

University of Connecticut  
Department of  
Allied Health Sciences

Independent Study  
In Allied Health  
AH 3099

**Guidebook**

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**THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES (AHS)  
INDEPENDENT STUDY GUIDEBOOK**

**I. DEFINITION OF AN INDEPENDENT STUDY**

An Independent Study (an elective course that is optional for completion of a major within the Allied Health Sciences department) is an academic-based “course” designed to engage a student in independent inquiry and investigation of a topic of interest under the guidance and supervision of an appointed faculty member from the Allied Health Sciences department. The study is expected to cover academic topics not typically covered in regular course offerings.

**II. OVERVIEW OF AN INDEPENDENT STUDY**

Junior- and Senior-status students enrolled in the Department of Allied Health Sciences at the University of Connecticut may enroll in an academic independent study. An independent study is a 2-way cooperative venture between a faculty member (Allied Health Sciences’ instructor/faculty advisor) and a student. Students engaging in an independent study are expected to be independent, self-motivated, autonomous and unconventional in their approach to their learning. Also, students are expected to have completed courses that will provide the appropriate background or preparation needed to engage in the independent study. The independent study must include an academic component and a learning product(s) that are graded. As such, the student is expected to take the lead in developing an area of interest and inquiry that will add to and expand upon the student’s intellectual capabilities that helps:

- Connect, apply, and expand on academic learning to real-world environments
- Assist in independent learning in an area not offered within a standard course of study
- Develop independent thought, critical thinking, professionalism, and communication

Students may participate in academic independent study during the summer or while they carry a full- or part-time student course load. The fee associated with earning credit for academic independent study is included in the student's regular semester tuition. Fees for independent study credit taken during the summer will be under the summer tuition structure (fees vary by the number of credits). Course grade and credit will be awarded by the AHS faculty instructor based on the grading criteria outlined in the Learning Agreement and the learning product(s) submitted by the student.

This document outlines the specific details of the independent study and is intended to give the student an understanding of the obligations and expectations of the experience.

**III. GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURE: Student must follow the guidelines and requirements found herein.**

1. Ensure you have Junior or Senior standing in the AHS department prior to the start of the independent study.
2. Identify a potential topic of investigation. This usually requires persistence, enthusiasm, and knowledge about what you want. Speak with your faculty advisor, instructors, search the internet, and consult potential employers for ideas. It is the student’s responsibility to identify potential topics and areas of study. AHS faculty are not responsible to identify or ensure an independent study topic.
3. An independent study typically spans the fall or spring semester but can be done during a summer session. The scale for hours to credits is below. An Independent Study requires a minimum of 45 hours with a maximum of four (4) credits (~ 12 hours per week) in any one independent study. Credits may vary based on the agreement with the faculty member.

<i>Time</i>	<i>Hours</i>	<i>Credits</i>
<i>45-60 hours</i>	<i>3-4 hr/wk X 14 wks</i>	<i>1 credit</i>
<i>61-120 hours</i>	<i>6-8 hr/wk X 14 wks</i>	<i>2 credits</i>
<i>120+ hours</i>	<i>&gt;9 hr/wk X 14 wks</i>	<i>3 credits</i>

4. This course may be repeated provided that the sum total does not exceed six credits. Students in the *Allied Health Sciences major* may only count a total of 6 credits combined of Independent Study, Internship, and International Study toward the major requirements.
5. Identify an AHS faculty member who will be willing to work with you and perform the role of the instructor of record. Any member of the AHS faculty can serve as the instructor; however, it is the faculty instructor's discretion to engage in an independent study or not. Ideally the faculty instructor is appropriate to the independent study topic.
6. Develop the Learning Agreement. The student takes the lead in the development of the Learning Agreement with guidance from the faculty instructor. Learning Agreements should be submitted to the faculty instructor for initial approval. Please note the following with respect to approval:
  - *Independent study requests within one month of the start date or once the academic semester begins will not be approved except under extenuating circumstances.*
  - *Independent study credit will not be approved retroactively nor for previous experience.*
7. The function of the Learning Agreement is to establish a binding agreement between the student and the faculty instructor on the purposes and logistics of the student's independent study. The learning objectives should be specific, well thought out and articulated within the Learning Agreement (you are essentially building a course syllabus). The Learning Agreement will provide as much detail as possible about the a) learning objectives, b) student's role and responsibilities in the independent study (learning activities), c) work products, d) submission dates, and e) criteria for grading/evaluation of the student. Students outline the Learning Agreement and consult with the faculty instructor for consideration and approval. The Learning Agreement must be finalized and signed by both parties before it can be approved by the student's advisor and Department Head. *Department Head approval is required prior to the registration and start of the independent study.*
8. Provide signed copies of the following forms along with the Learning Agreement to the faculty instructor.
  - a. Rights and Responsibilities Form
  - b. Personal Property Waiver Form
  - c. Independent Study Authorization Form (on Registrar website)
9. Enroll in the appropriate Independent Study course (AH 3099, DIET 3099, DGS 3999 or MLSC 4099). University policy, procedures and add/drop deadlines apply.
10. Perform the independent study. Be sure to make progress on your learning product(s). Keep copies of all required paperwork.
11. To complete the independent study, submit learning project(s) in accordance with the timeline established in the Learning Agreement. At the conclusion of the independent study submit all learning product(s) to the faculty instructor.
12. A final grade of A-F will be assigned to students by the faculty instructor and will be based on the grading/evaluation criteria outlined in the Learning Agreement.

### **Student Procedure Checklist for Approval**

- Ensure junior/senior standing
- Identify potential independent study
- Identify faculty member to serve as faculty Instructor
- Complete Learning Agreement
- Obtain signature of all parties on the Learning Agreement; original must be submitted to the Main Office.
- Provide a signed copy of all forms with the Learning Agreement
- Enroll in the Independent study course; University policy, procedures and add/drop deadlines apply.

## IV. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### A. Faculty Instructor Responsibilities

The faculty instructor is a faculty member in the Department of Allied Health Sciences at the University of CT Storrs campus and has the responsibility of advising the student regarding University independent study policies, coordinating the independent study in collaboration with the student, and completing the final evaluation and grading.

The Faculty Instructor:

1. Assists student with the development of the Learning Agreement.
2. Evaluates educational objectives and outcomes for the independent study to be consistent with the learning objectives for the major, reviews and approves the Learning Agreement.
3. Oversees student progress in the independent study consistent with the timeline established.
4. Evaluates completion of educational objectives and outcomes, and records student performance.
5. Assigns a grade and submits the student evaluation to the official office of record.

### B. Student Responsibilities

The independent study is an academic self-guided, specific area of inquiry beneficial to allied health education. It is through this course of study that students learn to apply the skills learned in the classroom, engage in independent thought and inquiry to acquire new learning in the student's area of interest. The faculty instructor is not obligated to engage students in independent studies. Doing so requires time, commitment and follow-through on their time towards your education. Therefore, students are expected to engage in kind and adhere to all requirements as they would in a traditional course.

#### ❖ *Professionalism*

Students should strive to establish a **good working relationship** with all personnel that they come in contact with during their independent study. Students may be asked to complete tasks they would rather not do and/or encounter personality conflicts. These may occur just as they do in all aspects of life. While engaging in an independent study, however, it is expected that the student will put aside personal differences and work collegially with other personnel. Students should consult with the appropriate personnel anytime a question about proper protocol or procedure arises. If unsure of what the correct course of action is, it is the student's responsibility to determine proper protocol and proceed accordingly. Depending upon the situation, consultation with the faculty instructor or others may be appropriate. Students must develop and demonstrate the ability to determine which types of circumstances are best answered by each of the above. Conflicts not able to be resolved with the faculty instructor should be reported to the department head.

#### ❖ *Dependability, Initiative, Accountability and Communication*

Students are expected to take the initiative to have a thorough understanding of the objectives to engage in activities to optimize the learning experience. Students are expected to complete assignments of quality in accordance with the Learning Agreement by the assigned deadline dates. Students should keep the faculty instructor informed of their progress on a regular basis. Seek out feedback on performance and discuss issues of concern in a timely and professional manner with the faculty instructor. Talk honestly and professionally with the faculty instructor if difficulties are experienced.

#### ❖ *Confidentiality*

Students engaged in independent study may be exposed to or work with patient, confidential or proprietary information. Therefore, students have a moral, ethical and legal responsibility to maintain the confidential nature of this information. All information is the property of the university and/or department and students may be required to sign documents regarding confidentiality and proprietary information. ***Any unauthorized release of confidential information by any student to unauthorized personnel will be grounds for immediate failure of the independent study. Additional disciplinary***

*action may apply depending on the nature of the violation (i.e. failure of the course, University or other disciplinary action).*

❖ ***Attendance***

Students may be expected to be in attendance at events or other activities during regularly assigned times (if applicable to their learning objectives). You will be expected to be ON TIME and ready for the activity. Students are expected to inform the faculty instructor in the event of an absence prior to the event/activity. Because the independent study may be designed to simulate a work experience under professional guidance, the student must demonstrate professional behavior by notifying the appropriate person(s) as early in the day as possible. Excessive tardiness or absences may be factored into the course evaluation and may result in an “F” for the course if applicable to the completion of the independent study.

❖ ***Length of the Independent Study, Hours***

The total length of the independent study and hours required are outlined in the Learning Agreement. The faculty instructor must approve, in writing, any variance from the Learning Agreement and submit to the department. The scale for hours to credits is below. An Independent Study requires a minimum of 45 hours with a maximum of four (4) credits (~ 12 hours per week) in any one independent study. Credits may vary based on the agreement with the faculty member.

<i>Time</i>	<i>Hours</i>	<i>Credits</i>
<i>45-60 hours</i>	<i>3-4 hr/wk X 14 wks</i>	<i>1 credit</i>
<i>61-120 hours</i>	<i>6-9 hr/wk X 14 wks</i>	<i>2 credits</i>
<i>120+ hours</i>	<i>&gt;9 hr/wk X 14 wks</i>	<i>3 credits</i>

❖ ***Dress***

Students are expected to comply with the policies of the independent study with regard to dress if applicable.

❖ ***Harassment***

It is expected that all students be treated equitably within the independent study. The University of Connecticut does not condone harassment by or directed toward any person or group within its community – students, employees, and visitors. You must treat all co-workers, including others encountered during the independent study, politely and professionally. Alert your faculty instructor if you are subjected to or observe such behavior.

❖ ***Personal Accommodations***

Inform your faculty instructor of the accommodations you might need to successfully complete your work assignments. Students must be aware of and meet the essential observational, movement (physical) and communication requirements of the independent study (if applicable).

❖ ***Fees and Expenses***

The student is responsible for payment to the University the **usual tuition and fees** as paid by all University students when participating in an independent study. The student is responsible for his/her own transportation to any site as outlined in the Learning Agreement. The student should allow for transportation expenses, which could include cost of gasoline, parking fees & cost of air travel/bus/train where necessary. The student is also liable for his/her safety in travel to or from assigned areas. The University of Connecticut and the Department of Allied Health Sciences are not responsible for identification, liability for or payment of room and board while engaging in an independent study experience. Students assume all responsibility with respect to fees associated with engaging in an independent study experience.

## V. **LEARNING AGREEMENT: Documentation of Learning**

Documentation of learning may be done in a variety of ways and should specifically be outlined in the Learning Agreement. The function of the Learning Agreement is to establish a binding agreement between the student and the faculty instructor (University of Connecticut faculty member) on the purposes and logistics of the student's independent study. Each should keep a copy and the original must be submitted to the main office for filing in the student folder.

The Learning Agreement will provide as much detail as possible about the:

1. student's role and responsibilities in the Independent Study (learning activities)
2. learning objectives
3. criteria for grading/evaluation of the student
4. work products required

The following are typical methods used to evaluate student learning through an Independent Study; however students should be creative in their inquiry methods:

- 1. Reflective journal.** Students, either on a daily or weekly basis, enter a summary of their work and overall experience for the recent period. It is recommended that students follow a regular format including date, activity, work performed, what they learned, and how this helped them develop personal and/or professional skills.
- 2. Progress reports.** At regular intervals, weekly, bi-weekly or midterm, students provide the faculty instructor with a progress report of their work output, experience and how they are moving toward the achievement of their objectives. Often this is done by e-mail.
- 3. Product samples.** If the student was engaged in an experience where a product of any kind was involved, a sample of that product is provided to the faculty instructor with a thorough explanation of the student's involvement in the creation/development, etc., of that product.
- 5. Final report.** A scholarly written report of the achievement of their learning objectives. The format of the report is determined in conference with the faculty instructor.
- 6. Presentation.** When public speaking and presentations are commonly part of the career field, often a public presentation is required as part of the grading criteria. The student and faculty instructor should discuss the format and venue of the presentation.
- 7. Publication.** Occasionally, a student is involved in a project that warrants professional publication. The faculty instructor may assist the student in the presentation of their work for submission to a professional journal or other periodical. The process of preparing for a professional publication is part of the learning experience and worthy of grading consideration.

## VI. **LEARNING AGREEMENT AND FORMS**

### A. **Learning Agreement**

All students enrolled in an independent study must complete and have approved a *Learning Agreement*. The learning Agreement will provide as much detail as possible about the a) learning objectives, b) student's role and responsibilities in the independent study (learning activities), c) work products, d) submission dates, and e) criteria for grading/evaluation of the student. Students outline the learning Agreement and consult with the faculty instructor for consideration and approval. The Agreement must be finalized and signed by both parties before it can be approved by the student's advisor and Department Head. *Department Head approval is required prior to the registration and start of the independent study.*

**B. Rights and Responsibilities Form**

The *Rights and Responsibilities Form* acknowledges that the student received a copy of the Independent Study Guidebook, understands his/her responsibility as it relates to information in the guidebook, had an opportunity to review and ask questions regarding the contents of the Guidebook and the requirements of the Independent Study, and that the student accepts participation in the Independent Study and will abide by to the policies and requirements as outlined in the Guidebook and the Learning Agreement.

**C. Property Waiver: Personal Property Waiver Form**

All students enrolled in an Independent Study in the Department of Allied Health Sciences are required to complete a *Personal Property Waiver Form*, which indicates that the Department of Allied Health Sciences, and the University of Connecticut are not responsible for loss, damage, and /or theft to a student's personal property while engaging in an Independent Study experience.

**D. Independent Study Authorization Form**

All students enrolled in an Independent Study in the Department of Allied Health Sciences are required to complete the Independent Study Authorization form. This form is needed in order for the registrar's office to assign the correct number of credits and to provide an independent study title on your transcript. Students should NOT be registering without this form (i.e. using a permission # only). Doing so will not allow you to have your independent study title listed on your transcript.

University of Connecticut  
 Department of Allied Health Sciences  
**Independent Study in Allied Health Learning Agreement**

Directions:

- 1) Obtain an Independent Study Authorization Form (<http://registrar.uconn.edu/forms>).
- 2) Complete student section (Part I) of this Agreement.
- 3) Meet with the faculty instructor and complete Part II of this Agreement and obtain signature on the Independent Study Authorization Form.
- 4) Obtain faculty advisor signature (Part III) on this Agreement and on the Independent Study Authorization Form.
- 5) Submit the Independent Study Learning Agreement, supporting forms, and the Independent Study Authorization Form to the Dep't of Allied Health Science's Main Office for Department Head approval (Part IV).
- 6) Submit the signed Independent Study Authorization form to the Registrar's Office. *Authorization and Agreement forms must be completed by the add/drop deadline; refer to the Independent Study in Allied Health: AH 3099 Guidebook for required dates for department approval.*
- 7) The original signed Learning Agreement and forms remain in the student's file in the main office.

**Part I: To be completed by student:** The student assumes the responsibility to coordinate and ensure this Agreement is complete prior to submitting it to the faculty Instructor and the Department head.

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Student ID:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Student email address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Program:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Concentration (if applicable):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Credit standing:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Faculty Advisor:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

My signature verifies that I am capable of and committed to participation in the independent study as described below. I also agree to abide by the policies and procedures as outlined to me as a University of Connecticut student. I understand that failure (including but not exclusive) to meet objectives, effective requirements, institution requirements and/or attendance policies may result in an unsatisfactory grade for this independent study.

**Part II: To be completed by Faculty Instructor: Complete after Part I has been completed and signed.**

**Faculty Instructor (print name):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Faculty Instructor phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Course Catalog number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Section number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Credit hours\*:** (variable 1- 6 credits): \_\_\_\_\_

**Semester:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grading:** Graded (A-F)

\*Students may count up to 6 credits of combined Independent Study, Internship, and/or International Study course work toward the major.

Title of the Independent Study (as it will appear on the transcript): \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of participation (hourly, weekly): \_\_\_\_\_

Total hours for Independent Study: \_\_\_\_\_

Time	Hours	Credits
45-60 hours	3-4 hr/wk X 14 wks	1 credit
61-120 hours	6-10 hr/wk X 14 wks	2 credits
120+ hours	>9 hr/wk X 14 wks	3 credits



UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES  
Independent Study

**Rights and Responsibilities Form**

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_  
(PRINT NAME)

Student ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Independent Study Course number: (i.e. AH 3099) \_\_\_\_\_ Semester: \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this form, I am accepting the statements indicated below:

- 1) I acknowledge that participation in an Independent Study experience is not mandatory for completion of the Allied Health Sciences major.
- 2) I acknowledge that the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources, the Department of Allied Health Sciences, and participating faculty assume no responsibility as it relates to my personal being and that I assume full responsibility for participation in an Independent Study.
- 3) I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Independent Study Guidebook.
- 4) I understand that it is my responsibility to read the policies and requirements as stated in this Guidebook.
- 5) I have had an opportunity to review and ask questions regarding the contents of the Guidebook and the requirements of the Independent Study.
- 6) I accept participation in the Independent Study and will abide by to the policies and requirements as outlined in the Guidebook.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Please return this form along with the Independent Study Learning Agreement.**

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES  
Independent Study

**Personal Property Waiver Form**

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_  
(PRINT NAME)

Student ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Independent Study Course number: (i.e. AH 3099) \_\_\_\_\_ Semester: \_\_\_\_\_

My signature below signifies that I understand that during my participation in an Independent Study:

- 1) The College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources, the Department of Allied Health Sciences, and participating faculty are not responsible for loss, damage or theft to my personal property while traveling to or during an event associated with the independent study.
- 2) If I am at a designated facility or agency, they are not responsible for loss, damage or theft to my personal property.
- 3) If I bring any personal property to my Independent Study event, I understand that I assume all responsibility if it is lost, stolen, and/or damaged.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Please return this form along with the Independent Study Learning Agreement.**