

Provost Guidelines on Directed Studies

Introduction

These guidelines support Auburn University's Policy on Credit for Directed Studies found in the AU Policy Database:

<https://auburnpub.cfmnetwork.com/B.aspx?BookId=12590&PageId=462109>

Directed Studies Courses

Auburn University offers directed studies courses, also referred to as directed readings, special problems courses and independent studies, in accordance with its established policy.

Directed studies courses allow in-depth study of a particular subject by a student who is well into her or his major and, in extraordinary circumstances, accommodate scheduling issues when no other remedy is available.

Directed studies courses should not normally be used as replacements for required courses or as a solution to routine scheduling problems.

Purpose of Policy

The university is committed to maintaining the highest level of academic quality and integrity in the instructional process.

The policy and these guidelines are designed to bolster both academic integrity by ensuring that the academic quality of directed studies courses is materially equivalent to the academic quality of other courses, regardless of format or mode of delivery.

Eligibility

To be eligible to take a directed studies course, a student must be at junior level or above, and the course must be taken for credit toward the student's major or minor; exceptions by the student's dean's office may be approved as follows:

Exceptions concerning junior standing or higher, or concerning credit toward the student's major or minor, must be approved by the instructor and the offering department head/chair (or dean, if the instructor serves as department head/chair or associate dean), and by the dean of the college in which student is enrolled, if different from the offering college.

A student must have the approval of her/his dean and the provost to take more than 9 hours of directed studies coursework for credit over the course of her/his degree program.

Provost Guidelines on Directed Studies

Approval to Teach Course

A standard ["Approval for Directed Studies" form](#) available through the Office of the Provost forms web page specifies the necessary approvals and serves as the vehicle for obtaining them. All necessary approvals should be obtained by the tenth-class day of the semester (or fifth class day of the summer semester).

The form for course approval serves in the nature of a contract in which the student and the instructor affirm their understandings concerning:

a. the objective of the course; b. the nature of the teaching-learning process and the proposed schedule of meetings; c. the proposed work products; and d. the criteria that will be used to assess the work product and the grade options that will be available.

Information on points a through d above should be presented through a syllabus that is attached to the form for approval.

Academic Standards

The documentation consisting of the approval form and accompanying material must comply with the course description approved by the University Curriculum Committee, and must reflect essentially the same standards of academic quality expected of all courses regardless of format or mode of delivery.

An instructor wishing to offer directed studies coursework to more than three students in any given semester must receive written approval from the department head/chair (or dean, if the instructor serves as department head/chair or associate dean) no later than the tenth-class day of the semester (fifth day of summer semester).

The instructor, department head/chair, and dean affirm through their signatures on the approval form that the amount and level of credit to be awarded for the course is materially equivalent to the amount and level of credit awarded for comparable course work, regardless of format or mode of delivery.