

Resolution 2013-06. On Campuswide Implementation of the Recommendations of the 2012 Independent Study Task Force

The Faculty Council resolves:

That the rules and regulations concerning independent studies recommended by the April 10, 2012, report of the College of Arts and Sciences Independent Study Task Force apply to all undergraduate programs and curricula, except that the following rules do not apply to appropriately supervised out-of-classroom internships/practica in undergraduate programs offered in the professional schools: (1) the limit of twelve hours of graded independent study credit, excluding honors thesis courses, that may be counted toward graduation; (2) the limitation that no more than twelve hours may be taken in any one semester, and (3) the two-student restriction on the number of students a faculty member may supervise in cases involving internships/practica required by the professional school.

Submitted by the Educational Policy Committee

Comment:

In September of 2011, Karen Gil, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, requested that Bobbi Owen, Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, ask the Administrative Board of the College of Arts and Sciences to develop guidelines for undergraduate independent study courses and directed readings courses. Dean Owen formed the Independent Study Task Force (ISTF) of faculty from across the college to work on this project; their report was issued on April 10, 2012

(<http://www.unc.edu/news/050412/Independent%20Study%20report.pdf>).

In August of 2012, Provost Bruce Carney asked the Educational Policy Committee to review the report with the goal of adopting its recommendations for all undergraduate programs university-wide. Prof. Theresa Raphael-Grimm, EPC Chair, contacted the administrative leaders in all of the professional schools to ascertain potential obstacles to campuswide adoption. Officials in the schools of Nursing (SON) and Education (SOE) identified problems having to do with practica and internships, which, in both schools, are defined quite differently from “independent studies” but which, according to the current language of the ISTF report, would fall under the general umbrella of “independent studies.” Because SON and SOE practica courses carry considerable course credit, adopting the ISTF report in their schools would render undergraduate students in those schools perpetually in violation of the independent study credit limit included in the ISTF report and adopted by Faculty Council in Resolution 2012-12.

Language recognizing this reality is the most significant revision that will need to be made to the ISTF report before it can be fully implemented for undergraduate programs campuswide. It is suggested, specifically, that language on p. 8 of the ISTF report be updated to include the following clarification:

Special Circumstances Pertaining to Professional Schools

Professional schools at UNC-Chapel Hill with undergraduate degree programs – majors and minors - (Business, Dentistry, Education, Journalism, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health, SILS, Social Work, Allied Health Sciences in the School of Medicine) confront circumstances that

warrant special consideration with respect to 1) the limits on counting independent study credit toward graduation, and 2) the restriction on the number of students a faculty member may supervise during a semester or summer session in internships/practica. Clinical placements, student teaching, and professional practica are a recognized and important part of their undergraduate curriculum. They often fulfill an important standard established by external accrediting bodies.

Therefore, the limits established by Faculty Council Resolution 2012-12 "On Revising the Regulation Concerning Independent Studies for Credit" shall not apply to appropriately supervised out-of-classroom internships/practica for a professional school's undergraduate program. Specifically the statements that do not apply are these:

- *Only twelve hours of graded independent study credit, excluding honors thesis courses, may be counted toward graduation.*
- *No more than twelve hours may be taken in any one semester.*

Further, professional schools shall be excluded from the two-student restriction on the number of students a faculty member may supervise in cases involving internships/practica required by the professional school.

Other suggested revisions to the ISTF report include language incorporating the requirements already implemented by Faculty Council Resolution 2012-12 and language clarifying the definitions of independent studies as opposed to internships and practica.