Many Sociology majors have found an Independent Study course to be an excellent way to develop specialized knowledge and expertise on a topic they are interested in. If you wish to do an Independent Study, you are expected to have taken the regular sociology course upon which your Independent Study course will build. Note that regularly-scheduled Sociology courses will not normally be offered as an Independent Study course. You can do an Independent Study as one of your 5 sociology electives, or as your Capstone Course.

Who can do an Independent Study?
Any IUPUI sophomore, junior, or senior with a minimum overall GPA of 2.5 and a Sociology GPA of 3.0 can do a Sociology Independent Study. You must also
- be a declared major or minor in Sociology.
- have completed 12 credit hours of Sociology courses (6 of which must be taken at IUPUI) in subjects related to the Independent Study.

If you intend to use the Independent Study as your Capstone, you must meet all of the above requirements. In addition, you must also
- be a second semester junior or a senior
- have completed Theory, Research Methods, and at least 4 of your 5 electives.

Note that, if you do an Independent Study as one of your Sociology electives, you cannot change your mind later and have it count for your Capstone Experience.

How do I set up an Independent Study?
Here are the “Six Steps to Arranging your Independent Study:”
1. Check to see if you meet the academic prerequisites listed above.
2. Decide on a subject for the Independent Study and locate a faculty advisor. This should be someone who has taught you in class and knows your interests and capabilities, and who is also familiar with the area you wish to study. Alternatively, you may meet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies, Patricia Wittberg, who will suggest a faculty advisor. Then meet with the faculty advisor to see if s/he is available to supervise your Independent Study.
3. Meet with your faculty advisor to finalize the academic goals of your independent study, the specific course product/s (paper, journal, annotated bibliography, questionnaire, etc.) and the due dates for each component.
4. Together with your faculty internship advisor, fill out and sign the Independent Study Proposal Form (This form is linked to the department website) and make copies of it for yourself, the faculty member and the Director of Undergraduate Studies.
5. If you are doing independent research which involves Human Subjects, you must complete the IRB process prior to beginning the Independent study.
6. Go with your faculty internship advisor for the internship go and see Whitney Hendress the Sociology office manager, who will assign you a section number for the Independent Study.

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.

A Word of Warning:
In order to succeed in an Independent Study course, it is absolutely necessary that a student be organized and self-motivated. Students who put off writing their Independent Study paper until the final weeks of the semester, having done little or no preliminary work prior to that time, will not pass the course. The Sociology Department has established the following timeline regarding the grading of Independent Study courses.
By the end of week #4: The supervising faculty member will schedule 2 or more Initial meetings with the student within the first month of the semester, and at least one course product deadline should also be scheduled during that time. Students who fail to meet these initial deadlines may be administratively withdrawn from the course by the supervising faculty member.

Mid-term Week: A progress report on the student’s work will be made by the student’s supervising faculty member during the midterm week. Students who are not satisfactorily progressing will be asked by the Department to withdraw from the course.

By the end of the semester: Students must have completed 75% of the work for the course prior to the end of the semester in order to be given an incomplete. This is SLA, not Sociology Department, policy. Students who have not completed 75% of the course work by the end of the semester will fail the course. Only in extraordinary circumstances will students be allowed to take an “Incomplete” in R497.

Timely meeting of the agreed-upon deadlines for course product components and regular meetings with the supervising faculty member are essential components of the student’s final grade. The student is ultimately responsible for fulfilling these requirements.