Recommendations & Guidelines for Independent Study Courses  
Mercy College of Northwest Ohio

- Elective courses with the course number of the format XXX 280 (XXX stands for the subject of the course offered, e.g. BIO 280 would indicate an independent study course in biology)
- Prerequisites for the independent study course to be determined by the facilitating faculty member (e.g. BIO 110 and 111 are prerequisites for any additional physiology electives)
- Participating students must be in good academic standing with a GPA of 2.7 or better. The Associate Deans must approve all independent study requests. Whereupon, the student then takes the approved request to a faculty member.
- This is strictly a volunteer project for the faculty member. If approached by a student, a faculty member may accept or reject the additional workload, or suggest that the student see the Associate Dean for recommendation of another faculty member who may have time to work with the student.
- The number of credit hours will be counted as part of the faculty workload, but cannot exceed the standard 12-15 credit hour workload. Faculty will not be paid over the standard workload for an independent study.
- Students may accrue a maximum or total of 1 semester credit hour of independent study during their time at Mercy College of Northwest Ohio for an associate degree program and 3 semester credit hours for a bachelor degree.

Specific guidelines regarding the independent study

1. Independent studies may not be available in all divisions. A proposal must be approved, by the Associate Dean in charge of the student’s Program Area and the Associate Dean in charge of the Content Area of the proposed independent study course, three weeks prior to the beginning of the term.

2. After obtaining a hard-copy packet at the Registrar’s Office, a student wishing to enroll in an approved independent study must approach the faculty member with a proposal * and rationale for the topic/project, as well as the method for evaluation of the project, prior to registration.

* The proposal is necessary for the faculty member to decide if he/she wants to direct this independent study. The student must develop an idea for a topic before coming to the instructor to propose the independent study. The independent study option is intended for advanced students who desire to pursue study of a subject beyond the scope of current catalog offerings.
3. After the initial meeting with the student, the faculty member will meet with the Associate Deans to obtain final approval of the independent study.

4. During the first week of classes the faculty member will meet with the student to develop the exact course requirements. During this initial meeting, the student and the faculty member will further develop the proposal and execute a contract, signed by both the faculty member and the student, which includes: learning objectives, resources and strategies, target dates, and how the student will be evaluated. (Independent Study Proposal forms, Guidelines forms and Learning Contract forms are available through the Registrar’s Office).

5. A plan for ongoing and substantive contact hours will be negotiated by the student and faculty member and must be approved by the Content Area Associate Dean. This plan should be reflective of the credit hours for the course. Identified times for meeting are to be included in the learning contract.

6. It is very important that the independent study be addressed in a manner that provides students with the opportunity to pursue an area that enhances professional or personal academic development and also allows the student to become actively involved in his/her own education – student directed learning.