



ACADEMIC POLICY

Supervised Independent Study Course Policy (AA 22)

POLICY STATEMENT

Independent work under the supervision and mentorship of an instructor has been identified as a high-impact practice that increases student retention and graduation. This policy distinguishes between several types of courses offered at Nevada State that provide experiential opportunities under the direct supervision of an instructor and require instructor approval to enroll. This policy also outlines the pay rates for such courses.

Refer to the Academic Catalog to identify relevant course prefixes, prerequisites, and grading policies for instructor-supervised courses.

DEFINITIONS

Senior Thesis Course (also known as Honors Thesis Course): Course (typically 3.0 units) that provides a summative assessment of a student's mastery of academic content and outcomes in the field of study. Typically involves the preparation and defense of a research document or comparable project. A Senior Thesis Course may enroll one or more students per section. Instructor approval is required to enroll.

Independent Research or Creative Works Project: Variable Credit Course (ranging from 1.0 to 6.0 units) in which the instructor recruits qualified student(s) to meet independently and sets goals for the student to complete by the end of the academic term. The course may include a research project/essay, creative work project, or comparable project developed by a student under the supervision of an instructor. This category of courses typically enrolls one to three student(s) per section, but may enroll more. Instructor approval is required to enroll.

Independent Study: Variable Credit Course (ranging from 1.0 to 6.0 units) in which student works on an individual basis with an instructor to read and study materials on selected topic(s). This category of courses typically enrolls one to three students per section, but may enroll more; in this case, an request approval from the dean to run the course as part of their instructional load. Instructor approval is required to enroll.

Overload Pay Rate: Compensation for a course taught or other academic work that can be equated to courseload credits, completed over and above an instructor's contractual workload requirement. Equivalent to the faculty member's summer rate of pay.

Supervised Independent Study Course: Course in which the number of credits earned varies based on the workload and amount of material agreed upon by the instructor and student at the time of enrollment. Instructor approval is required to enroll.

PROCEDURES

I. Courses Covered by Policy

This policy addresses expectations and instructor compensation for Independent Study, Independent Research or Creative Works Project, and Senior/Honors Thesis Courses. This policy does not apply to field experience, student teaching, or internship courses ([AA 7 Internships for Academic Credit Policy](#)).

II. Approval of Courses

Instructor and supervisor (e.g., chair or dean) approval is required for a student to enroll in a course covered by this policy. Senior or Honors Thesis courses may also have specified prerequisites that must be fulfilled before enrollment is approved.

Independent Study courses should be offered as exceptions rather than regular practice, with programs aiming to structure their curricula and course offerings to ensure that class sections can meet minimum enrollment targets. Requests for single enrollment sections of Independent Study courses, Variable Credit Courses, and Senior (Honors) Thesis courses as curriculum substitutions for courses that are required to complete a degree program but which fail to meet minimum enrollment targets are strongly discouraged and should be minimized as much as possible. However, they may be granted in exceptional circumstances, particularly to help students graduate in a timely fashion, with special permission from the faculty member, chair (where applicable), and dean.

III. Pay Rates

Course pay for instructor-supervised courses is calculated using a modifier of 0.2 applied to the normal pay rate per credit per student enrolled:

$$\text{Pay per student} = 0.2 \times (\# \text{ of credits}) \times (\# \text{ of students}) \times (\text{overload pay rate})$$

If pay for overload courses changes, the pay for Supervised Independent Study Course will change accordingly. Faculty should refer to AA 3.2 [Academic Faculty Workload Policy](#) and AA 6 [Extra-Contractual Compensation Policy](#) for additional information.

A Supervised Independent Study Course may count toward a faculty member's instructional workload (coursework credit, per AA 3.2), with dean approval, if it meets a sufficient threshold of students and/or total units in a given term.

FORMS/INSTRUCTIONS

1. Faculty and student meet to discuss the work or project and to outline deliverables.
 2. Faculty member completes Onbase e-form for Supervised Independent Study Courses.
 3. E-form is routed to dean/supervisor for approval.
 4. Administrative assistant completes faculty contract.
 5. Pay is distributed on last paycheck of the term.
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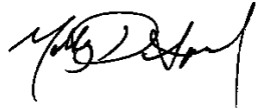
CONTACTS

UNIT	CONTACT	PHONE	EMAIL
Office of the Provost	Sita Sales	X2600	Sita.sales@nevadastate.edu
Human Resources	Eric Gilliland	X2322	Eric.gilliland@nevadastate.edu

RELATED INFORMATION

- AA 3.2 [Academic Faculty Workload Policy](#)
- AA 6 [Extra-Contractual Compensation Policy](#)
- AA 7 [Internships for Academic Credit Policy](#)
- NSU Academic Catalog

APPROVAL SIGNATURES



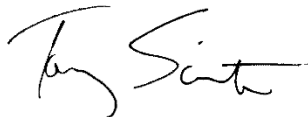
7/27/2023

Recommendation (check one):

Faculty Senate (Chair's Signature)

Date

	Denial	Approval	Approval w/ condition*
<i>Recommendation</i>		X	



7/27/23

Recommendation (check one):

Office of the Provost (Provost's Signature)

Date

	Denial	Approval	Approval w/ condition*
<i>Recommendation</i>		X	



9.13.2023

Final decision (check one):

Office of the President (President's Signature) Date

	Denial*	Approval
<i>Recommendation</i>		X

*Attach rationale for denial or conditional approval