

# The Value of Independent Study

## Skills Gained Through Independent Study

- Time Management Strategies
- Decision Making Capabilities
- Critical Thinking Skills
- Organizational and Project Management Experience
- Research Techniques
- Presentation Skills
- Writing Skills
- Creativity
- Stress Management

## Utilizing Independent Study as an Example of your Work

- **Personal Statement:** Mention Independent Study in your application for admission as a reason why you are interested in continuing your studies.
- **Interviews:** Discuss Independent Study with employers and graduate schools utilizing the S.T.A.R. method.
- **Resume:** List Independent Study on your resume in education or experience.
- **Cover Letter:** Write how Independent Study prepared you for the duties of a position.

## Tips for Explaining Your Independent Study to Others

- For people who are not familiar with Independent Study they might be surprised at the scope of this academic requirement.
- Explain your project in a logical fashion: start at the beginning and explain your activities sequentially, emphasizing specific skills gained and results found during the process.

## Review examples on ways to discuss your Independent Study

- "Independent Study is required of all seniors at The College of Wooster for graduation. I chose \_\_\_\_\_ as my topic of study and proposed my ideas to faculty members for approval. Realizing I needed funding to complete this study, I wrote a grant proposal explaining my interests and was awarded \$\_\_\_\_\_ toward my efforts. I then utilized \_\_\_\_\_ to conduct research relevant to this topic and designed a series of experiments to test my hypothesis. I conducted the experiments and recorded the results. In analyzing my findings, I noted that \_\_\_\_\_ and I wrote a \_\_\_\_\_ page thesis describing my Independent Study and presented and defended the results to the department. I've also been asked to present my study at \_\_\_\_\_ conference and/or submit an abstract for publication to journal."
- "Independent Study is a yearlong, self-designed, faculty mentor research project that all College of Wooster students complete before graduation. I chose \_\_\_\_\_ as my topic of study and prepared a detailed outline planning my project that included targeted completion dates for each phase of the project. Realizing that I would need monetary support to travel to New Mexico to interview members of the Indigenous population I connected to my topic, I contacted various professional organizations and submitted grant proposals to secure \$\_\_\_\_\_ of funding toward my efforts. I then conducted research databases to identify sources for additional information relevant to the topic. I prepared a draft of interview questions to be used and discussed my strategies for interviews with participants. Upon my return, I transcribed the qualitative portion of the interviews and entered the quantitative data into \_\_\_\_\_ statistical program to complete an analysis. Once the findings had been determined, I wrote an 80-page thesis describing my study and used Microsoft Excel to create a variety of graphs for presenting the numerical results. I then defended my Independent Study to members of my academic department."



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