

AAS Independent Study Guidelines

AAS independent study courses (AAS 4993) are student-driven. They entail the approximate amount of reading and writing that an upper-level seminar would require: 1500-2000 pages of reading and a **20-page research paper**. Students should decide on their own topic, and then approach an appropriate faculty member to direct the independent study.

In the SIS Schedule of Classes, independent study courses cannot be listed unless an instructor has been identified. Students are therefore strongly encouraged to obtain approval of the supervising professor *prior* to the semester when the independent study will begin. The student should obtain the supervisor's signature on a course action form, and take it to the AAS Director of Undergraduate Programs for approval. The DUP will then make sure that the independent study is posted in SIS.

After agreeing to supervise the independent study, the professor and student should set a time-table for meetings, and establish clear deadlines for submission of the items listed below:

1. Within the first week of classes, the student should submit a description of the **paper topic**, in writing, to the supervisor.
2. The student should submit an **annotated bibliography** based on a wide range of readings that will provide background for the paper. The number of entries and the format should be discussed with the supervisor in advance.
3. The student should submit **an outline** of the paper that includes the main thesis, and supporting evidence.
4. The student should submit a draft of the paper, including references. The draft should represent the student's best work at that point; it should not be half-done.
5. After making revisions based on the professor's comments, the student should submit **a final draft** by the deadline set by the professor, which should be at least a few days prior to the end of the exam period.