines for Political Science 390

1. The primary objectives of independent study are to provide opportunities to explore in greater depth academic subject matter encountered in political science or international studies courses or to study matters not covered in the framework of courses offered by the two majors. Independent study work requires a high degree of academic maturity and discipline. As a result, not all students will feel comfortable with the requirements of independent study.
2. Independent study can be taken for 0.5 or 1 unit. The amount and type of work required will vary according to the number of hours taken, the subject matter to be studied, the research approach pursued, and the professor with whom the student works. A one-unit PLSC390 would require the equivalent amount of work as a typical one-unit lecture class (that is, 10 to 14 hours per week tasks on hand); a 0.5-unit version requires half of that amount of work.
3. Faculty members are generally willing to explore the possibilities of independent study with any student who is serious about meeting one of the objectives outlined in guideline 1. For students with a solid background in our regular courses, the 390 option provides an opportunity to expand the traditional curriculum through an student-initiated course of study or research project.
4. Independent study is not intended as a device for alleviating course-scheduling difficulties or as a means of avoiding a traditional 1 unit course.
5. Students interested in independent study should be prepared to propose a topic to a member of the political science or international studies faculty. Registration for independent study generally will not be permitted until the Independent Study Agreement Form has been signed. Specifically, an initial reading list, course requirements, and timetable for student/faculty consultations must be agreed upon before a student has the responsibility for seeking faculty advice and submitting work in a timely fashion.
6. Faculty members who agree to supervise an independent study are responsible for advising the student in developing and carrying out the work, meeting with the student according to an agreed upon schedule, and evaluating the student's progress and course work. At the end of the semester, the professor is to forward the grades to the Department Chair, unless other arrangements are made.
7. All PLSC390: Independent Study requires department approval. The student and the supervising faculty should fill out the following form, return it to the Department Chair before the end of the Add/Drop period. Only when the departmental approval is given can a student register online for PLSC390.

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Independent Study Agreement Form

Name _____ Major _____

School Address _____ Year _____

Local Telephone _____ Email _____

UR ID _____

I. Proposed area of study (title and/or one paragraph description).

II. Proposed unit (0.5 or 1 unit): _____

III. Course requirements (including timetable for meetings between faculty member and student, dates due for course submissions, and an initial reading list). Attach sheets if necessary.

The above agreement has been mutually agreed upon by the student and the faculty member in accordance with the "Independent Study Guidelines for PLSC390."

Student _____ Date _____

Faculty Member _____ Date _____

Department Chair _____ Date _____