GUIDELINES FOR PART-TIME MSIT INDEPENDENT STUDY OPTION: MSIT 499 Course

Part-time MSIT students with extensive knowledge in a particular area covered by the MSIT may wish to study a separate topic in that area or to conduct more advanced research in that area, under the supervision of an MSIT faculty advisor. Students may opt to substitute up to two Independent Study projects (MSIT Course 499) for any second year MSIT course or any of the three MSIT business courses. The topic of the independent study course must be chosen so that the student maintains a balance between technical and business courses. Independent Study projects must be of graduate level quality, representing a substantial effort at research, analysis and organization, and adhering to traditional academic formats and language usage. The MSIT director must approve both the project and the faculty advisor well in advance of the final deadlines listed below. A final project or report must be prepared and submitted to the MSIT office by the end of the quarter in which the project is conducted.

Students who choose a business/management project should show the relationship of the project to information technology in the proposed outline, and then demonstrate a thorough understanding of the technology/technologies involved in the final report. Independent Study projects may be conducted by more than one student.

To secure approval for an Independent Study project, complete the following steps:

1. Define your topic in general and provide a justification for the course substitution to the MSIT director. You must demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the material in the course being substituted. The MSIT director will evaluate your proposal and will suggest possible faculty advisors.
2. Secure a faculty advisor for the independent study.
3. Work with your independent study faculty advisor to prepare a full project proposal that is satisfactory to both of you. It should include the following:
   a. The purpose of the project and your intended outcome/deliverable;
   b. Your project-specific educational objectives;
   c. A moderately detailed outline that describes your project along with a week by week milestone timeline for completing the various stages and, if more than one student is involved, that identifies who will be responsible for which particular project areas;
   d. List of readings and/or resources to be used;
   e. The course(s) you will be substituting the Independent Study project(s) for.
4. Submit the proposal, along with the Independent Study Agreement (attached) to the MSIT director for approval. Before you begin the work, you, your independent study faculty advisor and the MSIT director must sign the Agreement.

Independent Study proposals are due on the following dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quarter project to be conducted</th>
<th>Due date of full plan proposal to MSIT director</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>September 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>December 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>March 1</td>
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Following full plan approval by the MSIT director and your independent study faculty advisor, the MSIT office will register you for the Independent Study course (MSIT 499) and provide the usual follow-through for receiving and recording grades.
INDEPENDENT STUDY AGREEMENT: MSIT 499 Course

FOR THE STUDENT(S):  
Independent Study Agreements, along with project proposals and week by week outlines, are due to the MSIT director on the following dates:

- Fall Quarter – September 1
- Winter Quarter – December 1
- Spring Quarter – March 1

For record keeping, please return this form, along with your approved project proposal and week by week outline, to the MSIT associate director:

Northwestern University  
McCormick Education Center  
2311 N. Campus Drive, Suite 1400  
Evanston, IL 60208

I/We, ____________________________________________________________  
request approval to register for an Independent Study project for the____________ quarter, 2020-21. The project title is ____________________________________________________________.  
The project will replace the following MSIT course: _____________________________.

I/We have read the Independent Study Guidelines and have received approval from the MSIT director for the proposed MSIT Independent Study. I/We agree to complete the study in the specified quarter and submit the final project or report to the MSIT office by the end of the specified quarter.

Signature - Student __________________________ Date ______________

Signature - Student __________________________ Date ______________

MSIT DIRECTOR APPROVAL:

I approve the student’s project proposal.

Signature of Approval – MSIT Director __________________________ Date ______________

INDEPENDENT STUDY FACULTY ADVISOR APPROVAL:

I approve the student’s project proposal and agree to serve as faculty advisor.

Signature of Approval – Independent Study Faculty Advisor __________________________ Date ______________