SON OP 40.635: Independent/Individual Studies Courses Policy

PURPOSE: This policy details the requirements for student's to engage in an independent study for academic credit and the requirements for a formal agreement between student and faculty. A formal agreement assures both the student and faculty member have a clear understanding of the expectations in the independent/individual studies process.

REVIEW: All policies in the Graduate Program Manual shall be reviewed by the Graduate Program Associate Dean/Department Chairs by December 1 of even numbered years in collaboration with the Graduate Program Council. Final approval of the Graduate Program Manual is by the Dean.

1.0 Policy
The course entitled Independent/Individual Studies is available to individualize student learning. The faculty member responsible for functioning as the independent/individual study mentor develops a formal agreement with the student who registers for an independent/individual study. The assumption is that a student who contracts for an independent/individual study will complete that contract within the semester in which he/she registers for the independent/individual study. If the student or faculty member believes that it will take longer than one semester to complete the independent/individual study, then the student should either contract only for those credit hours that can be completed in one semester or plan to re-enroll in the independent/individual study until it is completed (receive a grade of PR).

2.0 Procedure
1. Student and faculty discuss and agree upon an independent/individual studies course objectives, plan for achieving objectives, plan for evaluation, and means for validating evaluation data. This information is placed on the Independent/Individual Studies Agreement form (Attachment A). Students must file the Independent/Individual Studies Agreement form with the Student Affairs Office prior to registering for the course.
2. Copies are distributed as stated on the form.
3. The student registers for an independent/individual studies and pays tuition when the independent/individual studies contract is initiated.
4. At the completion of the independent/individual studies, the criteria and means for validating evaluation data submitted by the student and the grade earned are distributed to the student, maintained by the contracting faculty, and the final grade is posted in the Banner system for recording on the student's transcript.
5. Grading for an independent/individual studies is in keeping with the Grading Practices Policy (SON OP 40.475).
6. The appropriate Associate Dean/Department Chair maintains the official independent/individual studies course files.

Attachment A
TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER
SCHOOL OF NURSING
Independent/Individual Study Agreement

STUDENT: __________________________ COURSE: (include section number) ______________ CREDIT HOURS ___________
SS #: ___________________________ # OF CREDIT HOURS TO EARN THROUGH CLINICAL WORK ____________
TODAY'S DATE: _______________ # OF CREDIT HOURS TO EARN THROUGH DIDACTIC WORK ____________

OFFICIAL PROJECT TITLE: _____________________________________________________________

PROJECT TITLE FOR TRANSCRIPT PURPOSES (35 characters maximum): ____________________________

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT: ________________________________________________________________

________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

SEMESTER OF REGISTRATION FOR COURSE: ________________________________
EXPECTED DATE OF COMPLETION: ________________________

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<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>PLAN FOR ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>PLAN FOR EVALUATION</th>
<th>CRITERIA AND MEANS FOR VALIDATING EVALUATION DATA</th>
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STUDENT SIGNATURE: __________________________ FACULTY MEMBER SIGNATURE: __________________________

ROUTING: Student returns completed original to Graduate Program Office
GPO: Files Original in Student File
Student delivers copies to: Registrar's Office at the time of Registration (face sheet only)
Contracting Faculty Member
Student
If the independent/individual study includes clinical experience, indicate the clinical facility and preceptor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF CLINICAL FACILITY</th>
<th>PRECEPTOR'S NAME AND TITLE</th>
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Contracting Faculty Member

Student
Explanation of Category -- “Criteria and Means for Validating Evaluation Data”

This category assists the faculty member in evaluating and grading of the “plan of evaluation.” This also results in a sense of responsibility and a degree of creativity in the student that is absent when the faculty member takes full responsibility for evaluating and grading an independent study. The student takes the responsibility for determining what criteria the evidence of evaluation will be judged by and the proposed means to have the evidence judged according to these criteria.

Example:

Suppose a student has an objective, “Develop policies and procedures for Gynecological Nursing Unit according to hospital guidelines.” The evidence of evaluation would be the policies and procedures. But how appropriate is it for the faculty member to judge the appropriateness, usefulness or articulation of these policies with currently established policies and procedures of the hospital? The head nurse or supervisor of the unit or the Nursing Service Administrator would be a better evaluator of this evidence. So the category labeled, “Criteria and Means for Validating the Evaluation Data,” could contain the following:

Final Evaluation of the policies and procedures for the GYN unit will be made by the supervisor of the unit and the Nursing Service Administrator. Each of these people will be asked to complete the following rating scale:

1. The policies and procedures showed evidence of an understanding of the organization and structure of the unit.
   Yes _________ To some degree _________ No _________

2. The policies and procedures reflect knowledge of current hospital policies.
   Yes _________ To some degree _________ No _________

3. The policies and procedures will provide guidance for nursing care activities of the unit.
   Yes _________ To some degree _________ No _________

A middle or positive rating indicates this objective has been met.

The student would make a final statement in this component as a summary for all objectives such as:

A middle or positive rating on each of the objectives indicates the attainment of the contracted grade.