



## Independent or Collaborative Study Project Application

The Independent Study Project (ISP)/Collaborative Study Project (CSP) allows students to supplement the established curriculum by completing a faculty-supervised project for credit in a specific area of interest not covered by regularly offered courses.

Students should first review eligibility requirements below before proceeding with application submission.

### Student Eligibility

- (1) sophomore or higher.
- (2) cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. If lower, student's department head must approve.

#### *Limits*

- (1) 3 credits per course.
- (2) 9 credits of ISP/CSP max toward undergraduate degree.

### Application Submission Deadlines

An ISP/CSP form for a **Fall term** must be submitted by the student to the ISP/CSP Instructor by the Friday prior to the last day of classes of the preceding spring term.

An ISP/CSP form for a **Wintersession or Spring term** must be submitted to the ISP/CSP Instructor by the Friday prior to the last day of classes of the preceding fall term.

Refer to the current [Academic Calendar](#) for important application deadlines.

#### *Exceptions*

Incoming graduate students must submit an ISP/CSP form to the ISP/CSP Instructor by the first day of classes of the semester.

### Application Process

(1) The student requests a faculty member with appropriate interests and competencies to serve as ISP/CSP Instructor and consults with them on the ISP/CSP content, work product, and other details. If the student needs help identifying an appropriate ISP/CSP Instructor, they should contact the Department Head of the department in which they wish to do the ISP/CSP or their faculty advisor.

(2) The student completes all fields of the application form and clicks the submit button. The link to the application form is provided in the “**Student Application Form**” section below.

Some departments may have specific guidelines for project proposals. For example, ISP/CSPs for Liberal Arts must involve, roughly, the same amount of work – including reading and writing about subject matter from the point of view of one of the Liberal Arts disciplines – found in a regular Liberal Arts course. The student can

determine if this applies to their ISP/CSP by asking their prospective ISP/CSP Instructor. Students may also refer to the [Criteria for Liberal Arts Independent Study Project](#) checklist.

**NOTE:** *All steps of the approval process are reviewed via an automated e-mail workflow that is triggered by the successful submission of the student ISP/CSP application.*

**(3)** The ISP/CSP Instructor reviews the application and either agrees or disagrees to advise the student on the ISP/CSP within the form.

If the ISP/CSP Instructor disagrees, they must provide a reason, which will be automatically emailed to the student after the ISP/CSP Instructor submits their decision. The student will then have the opportunity to modify their application and resubmit it to the ISP/CSP Instructor.

If the ISP/CSP Instructor agrees, the automated approval process continues.

If the student has proposed a CSP involving two CSP Instructors, this step is repeated for the second CSP Instructor.

**(4)** If the application is for non-major elective or Liberal Arts credit, the department head of the department granting credit (DHGC) reviews the application and either approves or rejects the ISP/CSP within the form. If the application is for major credit, this step is skipped.

If the DHGC rejects, they must provide a reason, which will be automatically emailed to the student and ISP/CSP Instructor(s) after the DHGC submits their decision. The student will then have the opportunity to modify their application and resubmit it to the DHGC.

If the DHGC approves, the automated approval process continues.

**(5)** The student's department head (SDH) verifies the student's GPA is > 3.0, reviews the application, and either approves or rejects the ISP/CSP.

If the SDH rejects, they must provide a reason, which will be automatically emailed to the student, ISP/CSP Instructor(s), and DHGC (if applicable) after the SDH submits their decision. The student will then have the opportunity to modify their application and resubmit it to the SDH.

If the SDH approves, the automated approval process continues.

**(6)** The Registrar's Office reviews the application and either processes or rejects the ISP/CSP.

If the Registrar's Office rejects, they must provide a reason, which will be automatically emailed to the student, ISP/CSP Instructor(s), and DHGC (if applicable) and SDH after the Registrar's Office submits their decision. The student will then have the opportunity to modify their application and resubmit it to the Registrar's Office.

If the Registrar's Office processes the form, the approval process is completed. All parties will be notified by email of the successful registration.

## **Student Application Form**

When you click the link, you will be asked to enter your RISD-email username and password so the form can identify you. The student should note that the form times out after ONE HOUR. If the student thinks they may need more time to complete the application, they should prepare their responses in a word processor, then copy

and paste them into the form. If the student completes the application in this manner, they should note that the text fields on the application are limited to a relatively small number of characters and should plan their response length accordingly.

To sign out of the form software after a session, you must entirely close the internet browser you are using (i.e. Chrome or Safari) – if you are using a Mac, use the Command+Q keyboard shortcut to ensure the browser is completely closed. If you do not close the browser entirely, the next person to access the form from the same computer may be misidentified as you.

Access the online application form here: [ISP/CSP Application](#)

## **ISP Instructors**

The following instructions are applicable to faculty that are conducting an ISP/CSP.

### *Limits*

- (1) Part-time faculty – No more than 5 ISP/CSP/second advisor on Graduate Thesis Committees per academic year.
- (2) Full-time faculty – no more than 3 per semester.

### *Responsibilities*

- (1) Ensuring the educational merit of the ISP/CSP meets the standard of what is expected of a comparable 3-credit course.
- (2) Ensuring the feasibility of a satisfactory and timely completion of the project, in light of the student's overall course load for the semester and your other obligations.
- (3) Establishing with the student the agreed-upon schedule and manner of meetings for the semester. Contact time to average 1.5 hours per week inclusive of prep and evaluation time (as RISD reports for AHCA purposes).
- (4) Establishing with the student the agreed-upon requirements (a series of small projects/papers, one big project/paper, form of research, etc.).
- (5) If needed, helping the student to complete every part of the application form and ensure that all the required information is provided on the form.
- (6) Submitting a final grade on Webadvisor at the end of the term. If satisfactory progress is not being made by mid-term, submitting a mid-term warning for the student.