

## **Independent Study and Ole Miss Online Courses: General Policies**

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Independent study courses are those that are administered by the Department of Independent Study, that are asynchronous with the normal academic calendar, and that involve communication between the student and instructor by the mail (traditional correspondence course) or an electronic (Internet-based) mode. Students admitted to the University who wish to take a correspondence or an electronic independent study course must take it through the Department of Independent Study, if the desired course is available. Also, prior approval by the student's academic dean is required before he or she can take an independent study course.

Courses not available through the Department of Independent Study may be taken by correspondence or the Internet from another institution, but these courses will then be considered to be transfer courses. Additionally, prior written approval of the student's academic dean is required before a student can take an independent study (correspondence or Internet-based) course from another institution.

Independent study courses taken from The University of Mississippi are considered resident credit, for purposes of loan eligibility and for meeting other requirements involving academic residency. Ordinarily, independent study courses are not to be used to meet the requirement that a student must take 15 of his or her last 21 hours in residence. Exceptions to this require written approval by the student's academic department and dean prior to enrollment in the independent study course.

A maximum of 33 hours of independent study courses may be applied to a baccalaureate degree. Independent study (correspondence or Internet-based) courses may not be used to satisfy the University core course in mathematics.

When a University of Mississippi student enrolls in a course through the Department of Independent Study, a mid-course assignment will be indicated for the course. Once the mid-course assignment (or one-half of the assignments) for the course has been submitted, graded, and returned to the student, he or she will not be allowed to withdraw from the course and a grade (A, B, C, D, or F) must be assigned. That is, a student may not withdraw or simply drop the course after the mid-course point without receiving a grade. Generally a student has one calendar year to complete an independent study course and may purchase up to two three-month extensions of the deadline. Students who select to use independent study courses to qualify for federal aid must adhere to very specific enrollment and completion deadlines. They will have a much shorter time to complete their correspondence courses and may only purchase one two-month extension after the completion date. Contact the Office of Independent Study for more information concerning this option.

When the completion of the course is noted on the student's transcript, the grade will be included in his or her cumulative GPA, but the grade will not be calculated into the GPA of an individual academic semester. Grades earned through independent study will count as resident credit toward graduation honors designations. Each school or college may set other standards regarding whether independent study (correspondence or Internet-based) courses count toward degree requirements. These policies apply only to University of Mississippi enrolled students.

Ole Miss Online courses are those where 51 percent or more of the course (which includes lectures, discussions, and course work) is in an online or Web-based environment and are taught synchronously with the academic calendar. Students have the same responsibilities and rights in online courses as they do in traditional courses.