

# Independent Study & Curricular Practical Training (CPT) GUIDELINES

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## SUMA PS5997 Independent Study

**Independent Study** is a one- or three-credit course that can count toward the curriculum area requirement in Integrative Sustainability Management, Economics and Quantitative Analysis, Physical Dimensions, Public Policy, General and Financial Management, or Elective, with the approval of the faculty advisor. A final deliverable relating to the Sustainability Management curriculum is required at the end of the semester, and will be evaluated for a letter grade by the faculty advisor and reported to the SUMA program office.

### The following are required to register for this course:

1. Prepare a 1-page independent study description and a final deliverable you plan to produce and the dates by which you'll do so.
2. List the name of the faculty advisor who is willing to oversee your project and their written sign off on the project proposal.
3. Indicate under which curriculum area you will be counting the independent study.
4. Include existing degree audit form for review.

### International Students

- Students can have an internship count for a for-credit elective course (SUMA PS5997 Independent Study) that satisfies degree requirements as **Curricular Practical Training (CPT)**. Eligibility can vary, and we recommend visiting the International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) to discuss your specific circumstances. The material requirements from the SUMA program for CPT are the same as for Independent Study; there might be additional requirements for the ISSO.
- The program office will sign off on CPT paperwork once all other requirements are submitted, including a proposal and faculty advisor approval.

### REGISTRATION DEADLINE

Students interested in completing an Independent Study should submit proposals no later than Five (5) Business Days before the end of add/drop period to ensure timely processing.

**NOTE: SUMA students can complete up to two Independent Studies as part of their degree requirements, and they take them as a one-credit or a three-credit option.**

## Important Questions & Details

### ***Who can serve as a faculty advisor?***

- Any instructor at Columbia willing to oversee your work can act as your faculty advisor for the independent study. Please note that the advisor will need to provide approval and confirmation in writing and that they need to provide a grade in a timely manner.

### ***What does the faculty advisor have to do?***

- The faculty advisor will need to provide a grade on your final deliverable to the program office. Usually, students meet with their advisors before the term to set the deliverable, and the instructor reviews the final deliverable for grading and sends the final grade to the program office. Instructors may also meet with students throughout the term to advise on the student's project. The work is managed independently by the student and no Canvas site will be created.

### ***What is considered proof that an instructor is willing to oversee the project?***

- An email or letter from the instructor providing approval can serve as sufficient proof.

### ***Which curriculum area is the independent study approved for?***

- The student should identify the area based on the work you plan to complete in your independent study, and the curriculum areas you have completed so far.

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## **Final Deliverable Guidelines**

An Independent Study provides students with the opportunity for greater exploration of a particular topic or specific area of interest. Designing the independent study is an important part of the process. Generally, the work for an independent study should be comparable to a graduate-level classroom course. The specific format of the work will be determined by the student and the advisor who will evaluate it. The work for the study should be submitted according to the schedule and outline established in the project proposal.

Students have the flexibility of choosing the format of the final deliverable, depending on the nature of the study. A 10-15 Page Final Paper is the most common format; however, students have the opportunity for creative projects, which could also include:

- One or more written documents or reports
- PowerPoint Presentations
- Conference/Symposium Presentations
- Multimedia Productions
- Case Studies