

HSC 4905 – Independent Research

Purpose: This course is designed to provide the student with an opportunity to gain or enhance health science knowledge and to explore an area of interest related to health research or the delivery and/or administration of health services.

Objectives (one or more of the following may be met depending upon the project):

- Students expand current knowledge in a specific area of interest
- Students develop or enhance skills in analyzing, synthesizing, and integrating health-related information or experiences
- Students develop or enhance skills in project identification, development, management, and/or implementation
- Students develop or enhance skills in presenting relevant material in oral and/or written formats
- Students develop or enhance professional work habits
- Students remediate deficient areas of knowledge, behavior, or skills

Course Design: This is a variable credit course (1-4 credits repeatable to a maximum of 16). Credit hours are determined by the length and intensity of the independent study requirements.

Registration: The student will not be able to register on ISIS for the independent study course. The dean's office must register the student. In order to be registered for this course, the student must turn in the signed Contractual Agreement (included in this packet). No student will be registered until this documentation is received in the dean's office. This completed form should be returned to HPNP, room 3189.

Requirements:

1. Students discuss their general topic with a faculty member with whom they would like to complete the independent study project and solicit the faculty member's commitment to being the project mentor.
2. Once the faculty supervisor is identified, the student and faculty mentor determine the specific project in which the student will be involved. After this discussion, the student presents a typed outline of the independent study project to the faculty supervisor, who must approve the outline prior to the student initiating the project itself. The outline must include the goals of the independent study, the elements required, and a timeline for completion of all required elements. Students are encouraged to receive this outline approval by the end of the first week of class.
3. Once the outline is acceptable, the faculty member will add the grading requirements and the approximate dates of any intermediate evaluations (minimally at midterm; see #5).
4. Once all elements are added to the outline, both the student and the faculty supervisor sign the outline. This outline serves as the formal contract for the independent study project. This contract must be signed before initiating the project itself.
5. Students will participate in a formal feedback session minimally at the mid-term in order to receive feedback and modify their project as needed to reach a passing level on the project. Students must complete the project elements agreed upon by the end of the term.

Grading: Grading will be specified in the contract with the student and will be determined by the faculty member based on the requirements for the independent study. Both S/U and graded options are available. Regardless of the independent study project, the student must successfully complete all project elements agreed upon in the contract by the end of the term to receive a passing grade. That is, the student is required to complete all project components, is required to submit interim reports/components of the project to the faculty supervisor by all dates specified, and must submit the final project in the format agreed upon by the deadline. Failure to meet any of the terms of the outline can result in an unsatisfactory grade. The final paper must be graded as satisfactory by the faculty supervisor for the student to receive a passing grade. Incomplete grading

will only be considered for extenuating circumstances, such as medical issues. General guidelines for papers are attached.

Academic Integrity: Each student is bound by the academic honesty guidelines of the University and the student conduct code printed in the Undergraduate Catalog. The Honor Code states: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity." Cheating or plagiarism in any form is unacceptable and inexcusable behavior.

Class Attendance: Students are expected to attend all meetings set up with their supervisor and to complete all professional obligations agreed upon as part of the independent study.

Policy on Make-Up Work/Exams: Students are allowed to make up work ONLY as the result of illness or other unanticipated circumstances warranting a medical excuse and resulting in the student missing an exam or project deadline, consistent with College policy. Documentation from a health care provider is required. Examinations, progress reports, or work missed for any other reason will receive a grade of zero.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Students requiring accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students' Office. The Dean of Students' Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the faculty member when requesting accommodation. The College of Public Health and Health Professions is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to assist students in their coursework.

PAPER GUIDELINES

Upon successful completion of the student's project, the student submits a typed summary of the research, including comprehensive literature review, methods, results, and discussion. For non-research projects, the paper must include a comprehensive literature review, thorough description of the project itself, conclusions based on project outcome, discussion of project implications, and potential future directions. The faculty member will assist the student in determining the specific content required in the paper.

The paper requirements are delineated below:

- The paper length is determined by the faculty member based on the number of credits and the project involved.
- The paper must be appropriately and comprehensively referenced. That is, the number of references must be sufficient to cover all primary and secondary points in the paper. References must predominantly represent contemporary thinking on the topic of interest although it is recognized that classic work on a topic also may be appropriate to include. References must be from peer-reviewed journals and texts. Web-based references are not acceptable without the explicit permission of the supervisor. The student should discuss the reference list with the faculty supervisor as the project develops.
- The paper must be well written. That is, the paper must be well proofread and grammatically correct to be accepted. Papers that are poorly constructed, whether based on content, grammar, or general proofing, will be returned to the student to revise. The student is encouraged to take advantage of the UF Teaching Center to assist with paper construction.
- The paper must be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point font, and with one-inch margins
- The paper must be typed in APA style, including references, and must be accompanied by an abstract.