

# Independent Study (policies as of 2012-7-3)

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I value the opportunity to work one-on-one with a student who: (1) has a strong interest in studying and writing about a subject (about which I know enough to be a useful guide and grader) that is not covered in any of our regular classes; and (2) does the work required to learn and write about that subject outside the regular classroom environment. This kind of work is serious business for both the student and the instructor, and if it is treated that way by both people it can be a great learning experience that is also great fun. It is in that spirit that I seek to make the basic structure of that serious business clear up front. If you would like to enlist me as your instructor for an independent study, here is what you should do:

**1. Regulations:** Know and follow the law school's regulations governing independent study.

**2. Written proposal:** Give me a written proposal before the end of the second semester of your penultimate year of law school that includes: (a) a one-paragraph description of the subject you want to study and why you want to study it; (b) an outline of your proposed course of study, including lists of the works (books, articles, opinions, statutes, etc.) you have already read and the works you will read in your study of the subject in which you are interested; (c) a short outline or one-paragraph description of the paper you propose to write; (d) the specific dates on which you will meet or beat the deadlines specified below; and (e) the number of course credits you are seeking, and whether you want to be graded on the regular letter-grade scale (A+ to F) or CR/NC (aka credit/no credit or pass/fail).

**3. Deadlines:** Please note that these are deadlines, not guidelines. You must honor them to complete and get credit for an independent study with me.

Written proposal: Before the end of the second semester of your penultimate year of law school.

Start date for reading, research, and writing: Before the end of the summer before your last year of law school.

Detailed outline and bibliography for your paper: Also before the end of the summer before your last year of law school.

Complete (meaning researched, written, footnoted, and proofread) draft of your paper: Before the middle of your penultimate semester of law school.

Final version of your paper for grading: Before the end of your penultimate semester of law school.

**4. Grade:** It is based on a scholarly paper researched and written entirely by you demonstrating that you have learned what you set out to learn and that you can pass that knowledge on to someone else (me, for starters) in the form that remains the lawyer's basic stock in trade: the written word. **Fair warning:** Plagiarism is forbidden and I reserve the right to detect plagiarists by any reasonable means, including, but not limited to, plagiarism-detection software.