

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN SOCIAL POLICY (MSSP)

MSSP 6010 The Power of Partnerships between Government, Non-profits, & the Private Sector

Everything from the Affordable Care Act to the Mayor's Rebuild Initiative here in Philadelphia could not be implemented by government without strong and vital partnerships with non-profits and the private sector. These collaborations provide an opportunity to help people, impact and change policy, improve outcomes, and multiply the impact that non-profit and private sector organizations can have. The course will help graduate (and advanced undergraduate) students not only understand the theory, policy, and practice of these collaborations but also learn how they actually happen. Students will also learn the characteristics of these three sectors, their roles and contributions, and competitive forces that are often at work in the collaborative process. Topics for discussion will include attitudes and expectations in the public sector, the ingredients of effective partnerships, and effective communication strategies with elected and appointed officials. The course will be conducted on a seminar basis. Graduate students are expected to take an active part in shaping the discussion. Students will be expected to rotate leadership for the class discussions and to supplement course materials with independent study of relevant magazine and newspaper articles. Course grades are assigned as follows: 20 percent for class participation, 15 percent for an in-class written exam, 30 percent for a group presentation and write up of a case study, and 35 percent for a final project. High quality written work and accurate citations is an expectation in all assignments.

1 Course Unit

MSSP 6060 Data for Equitable Justice Lab

Data for Equitable Justice Lab is a non-credit research group that gives SP2 Masters students an opportunity to analyze some of today's most important social issues through data and, with faculty support, create a product for audiences well beyond our classrooms and campus. With guidance from the lab faculty, students develop a project - either individually or as part of a team - to examine a contemporary social policy or political issue through or on data or digital technology. Through these projects students will produce an op-ed, blog post, podcast, academic article, short film, or other product of their choosing that creates or contributes to contemporary discourse.

Fall, Spring, and Summer Terms

0 Course Units

MSSP 6070 Practical Programming for Data Science

This course familiarizes students with no prior programming experience with the core concepts of programming and the practice of software development for data-intensive applications in industry and government. After this course, students will be comfortable (1) writing code to save and load from files and spreadsheets into basic data structures like strings, lists, and maps; (2) manipulating data with code to perform tasks like generating aggregate statistics and filtering data into subsets; (3) effectively communicating findings from interactive, exploratory programming with others; and (4) working with technical teams, using best practices of software development when building line-of-business applications.

Fall

1 Course Unit

MSSP 6080 Practical Machine Learning Methods

This course prepares students with no background in machine learning or data science to use tools from those fields effectively in applied contexts. Using GUI-based software - or optionally, by programming with libraries - students will build skills including (1) feature representations of spreadsheet-based or text datasets; (2) training classification and regression models for prediction tasks; (3) evaluation of machine learning model accuracy and error analysis; and (4) reasoning about predictive models and making tradeoffs like bias vs. variance, granularity and annotation complexity in labeled training data, and the ethical application of predictive modeling to human-centered data.

Spring

1 Course Unit

MSSP 6090 Invisible Injustices: How Policy & Bureaucracy Create (& Hide) Diff. & Power

How does the design of everyday objects and systems in our social world - from the workplace to the civic sector - produce variation in our political participation to promote or stifle the collective project of social justice? Systemic injustice expresses itself in everything from software interface designs to paper passport applications. Using these objects and others, this course focuses on the ways in which power operates through and within aesthetics to create and enforce difference and produce the inequalities that demand a collective reimagining of our world. What might we learn from these "aesthetic assemblages" of power and difference, and their manifestations in current social policy? In this course, we will work with case studies from a range of politically urgent topics - mass incarceration, immigration reform, healthcare inequity - through the lens of critical theories and pedagogies that center the lives of those communities most impacted by discriminatory social policy. Students will learn to apply the thinking of scholars such as Fred Moten & Stefano Harney, Dean Spade, and Mel Chen towards their own social justice-informed approaches to social policy and practice. Through independent study projects, students will explore their own unique areas of interest beyond the scope of this course to rethink how critical theory can shape and be shaped by on-the-ground, everyday practices.

Fall

1 Course Unit

MSSP 6280 Policy: Analysis of Issues, Strategy and Process

Policy analysis requires an understanding of social problems/social issues and the processes by which policy is developed and implemented. Critical skills in many policy frameworks include: problem definition and analysis, review of relevant research, identification of possible actions, implementation and evaluation, and fiscal analysis. Competency in written and oral communication is also essential. To develop these and related skills, this course utilizes as a base a dynamic social problem analysis framework that addresses issues of equity, equality and adequacy. It also examines multiple theoretical and analytical perspectives. Through the review of contemporary and historical social policy debates and provisions, selected case examples and policy briefs, this course provides students with an understanding of the policy roles of the legislative and executive branches of government, including goal setting, policy rulemaking and enactment, allocation of resources, financing, regulation, and implementation. The policy process at state and local levels of government will also be addressed. The primary focus is on U.S. policy although global policies will be discussed when relevant.

Fall

1 Course Unit

MSSP 6290 Research and Evaluation Design

Research and Evaluation Design introduces social research methods in the context of social policy and program evaluation. The course provides a conceptual and practical understanding in the design of experimental, quasi-experimental, and non-experimental research and in the application of quantitative and qualitative methods. Students learn about the application of the research process and skills in all phases of assessing a social policy and developing a social program, including needs assessment, implementation analysis, and evaluation of policy or program effectiveness. Students learn to be critical and informed consumers of research and to apply guidelines of research ethics in social policy settings.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

MSSP 6300 Quantitative Reasoning/Social Statistics

The primary goals of this course are (1) to provide students with a solid understanding of the logic of social science research as well as (2) to provide students with an introduction to a broad range of statistical methods commonly used in social science research. The first portion of the semester concentrates on defining research problems, research design (including sampling, measurement, and causal inference), and assessing research quality. The latter portion of the semester focuses upon data analysis including descriptive statistics, measures of association for categorical and continuous variables, introduction to t-tests, ANOVA and regression, and the language of data analysis. Students will learn how to choose and apply statistical tools to data sources, how to interpret quantitative studies, and will gain experience using SPSS - a statistical software package.

Fall

1 Course Unit

MSSP 6310 Law and Social Policy

This course introduces students to the basics of the American legal system, focusing on the interplay between litigation and social policy. Students will learn how law, and particularly case law, is made, how to read case law and evaluate precedent, legal reasoning and argument. This course will utilize various teaching methods including introduction to the "Socratic" lecturing method which is frequently utilized in the study of law. Students will also study the structure of court systems at both state and federal levels as well as the litigation process and the role of law and courts in shaping and addressing social policy issues. Students will also learn the basics of several areas of substantive law, with an eye toward consideration of how that law has been, and can be, used to effect social change.

Spring

1 Course Unit

MSSP 6320 Capstone Seminar I: Policy Communications

The focus of the Capstone Seminar is three-fold: 1) to enhance student integration of the theory and practice of social policy analysis; 2) to enhance the student's competencies in the written and oral communication processes and procedures necessary for the policy world; and 3) to ensure basic knowledge about federal budget processes, stakeholder roles, and inter-organizational collaboration. Registration restricted to majors only.

Spring

0.5 Course Units

MSSP 6330 Capstone Seminar II: Policy Internship

Capstone II consists of an intensive, multi-week policy internship that is selected through a consultative process involving the student, MSSP advisors, internship coordinator/advisor, and mentors/supervisors at potential sites. The internship provides an opportunity for the student to expand horizons beyond the academic. It serves as a medium to integrate classroom learning with experiences in policy making activity. Registration restricted to majors only.

Summer Term

0.5 Course Units

MSSP 6340 MSSP/DA Capstone I: Telling Stories with Data

The volume and complexity of data continues to increase in the world around us, including science, business, medicine, social media and everyday human activity. This course aims to expose students to visual representation methods and techniques that increase the understanding of complex data. Good visualizations not only present a visual interpretation of data, but do so by improving comprehension, communication, and decision making. In this course, students will learn about the fundamentals of perception, the theory of visualization, and good design practices for visualization. The course will also provide hands-on experience on the process of data communication, from initial data analysis, to identifying appropriate visualization techniques, to crafting informative visualizations.

Fall

0.5 Course Units

MSSP 6350 Capstone II: Policy Internship in Data Analytics

Capstone II consists of an intensive, multi-week internship that is selected through a consultative process involving the student, MSSP advisors, internship coordinator/advisor, and mentors/supervisors at potential sites. The internship provides an opportunity for the student to expand horizons beyond the academic. It serves as a medium to integrate classroom learning with experiences in policy making activity. Registration restricted to majors only.

0.5 Course Units

MSSP 6670 Critical Global Politics, Policy & Identity

What is identity? Why do we identify with categories such as "Black", "Latino", "Queer", "American" or "Asian"? How do these categories play a role in current Global Politics, and how have Global Politics & Policies helped configure different identities throughout history? According to Fredric Jameson, in the 60's there was a Global Shift by which the "natives of the world" became human beings. Concepts such as "diversity" and "identity" as we know them today originated in these global reconfigurations of subjectivity that occurred in the context of the decolonization of Africa, the Civil Rights movements in the United States, and the Cuban Revolution, among other historical events. As western nations were coming to terms with Otherness within their own borders, confronting the needs of women and minorities, underdeveloped nations were fighting for independence and liberation claiming their rights in the new geopolitical arena. At the same time, the Orient had become the West's most powerful cultural contestant and, as Edward Said put it, its "deepest and most recurring" Other. This course is designed to provide students with the critical and analytical tools to understand different global policies and political events, while examining their implications in the formation of identity through the lens of critical theory. Each class will be structured around a case study that students will reflect upon using the assigned readings and supporting materials. Students will learn about the discursive formations that have made possible to name ourselves in opposition or in relation to others, claiming gender, race, national, class identities that are indebted to power-knowledge dynamics rooted in colonialism. We will examine how class is reformulated into different types of Capitals that inform positionality in the social space (Bourdieu). We will analyze how race as a tool for classifying bodies became a global category present, for example, in the War on Terror after 9/11, as well as in the Global division of nations based on different degrees of development. We will question how nationalism is formed and enacted in a changing world where migration is so prevalent. Along with racial, national, and global processes for subjectivization, we will examine gender, non-binary and queer identities, and how they all intervene LGBTQ rights, abortion and same-sex marriage policies.

Fall

1 Course Unit

MSSP 6680 Economics for Social Policy

Economics allows us to determine the costs and benefits of social policies like cash benefits, unemployment insurance, health insurance, pensions, education, etc. Policies typically affect the behavior of agents like individuals, families and firms, and we have to take these reactions into account when analyzing policy. Economics allows us to predict how policy is likely to affect behavior by understanding how the policy changes individuals' decisions, and what collective outcomes these myriad individual decisions bring about. For example, a universal basic income allows individuals to sustain themselves and their families when they are not working. At the same time, such guaranteed income has the potential to discourage people from looking for a job. If enough people are discouraged from looking for a job, employment in the economy will decrease, leading to lower production and lower tax revenues for the government. Policy makers have to take these phenomena into account in order to design a good income support system.

Fall

Also Offered As: SWRK 6680

1 Course Unit

MSSP 7010 Race, Technology, & the Body

The history of the relationship between race and technology has long been fraught. On the one hand, the sociopolitical formation of race constituted black and brown bodies in juxtaposition to the logics of reason that the instruments of post-Enlightenment technicity were built. On the other hand, as Wendy Chun argues, the discursive formation of race was a technology in and of itself that was designed to hierarchize and differentiate bodies as well as to make black and brown bodies extracted technologies for labor and Capital. This seminar will explore this deeply enmeshed history between race and technology by engaging text in the history of science and philosophy, critical theories of technology, cybernetics, and critical theories of difference. These text will range in topics from the transparent subject to surveillance studies to algorithmic bias to the speculative fiction of Afrofuturism. The text will include both scholarly written products as well as media and popular culture. Students will learn about the history of philosophy and technology in relation to race and the (em)body as well as how to examine for speculative futures.

Spring

1 Course Unit

MSSP 7030 Visual Techniques for the Contestation of an Unjust World

In this course we will work through a select history art, social movements, and collective organizing. This material will be used for gaining new clarity on present conditions of social injustice and to tease out novel solutions. In combination with these case studies, students will also read literature related to the field of political and decolonial aesthetics by authors such as Jacques Ranciere, David Graeber, and Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui. We will discuss how social issues such as poverty, incarceration, and racism are reframed from the perspective of those positioned within impacted communities, and/or outside of government and policy. A central question of this course is to ask how aesthetics plays a role in the formation of political conflicts and subjectivities, and whether or not this role can be turned back on itself to offer new possibilities in thinking resistance and abolition. The ultimate goal of this course is twofold. One is to train students in a new analytic framework through which to approach issues of conflict, injustice, and asymmetries of power. By drawing from diverse and potentially unfamiliar examples students are encouraged to free themselves up to think more broadly with the new tools they will gain during this course. The second goal is to encourage students to critically assess existing ethics, or evaluative patterns, by which problems and solutions are thought in policy today. Experience with and knowledge of art history is not a requirement for this course, and in fact, students from a range of disciplinary backgrounds and interests are encouraged to participate.

Spring

1 Course Unit

MSSP 7040 Critical Studies in Health Inequity and Policymaking

The relentless focus on the being of health inequity often overshadows the becoming of health inequity. Each drip of social injustice pools into a conformation that disproportionately affects the health and healthcare of the socially disadvantaged groups. This course navigates health policy-making through a sociohistoric lens and grapples with contemporary perspectives in health equity. We explore the theoretical frameworks that best inform the existence of health inequity along with the practices that eliminate health inequity. Students will have the opportunity to learn how to effectively communicate evidence-based strategies in both policy and academic grant formats. While generally structured as a seminar, this course extends the walls of the classroom and encourages students to confront real-life health policy issues while engaging local, state, and federal health policy influencers. Students will spend time in the robust archives and cutting-edge medical facilities at Penn to best hone their policy-making voice.

Spring

1 Course Unit

MSSP 7060 Behavioral Economics and Social Policy Design

This course will introduce students to the field of behavioral economics and its application to designing social policies concerning health, education, childcare, voting, poverty, financial stability, legal and regulatory frameworks, among others. Behavioral economics extends the classical textbook theory of how the "rational" economic individual - often referred to as homo economicus - makes choices to include insights from psychology, biology, anthropology, sociology and other fields in order to increase the explanatory power of economic theories. While classical economics is still a useful tool for any social scientist to possess, behavioral economics, in the words of one of the fields founding fathers, Richard Thaler (2015), "is more interesting and more fun than regular economics. It is the un-dismal science."

1 Course Unit

MSSP 7080 Data, Decision, Death: Security, Raciality, and Policy during the COVID-19 Global Pandemic (thus far)

"Bio-power (covers) the set of mechanism through which the basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy (...), how, starting from the eighteenth century, modern Western societies took on board the fundamental biological fact that human beings are a species." - Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*

When the spread of the disease caused by the new corona virus (Sars-CoV-2) took the form of a global pandemic, in the second and third week, March 2020, very quickly we were hailed by abstract representations and had to become literate on graphs, curves, lines, and computer models. In addition to informing the public, these became the guides for biopolitical strategies, that is, policy decisions - which included the setting up of an apparatus of security, which consists primarily of abstract tools and procedures (calculation, probability, averages) that would mean life and death to millions, and have led to the death of almost one million persons worldwide (so far 27 Sept 2020). Definitely these abstract presentations of COVID-19 fit very well with Foucault's description of bio-power and its security apparatus. To be sure, abstraction has been claimed as the distinguishing feature of modernity. Early philosophical texts dealing with scientific (Galileo's, Bacon's, Newton's) and juridic (Hobbes's, Locke's, Montesquieu's) matters devised and defended abstract procedures and tools because they allowed for objective descriptions of Nature and decisions on Human affairs that were not contaminated by subjective elements, such as inclinations, desires, emotions, etc. Consistently, the same applies to principles said to

Spring

1 Course Unit

MSSP 7100 Democratizing Data? Critical Data Studies in Algorithmic Governance

With the advent of digital technologies and the increasing power of computational analytics, the proliferation and ubiquity of data production has increased at exponential rates enabling new possibilities for social analysis. This course will examine the emergence of democratizing data - the movement to make government and other data more widely or publicly available and its potential enabling for democratic possibilities. The types of data being made available, through various analytic systems, and the ways in which their accessibility and inaccessibility is contributing to reconfigured power relations, will be described. The paradigmatic tensions and shifts that have emerged in the debates on "Big Data," such as deductive versus inductive reasoning and the challenges posed to statistical sampling theory, will be interrogated. The appropriation of machine learning and predictive analytic algorithms for social analysis will be critically explored. Issues related to the ethical and legal use of administrative data, particularly data related to patient, client, student, and taxpayer information will be considered, as well as from internet-based sources including social media. Potential solutions to data security challenges will be additionally considered. Methods for web-scraping of data, analysis of web traffic data, and the use of social networking data in the modeling of social phenomena and public opinion will be examined. Students will learn how to make results accessible to non-technical audiences via data visualization tools, such as web-based data dashboards and web-based maps. These topics will be discussed for the analysis of health, education, and social policy as well as their implications for questions pertaining to race, gender, class, sexuality, dis/abilities, age and youth culture. This course will develop students' knowledge of computational and data analytics and its applications for social policy analysis.

Fall

1 Course Unit

MSSP 7410 Gender & Social Policy

Gender and Social Policy develops an advanced understanding of social policies through the lens of gender - a socially constructed classification system based on ideals of femininity and masculinity, which are most commonly understood to be binary, mutually exclusive categories corresponding to sex (female and male). (Gender is) a concept that pervades all aspects of culture: structuring institutions, social identities, cultural practices, political positions, historical communities, and the shared human experience of embodiment*. The class provides students with the opportunity to explore how social policies respond (and contribute) to the needs and risks of different groups of people based on gender classifications. Rather than a survey of "gender" policy, students will be introduced to key feminist and trans concepts and frameworks that can be applied to any social issue and policy intervention. Policy examples may include reproduction, state violence, exclusionary/inclusive space, and national emergencies. The topics and specific readings may change based on the class's interests and current events. Class assignments are designed to provide an opportunity to practice applying gender theory, as well as for each student to examine a policy issue of import to them through a gendered lens. *paraphrasing Garland-Thomson, 2002, "Integrating Disability, Transforming Feminist Theory", *NWSA Journal*, 14(3): pg 4.

Spring

Also Offered As: SWRK 7410

1 Course Unit

MSSP 7550 International Social Policy & Practice: Perspectives from the Global South

This interdisciplinary course will introduce students to social policy and practice perspectives from outside the U.S. and especially from communities in the Global South. The course will familiarize them with global professions and help prepare them for overseas/cross-cultural practice. Through the course students will identify numerous strategies and skills professionals have used to collaboratively build interventions within human rights, social policy, social welfare, education, healthcare and sustainable development arenas.

Fall

Also Offered As: SWRK 7550

1 Course Unit

MSSP 7680 Social Policy Through Literature

Also Offered As: SWRK 7680

1 Course Unit

MSSP 7800 Policy and Difference in Postmodernity

Social constructions of "difference" permeate the institutions, spaces, and assumptions of our society. These social constructions include but are not limited to the racialized, gendered, sexed, classed, and disabled constructions of the body. By leaning on postmodern thinkers such as Iris Marion Young, Pierre Bourdieu, Judith Butler, Jacques Derrida, Ernesto Laclau, and Michel Foucault, this seminar course will begin by engaging the questions of what is "difference" and how is "difference" discursively constructed and reproduced in society. Using a postmodern lens, the remainder of the course will engage various social science texts that deal with the varieties of "difference" (i.e. race, gender, class, sexuality) and the explicit and/or implicit policy implications of these works. Thus, we will critically engage policies such as welfare, affirmative action, economic policies of taxation, and same-gender marriage, among others. The underlying questions throughout the course will be to what extent does social policy enable the possibilities of freedom, justice, and democracy for the "Other", the deviant, the abject, the marginalized, those of assumed "difference"? And, to what extent does policy constrain those possibilities at the same time? This course does assume familiarity with social theory and is an introduction to postmodern thought on the law, the political, and policy.

Spring

Also Offered As: SWRK 7800

1 Course Unit

MSSP 7960 Family Economic Mobility: Problems and Policies

The experiences and voices of mothers, fathers, children, employers, children's teachers, human service workers, job training providers, policymakers and others in cities across America graphically show us the "real life" challenges to economic mobility facing today's families and organizations. These voices particularly illustrate how economic, social, and cultural policies, practices, and beliefs intersect to perpetuate economic inequality for low-income and many middle-income working families alike. The labor market, welfare and workforce programs, public schools and government are some of the institutions implicated in this intersection. In the course we deconstruct concepts such as the "work ethic," "family-friendly workplace," and "good jobs" in terms of economic, racial and cultural inequalities and, more broadly, in terms of their meaning, aims and rhetoric. At base, this course examines occupational mobility in America within the broad framework of capitalism, democracy, race, ethnicity and gender. Students from GSE, SAS, City Planning, and Communications often join SP2 students to read and critique classic and contemporary literature from multiple disciplines and explore generative roles for "meso-oriented" social change professionals.

Fall or Spring

Also Offered As: SWRK 7960

1 Course Unit

MSSP 7970 Social Policy in Revolutionary Cuba (1959-2017)

Cuba represents one of the world's long-standing institutionalized revolutions whose narrative and policies have changed from a strong nationalism yearning for independence, to an alignment with communism's ideology and modus operandi, to a nostalgic, post-Soviet Union "socialism" ruled by a binary, state-controlled capitalism. In addition to the myriad of social and political changes affecting the island, the transition of leadership from Fidel Castro to his brother, Raul, and the death of the former in 2016, has put into question the theoretical pillars of the Revolution, thus undermining its initial legitimacy. This course is designed to provide students with the critical and analytical tools to dissect Cuban revolutionary politics, policies, and identity mutations within the island's historical trajectory. We will begin by critically reviewing key points of diplomatic and historical relationships between the U.S and Cuba, followed by an analysis of the notion of independence - upon which Castro relied to gather massive support - in the context of the 60's debates on decolonization and underdevelopment. In addition, we will delve into the theoretical foundations of the Revolution focusing, among other texts, on the literature by Cuba's "founding father" Jose Marti, who deeply influenced the Spanish-American war (1898)'s outcomes as well as Fidel Castro's vision for Cuba. Throughout the course, students will also have the opportunity to critically read and discuss main Cuban social policies such as its famous Literacy Campaign, and other Education, Housing, Cultural, Health, and Immigration policies, as well as the island's complex relationship with technological development and communications. Finally, we will study identity and race dynamics, which are inextricably embedded in Cuba's political landscape.

Spring

1 Course Unit

MSSP 7980 Social Policy Topics

Titles and topics vary.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

MSSP 7990 Independent Study

Independent studies provide a flexible opportunity for standing faculty and students to work together in pursuing a topic of special interest that is not sufficiently covered by other courses in the curriculum. The content of independent studies is highly specialized and, as such, requires a plan of study developed jointly by the student(s) and the supervising standing faculty member. Part-time faculty members are not eligible to offer independent studies. Independent studies require the academic advisor's approval.

1 Course Unit

MSSP 8060 Systematic Reviews: Meta-Analysis and Meta-Synthesis

Systematic reviews and the synthesis of their primary studies (meta-analysis for quantitative studies and meta-synthesis for qualitative studies) are proliferating, and emerging scholars need to be conversant in the methodology, so they can contribute this type of valuable evidence to their knowledge areas. Through this course, students will learn how to locate, understand, and critically appraise systematic reviews. They will also learn how to write a protocol for an original systematic review and carry one out within a small student group. At the completion of the course, students will have a finished systematic review.

Spring

Also Offered As: SWRK 8060

1 Course Unit

MSSP 8970 Applied Linear Modeling

This course deals with the underlying assumptions and applications of the general linear model with social science, education, and social policy related questions/data. The first half of the course begins by covering simple linear regression and the assumptions of the general linear model, assumption diagnostics, consequences of violation, and how to correct for violated assumptions. This will also include methods of incomplete case analysis (i.e. missing data analysis). Then various aspects of regression analysis with multiple independent variables will be covered including categorical explanatory variables (e.g. to estimate group differences), interaction effects, mediating effects (e.g. to estimate the indirect effect of social processes), and non-linear effects. The course will then cover some of the applications of the general(ized) linear model including logistic regression, some elements of path modeling (structural equation modeling), multilevel analysis (hierarchical linear modeling), and longitudinal modeling (growth modeling). The course will be taught using SAS, but students are welcome to use any statistical package of comfort. Introductory Graduate Statistics is a prerequisite.

Spring

1 Course Unit

MSSP 9990 Independent Study

Independent studies provide a flexible opportunity for standing faculty and students to work together in pursuing a topic of special interest that is not sufficiently covered by other courses in the curriculum. The content of independent studies is highly specialized and, as such, requires a plan of study developed jointly by the student(s) and the supervising standing faculty member. Part-time faculty members are not eligible to offer independent studies. Plans for an Independent Study should include: a statement of the issue(s) to be studied; a rationale for why the identified issue(s) should be pursued via an independent study; a statement of how the independent study fits into the student's overall educational plan; a summary of the independent study's major learning objectives; the methods to be used in carrying out the study; a workable plan; the educational "products" that will result from the study (normally a written report or paper); and the expected date by which the independent study will be completed. The process for arranging an independent study requires approval of both the student's academic advisor and a standing faculty member who has agreed to conduct the independent study.

The procedures to be followed are: 1) the student discusses interest in doing an independent study with the academic advisor; 2) if the advisor concurs with the student's submission, the advisor and student will discuss potential standing faculty sponsors; 3) if a standing faculty sponsor can be located, the student and standing faculty sponsor craft the specific plan, including learning objectives, content, and structure for the course; and 4) the academic advisor informs the registrar that an independent study for the student has been approved.

Fall, Spring, and Summer Terms

0.5-1 Course Unit