Independent study enables a student to pursue for course credit individual interests under the supervision of a faculty member. Independent study is of two types: Independent Study (non-research) and Research Independent Study.

**STA 291, STA 391, STA 491: Independent Study:** Courses entitled Independent Study are individual, non-research, directed study in a field of special interest on a previously approved topic taken under the supervision of a faculty member and resulting in an academic and/or artistic product. Such independent study courses do not bear a Research (R) code and do not satisfy any general education requirements aside from the Small Group Learning Experience (SGLE) requirement. In Statistical Science, these courses consist of directed readings or work in a field of special interest under the supervision of a faculty member, the central goal of which is a substantive paper, project, or written report containing significant analysis and interpretation of a previously approved topic. Consent of instructor and director of undergraduate studies required. The course should include content and goals requiring performance appropriate to a 200, 300, or 400 level course, respectively, in Statistical Science.

**STA 393, STA 493:** Courses entitled Research Independent Study are individual research in a field of special interest under the supervision of a faculty member, the central goal of which is a substantive paper or written report containing significant analysis and interpretation of a previously approved topic. Research independent study courses bear a Research (R) code and satisfy general education Research requirements. One research independent study may be submitted and approved for a Writing (W) code in addition to the R code designation, but no other curriculum code designations are permitted for research independent study courses. Students who wish to request a W code for one research independent study course must take the appropriate form to 02 Allen Building by the end of the semester they are enrolled in the course. The request form is available at [http://trinity.duke.edu/academicrequirements?p=independent-study-research-w-coding](http://trinity.duke.edu/academicrequirements?p=independent-study-research-w-coding).

Note: STA 360 is the prerequisite for STA 493.

**Policies:**
The following policies apply to both types of independent study:

1. **Approval** — The independent study must be approved by the instructor(s) involved as well as by the Director of Undergraduate Studies.
2. **Faculty appointment** — The instructor of record (supervising faculty member) must hold a regular rank faculty appointment at Duke within the Department of Statistical Science. Students can be co-advised by a faculty member outside of the Department. In some cases, there may be an additional instructor who mentors the bulk of the independent study and holds an appointment outside the sponsoring department or program. If this is the case, the supervising faculty member is responsible for submitting the final grade, and ensuring that the instructor adheres to academic standards, policies, and procedures pertaining to undergraduate students in Trinity College of Arts & Sciences.
3. **Course Content / Quality** — The independent study must provide a rigorous academic experience equivalent to that of other undergraduate Duke courses. A student should expect to spend at least 180 hours, including meetings and readings, on the project over the course of the semester for a 1.0 course credit IS. Independent study courses may not duplicate available course offerings in the semester or summer term in which the independent study is being taken, nor may independent study be used simply to provide low-level support for other projects or to observe or shadow the work of others.
4. **Meeting schedule** — In addition to the individual effort of the student, which normally entails ~12 hours per week, the student will meet with the instructor of the independent study at least once a week.
5. **Final product** — The student will produce a final academic product to be completed during the semester for which the student is registered for the course. The final product must be submitted with the Director of Undergraduate Studies as a record of the independent study work completed.
6. **Grading** — The instructor will evaluate the work, including the final product, associated with the independent study, and submit a grade by the end of the semester. If the independent study has an instructor in addition to a supervising faculty member, the instructor will consult on the final grade with the supervising faculty member, and the supervising faculty member will submit the final grade.
7. **Credit toward a major, minor or certificate** — The Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Department of Statistical Science will determine whether an IS successfully completed will count toward the major, minor, or IDM.

**Procedures:**

1. Students wishing to register for an independent study or research independent study must first make arrangements with a faculty member having expertise in the desired area. The student and instructor should agree on the course title, plan of study, objectives and expectations, as well as on the nature of the final product and evaluation criteria.

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1 For policies and procedures related to independent study in Study Away programs, see the appropriate Duke GEO Handbook.
2. The student submits the Independent Study Permission Form (attached here) to the Director of Undergraduate Studies for final approval before the end of the drop/add period of the term in which the independent study is to be taken. If approved, the student will receive a permission number to register for the course.
To the student: Please read the attached policies and procedures, and consult with your instructor / supervising faculty member about course title, description, requirements and expectations. This form must be approved and signed by the supervising faculty member, the instructor (if different from supervising faculty member), and submitted to the Director of Undergraduate Studies or Certificate Program Director before the end of the drop/ add period.

Date:

Student Name:

Email:

Net ID:

Student ID (not unique ID):

Graduation Term and Year:

Major(s)/Minor(s)/Certificate(s):

Course: (Select one) IS: STA 291  STA 391  STA 491 Research IS: STA 393  STA 493

Term and Year:

Title:

Short Title (max 30 characters) for transcript:

Supervising Faculty Name:

Academic Title:

Affiliation: Statistical Science

Instructor (if different from Supervising Faculty) Name:

Academic Title:

Affiliation:
Please provide the following information:

1. **Prior independent study**
   If you have taken prior independent study courses at Duke, please provide information on the semester, course number, department, and supervising faculty member/instructor.

2. **Title and description of proposed study**
   Provide a one to two paragraph description of the proposed study, including topic, course goals, research/reading to be conducted, and a rationale for independent study as opposed to regular course work.

3. **Nature of the final product**
   Describe the nature and length of the final product (e.g., academic paper, artistic product, research report, etc.)

4. **Scheduled meetings and work expectations**
   Provide information on frequency and length of meetings with instructor, and expected work commitments and/or timetables:

5. **Grade to be based on**
   Provide information on how your work in the course is to be evaluated. Please be explicit. Sample text is provided below.
   - A range - Weekly progress met or exceeded expectations, student is able to independently implement methods, the end product is functional and meets expectations, and an accompanying write up describing the methodology is produced
   - B range - Weekly progress did not always meet expectations, student's understanding of the methodology and implementation is not quite where it needs to be for successful completion of the project, a sub-par final product/write up is produced
   - C range or lower - Weekly progress often did not meet expectations and/or student missed many meetings, student does not have a good handle on the methodology and is not able to implement it, a poor final product/write up is produced

6. **Reading list**
   For a regular independent study, provide a list of texts that will be studied over the course of the semester. For a research independent study, provide a bibliography of secondary sources related to your research proposal.

7. **Research sources and methods (research independent study only)**
   For research independent study, provide a description of the primary sources upon which your research will be based and how those sources will serve your research objectives. Data sources must be clearly described. In addition, please address whether you CURRENTLY have data access. If you do not have access to the data at present, a detailed back-up plan is required (e.g., what will be the final product if data access is not possible).

Signatures:
Signature of student:

Date:

Approval Signatures:
Please read attached policies and procedures on independent studies before signing.

Supervising Faculty Member:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Instructor (if different from Supervising Faculty Member):

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Director of Undergraduate Studies:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Print everything out, get all signatures, and take your paperwork to Karen Whitesell, the DUS Assistant, to obtain a permission number for a course.

To be completed by the DUS Assistant:

ASSIGNED COURSE AND SECTION NUMBER:

ASSIGNED PERMISSION NUMBER: