IUPUI Department of Sociology  
Faculty Guidelines  
For the R497 Independent Study  (12/08)

Eligibility for independent study: 
Students must be declared minors or majors in sociology. Prerequisites include 12 credit hours of sociology (6 at IUPUI), with a 3.0 GPA in sociology and 2.5 overall. Some sociology majors elect to do an independent study as their capstone course. Such students must be a second semester junior or a senior, have 80+ credit hours, and have completed - at the very least - Theory, Research Methods and 4 out of 5 of their electives. Most students will do their Independent Study with a faculty member they have already had as an instructor, but the Director of Undergraduate Studies may approach a faculty member who has not taught a student, if that faculty member’s area of expertise is particularly congruent with the student’s study topic. Arrangements for Independent Study courses must be completed well in advance of the beginning of a semester. All Independent Study courses should be reported to the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

Faculty responsibilities 
1. Initial Contact. Normally, a student will approach you to ask you to act as a potential faculty advisor for the Independent Study. Note that no faculty member is obliged to supervise an independent study student. Faculty members who agree to supervise a student’s independent study should contact the Director of Undergraduate Studies, who will determine if the student meets the academic prerequisites for the Independent Study.

2. Proposal form. Once a student is deemed academically qualified to pursue an Independent Study, s/he should draw up with the faculty member a list of the academic goals for the independent study, along with specific course product/s (paper, journal, annotated bibliography, questionnaire, etc.) and the due dates for each component. The student and the faculty member will then fill out the Independent Study Proposal Form (This form is linked to the department website) and make copies of it for the student, the faculty member and the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

3. Arrange for student registration in R497. The faculty advisor should notify the office coordinator, Whitney Hendress, who will assign the student a section number for the internship.

4. Meeting arrangements. It is recommended that a faculty advisor meet with the student every other week, after submission of whatever specific course product component is due. Regular attendance at these meetings should be a component of the student’s final grade, in addition to the student’s written work.

5. Grading the Independent Study 
Students are responsible for regular meetings with their faculty advisor, as well as for submitting the agreed-upon components on schedule. Initial meetings and deadlines should be scheduled relatively early in the semester (i.e. within the first 4 weeks), and students who fail to meet these initial deadlines should be administratively withdrawn from the course. There must be sufficient work completed by the midterm that the faculty member can be reasonably certain that the student will be able to complete the Independent Study by the end of the semester. If an incomplete must be given, students must have completed 75% of the work (this is SLA policy). Otherwise, the student must be given a failing grade. Therefore, it is vitally important that the student submit a sufficient amount of work prior to the final paper, or the faculty member will be obliged to fail the student. Only in extraordinary circumstances will a student be allowed to take an "Incomplete" in R497.

If the Independent Study is to serve as the sociology capstone, the paper or other course products need to integrate material from the entire major, clearly connect theory to practice, and how relate to the student’s overall college and/or career goals.