



Department of Computer Science
College of Computing and Informatics

Course Number	
Sent to SRC	
Student Registered	
Number of Credits	

Ph.D. Independent Study Contract

The PhD curriculum requires students to take 18 credits towards the Depth Requirement, which consists of at least 3 but no more than 9 credits of independent study. The main purpose of independent study is to assist in identifying an advisor and also to prepare for the candidacy milestone. The agreement should be formalized by completing the IS form and forwarding the completed form to the Graduate Coordinator. The workload as presented in the IS should justify the number of requested credits. The form requires that you specify how many credits the IS course is for (typically three credits, but it could be for one or two credits) and describe the work to be done. The form should include a reading list and state how often the student will meet or interact with the faculty member (typically, if it is a 3 credit course the student should meet or interact with the Professor for a minimum of 3 hours each week) and what will be counted towards the grade. The student and the professor must both sign the form before submitting it, indicating there is an agreement to the terms described. The title of the IS can be no longer than 30 characters including spaces; otherwise, it will be returned to you for correction. The Graduate Committee will evaluate the IS and reserves the right for further verification of content. If there is any lacking material the IS must be revised and the student will be notified and required to follow up with the requested material.

Following the Qualifying milestone (generally in the 2nd academic year in the PhD program), students should schedule the IS credits. Depending on the student's academic standing, here are possible ways to use the IS credits:

- *To prepare for the candidacy milestone (3 credits);*
- *To study a topic in depth that is not covered by a course;*
- *If the student doesn't have an Academic Advisor, he or she can use 3 to 6 credits to identify research topics of interest;*
- *If the student already has an Academic Advisor, he or she can use 3 credits to prepare for the candidacy milestone and the remaining credits towards thesis proposal or to explore other related areas of study (for example, with faculty who might be included on his or her thesis committee).*

PhD students may not take an independent study if there is a course that the University offers that covers the same topics, or if the student is receiving financial compensation for the work. The IS Advisor must be a tenured or tenure-track faculty member. We also discourage students from doing an independent study outside of the Department; however, if the student has a co-supervisor from outside the Department, this may be allowed, following approval from the Graduate Advisor.

The deadline for submitting independent study credits for approval is three weeks before the start of term; this will allow time for the student to search for other options if the request is denied. Please submit your form to the Graduate Coordinator. Generally, a turnaround time of one week is expected and a decision will be given to the student. If approved, the Graduate Coordinator will request the credits and send an email to the student once the independent study appears on the student's schedule.

Student Name _____ ID# _____

Instructor Name _____ Term Offered _____

To be filled out by Student and Instructor: (All questions are MANDATORY and must be filled out to completion!)

Course Title _____

Number of Credits _____ Date work will be completed _____

Course Description _____

Assigned Reading (include both text names and authors and the specific pages and chapters that the student will cover in each text):

***Please attach the reading list.**

Written Assignments that the student will turn in and the dates on which each assignment is due (attach additional sheet if necessary) _____

Indicate whether or not the student will be expected to take any exams and if so indicate when, how many, and the nature of the exams (take-home, in-class, other.) _____

How often will the student and faculty member meet to discuss the work? (a three credit course requires three hours of interaction) _____

How will the final grade be determined? _____

Reason for taking this course as an independent study course:

___ Preparation for candidacy exam ___ Research project with educational component
___ No course exists for this topic

Student Date Instructor Date

To Be Filled out by Advisor:

This course will be allowed to count toward:

- ☐ Intermediate CS (Breadth)
☐ Advanced CS (Depth)
☐ Preparation for candidacy exam (Minimum of three credits required)

Graduate Advisor Date Department Head Date