



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER™

School of Medicine

*Operating Policy and Procedure*

**SOM OP:** 30.13, **Independent/Guided Study**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this School of Medicine (SOM) policy and procedure is to define the methods used for enrolling students in Independent/Guided Study.

**REVIEW:** This SOM Policy and Procedure shall be reviewed within each even-numbered fiscal year by the Curriculum and Educational Policy Committee. Revisions will be forwarded to the Office of the Dean for approval and publication.

**POLICY/PROCEDURE:**

1. **General.** This policy is intended to provide guidelines for faculty, staff, and administrators concerning procedures to be employed in enrolling students in Courses identified as Independent Study. It has been developed to help ensure the SOM maintains compliance with Liaison Committee on Medical Education element 9.9 and 11.1.
2. **Definitions.**
  - a) Independent Study is defined as a course in which a student is enrolled that is personalized to enable the student to progress in the curriculum after experiencing academic difficulty.
  - b) Guided Study is defined as a course where students work with an advisor on an Individualized Learning Plan that enables them to complete a curricular requirement.
3. **Uses.**
  - a) Independent study courses are available for students who experience academic difficulties in the pre-clerkship curriculum or who are following an independent activity for personal enrichment.
  - b) Guided study courses are available for students who require extra time to prepare for USMLE Step 1.
4. **Procedures.**
  - a) Enrollment of a student in an Independent Study or Guided Study course must be approved by the Student Promotion and Professional Conduct Committee (SPPCC), except when an IDS course is being pursued for academic/personal enrichment.
  - b) The SPPCC will establish the length of time that a student can be enrolled in an Independent/Guided Study course.
  - c) The SPPCC will inform the Office of Academic Affairs that a student has been enrolled in an Independent/Guided Study course so that the student's status in the curriculum can be adjusted and administrators of previously scheduled courses are informed of these changes in a timely manner.
  - d) Any student enrolled in an Independent/Guided Study course will be monitored by a Learning Specialist in the Office of Student Affairs or their designee.
  - e) Any student enrolled in a Guided Study course will be assigned an advisor.

- f) A student in a Guided Study course will be required to develop an Independent Learning Plan (ILP) which must include:
  - i. A self-evaluation of the learner's strengths and challenges.
  - ii. At least one specific goal.
  - iii. One or more specific learning objectives.
  - iv. A timeline for completion of learning objectives, including a schedule of student-advisor meetings.
  - v. A list of resources to be used (including electronic, human or other resources).
  - vi. Expectations for engagement with available resources.
  - vii. A specific set of outcome measures that will determine whether the goal has been achieved.
- g) Each ILP should be considered to be a modifiable contract between learner and advisor and any modifications should be discussed with the advisor and documented by the learner.
- h) Outcomes of Guided Study courses should be reported to the SPPCC at the next meeting after course completion.
- i) The SPPCC will determine subsequent steps in instances where the goal of a Guided Study course is not achieved. For example, it may be necessary to determine whether a student needs additional time to prepare for USMLE Step 1 and whether that additional time can consist of additional Guided Study courses or a Leave of Absence.

5. **Grading.**

- a) Independent/Guided Study courses are graded as either Credit (CR) or No Credit (NC).
- b) Independent/Guided Study courses do not count towards graduation requirements.
- c) Failure to meet the expectation of an Independent/Guided Study course will result in assignment of a grade of NC and referral to the SPPCC.

6. **Resources.**

- a) Progress of students enrolled in Guided Study will be tracked by the Office of Student Affairs.
- b) Administrators in the Office of Student Affairs will be available for personal counseling of students in Independent/Guided Study courses.
- c) The Office of Academic Affairs will ensure that appropriate online resources are available to each student enrolled in an Independent/Guided Study course and that data from these resources are made available to the students and their advisors in a timely manner.

## Individual Learning Plan

**Student Name**

**Student Year**

**Course Name/Number**

**Date of ILP**

**Advisor Name**

**Advisor Department**

**Rationale for ILP:** (Include information from SPPCC)

**Student Self-reflection:** (Why is Guided Study course needed? Not just because exams were failed, assess behavioral choices, etc.)

**Goal:** (For example: to demonstrate preparedness for USMLE Step 1 through guided, self-directed learning)

### Learning Objective 1

Use **S**pecific**M**easurable**A**chievable**R**elevant**T**imely **Objective structure**

**Resources Needed:** (e.g. access to online resource, formative assessments, location, group membership)

**Outcome Measures:** (e.g. target score on formative assessment, participation requirement, level of engagement with learning resource)

**Timeline:**

### Learning Objective 2

Use **S**pecific**M**easurable**A**chievable**R**elevant**T**imely **Objective structure**

**Resources Needed:** (e.g. access to online resource, formative assessments, location, group membership)

**Outcome Measures:** (e.g. target score on formative assessment, participation requirement, level of engagement with learning resource)

**Timeline:**

### Learning Objective 3

Use **S**pecific**M**easurable**A**chievable**R**elevant**T**imely **Objective structure**

**Resources Needed:** (e.g. access to online resource, formative assessments, location, group membership)

**Outcome Measures:** (e.g. target score on formative assessment, participation requirement, level of engagement with learning resource)

**Timeline:**

**Other Factors:**

**Current Accommodations**

**Dual Degree program**

**Leadership position(s)**