MSCS Independent Study Contract

The purpose of the Independent Study (IS) is for a student to find a supervisor for his/her research with the hope of identifying a thesis topic, or for studying a topic in depth that is not covered by a course. The agreement should be formalized by completing the IS form and forwarding the completed form to the Graduate Coordinator. The workload as presented in the IS should justify the number of desirable credits. The form requires that you specify how many credits the IS course is for (typically three credits, but it could be for one or two credits) and describe the work to be done. The form should include a reading list and state how often the student will meet with the faculty member (typically, if it is a 3 credit course the student should meet with the Professor for a minimum of 3 hours each week) and what will be counted towards the grade. The student and the professor must both sign the form before submitting it, indicating there is an agreement to the terms described. The title of the IS can be no longer than 30 characters including spaces; otherwise, it will be returned to you for correction. The Graduate Committee will evaluate the IS and reserves the right for further verification of content. If there is any lacking material the IS must be revised and the student will be notified and required to follow up with the requested material.

Students in the Master’s program should not take more than six credits of independent study. Students may not take an independent study if there is a course that the University offers that covers the same topics, or if the student is receiving financial compensation for the work. The IS Advisor must be a tenured or tenure-track faculty member.

The deadline for submitting independent study credits for approval is three weeks before the start of term; this will allow time for the student to search for other options if the request is denied. Please submit your form to the Graduate Coordinator. Generally, a turnaround time of one week is expected and a decision will be given to the student. If approved, the Graduate Coordinator will request the credits and send an email to the student once the independent study appears on the student’s schedule.

Student Name ___________________________________ ID# _______________________
Instructor Name _________________________________ Term Offered ___________
To be filled out by Student and Instructor: (All questions are MANDATORY and must be filled out to completion!)

Course Title_____________________________________________________________

Number of Credits__________             Date work will be completed _______________

Course Description________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Assigned Reading (include both text names and authors and the specific pages and chapters that the student will cover in each text):
*Please attach the reading list.

Written Assignments that the student will turn in and the dates on which each assignment is due (attach additional sheet if necessary)_____________________________________

Indicate whether or not the student will be expected to take any exams and if so indicate when, how many, and the nature of the exams (take-home, in-class, other.)
________________________________________________________________________

How often will the student and faculty member meet to discuss the work? (a three credit course requires three hours of interaction) ______________________________________

How will the final grade be determined?_______________________________________

Reason for taking this course as an independent study course:

___Preparation for thesis                  ___Research project with educational component

___No course exists for this topic

_________________________________ _______________________________
Student   Date   Instructor  Date
To Be Filled out by Advisor:

This course will be allowed to count toward:

☐ Intermediate CS (Breadth)

☐ Advanced CS (Depth)

☐ Preparation for thesis (Two additional graduate level courses)

__________________________  ______________________________  
Graduate Advisor          Date                              Department Head  Date