

LIS 601 – Independent Study

An independent study offers a valuable opportunity for the Ph.D. student to pursue in greater depth an issue or specific problem related to library and information science. The study is not a substitute for the topics covered in existing courses. Projects can be adapted to individual students' interests or the common goals of a small group of students working together. The results of the study should be summarized in a paper for the faculty sponsor. Independent studies are usually for 3 credit hours.

Process

A student initiates an independent study by conceptualizing an issue or problem appropriate to his/her background and experience. The next step is to discuss this with a faculty member in whose area of specialization the project seems to fall and who might be willing to serve as the project's official sponsor. This discussion should take place several weeks before the start of the semester in which the independent study is contemplated. Faculty are entirely free to decline project sponsorship in any individual instance.

Once there is a faculty sponsor, the student develops a full statement of the dimensions of the investigation or examination, and the objectives to be reached using the LIS 601 independent study form. The proposal should be brief and consistent with the need to provide adequate indication of the student's research methods and objectives. The independent study proposal must be submitted in final form to the faculty sponsor for approval prior to the beginning of the semester in which the project is contemplated. After the faculty sponsor signs the proposal, the student delivers the completed form to the Coordinator of the SLIS PhD Program. Once the Coordinator has signed the form, he/she will request relevant personnel to register the student for the course. The digital copy of the signed form will be emailed to the student, the faculty sponsor, and PhD Program Assistant (slisphd@simmons.edu); and the PhD Program Assistant will save the digital copy of the signed form as the record for the student.

Academic Credit

The faculty sponsor assigns a final grade for an independent study project.

Publication

The student is normally at liberty to publish his/her own work without permission from the School. The courtesy of a footnote or introductory acknowledgement is, however, requested. SLIS is interested in actively encouraging the publication of completed independent study projects representing useful contributions to professional literature.