

Resource Guide

Designing Independent Study Courses

If you currently teach independent study courses or are interested in learning more about ways to design and facilitate them, explore some of the resources below. The document from Western Washington University is particularly useful because of its student-centered approach to course design. If you are looking for evidence-based resources, the University of Waterloo document will be helpful.

To get you started, here are three important elements for **students** to consider before meeting with you to design an independent study course (see [Planning for Independent Study](#) below).

- **Description:** What do you plan to do and how do you plan to do it? What are your objectives in undertaking this study? What do you hope to learn?
- **Qualifications:** What background, knowledge, or preparation do you have that will help you in undertaking this course? What books have you read? What courses have you taken? What relevant experiences have you had?
- **Demonstration of Learning:** What sources and resources do you intend to use? Can you provide a list of articles and books you want to read? How will you keep track of and demonstrate your learning? When, where, and how will you report your progress?

Resources

[Planning for Independent Study](#) (Western Washington University)

[Recommended Independent Study Structure](#) (The University of Texas Health Science Center)

[Self-Directed Learning: A Four-Step Process](#) (University of Waterloo)

[Supervising Independent Student Project](#) (Carnegie Mellon University)

For more information or to discuss how you might incorporate these ideas into your courses, contact the Reinert Center at cttl@slu.edu.