

Information for Students and Instructors

Independent Study Courses at St. Stephen's College

Context

St. Stephen's College is a graduate theology school and an Affiliated College of The University of Alberta in Edmonton. The mission of St. Stephen's College is to be an interfaith community that offers sacred spaces for learning and transformation. The College is open to people from all world views, faith traditions and spiritual expressions. For the past century, St Stephen's has been recognized not only for its commitment to academic excellence, but also for its creative and non-traditional styles of learning: we value flexibility, innovation, collegiality, self-directed learning, and the integration of the arts with theology. The College is an Associate Member of The Association of Theological Schools in The United States and Canada; and an Approved Training Program of the Canadian Art Therapy Association. St. Stephen's College is committed to an adult education model of teaching which ensures that the teaching/learning process occurs when both teacher and student share responsibility, according to their respective roles, for the direction, approach, and content of the subject matter being studied. The following description of the independent study course will assist prospective instructor and students.

Independent Study Course Content

The independent study course should be offered in such a way that the student is able to gain a basic understanding, appropriate to their program, of the general principles of the subject matter being studied, as well as providing an opportunity for an in-depth reflection on aspects that support the student's chosen research topic or area of interest. Independent Study courses must be taken for credit, and cannot be audited.

Responsibilities of the Instructor

It is important that the student and instructor negotiate a work plan. The instructor's responsibilities are to:

- provide a course outline that indicates the general objectives of the course and a basic bibliography,
- indicate required reading (include several basic resources as well as supplementary materials),
- consult with the student and communicate in writing timelines, ways of communicating, assignments and evaluation methods,
- provide adequate feedback to the student in a reasonable amount of time,
- send evaluation to the St. Stephen's College Registrar's Office, using the Assignment Form (see last page of these guidelines). This evaluation is to include evaluative comments, marks on interim assignments and a final percentage grade. The final major assignment is to be appended to the Assignment Form.

Upon receipt of the final grade, the Registrar's Office will forward to the instructor the current instructional fee of \$370Cdn. In the event that the instructional relationship is terminated, the instructor shall advise the Registrar's Office and the fee will be pro-rated.

Responsibilities of the Student

It is important that the student and instructor negotiate a work plan. The student's responsibilities are to:

- submit the *Instructor's Profile and Independent Study Course Proposal* to the Chair/Associate Chair of the Department, (or if not in a St. Stephen's program, the Academic Dean) for approval; the course outline, including objectives, content, and bibliography must be attached and the *Instructors Profile and Independent Study Course Proposal* must be signed by the proposed instructor,
- once course is approved, register for the course with the Registrar's Office according to the fee schedule in effect at the start date of the course; registration may be by phone (780.439.7311 or 1.800.661.4956) or online at <http://ststephenscollege.ca/students/registration-form>,
- ensure that there is sufficient access to the basic resources as well as to supplementary resources required for the comprehension of the course as well as specific assignments; consult with the instructor and establish in writing the timelines, ways of communicating, assignments, and evaluation methods.
- keep in regular contact with the instructor, and apart from exceptional circumstances, ensure that assignments are completed on time.
- submit the final assignment to the instructor with an Assignment Form (see last page of these guidelines), so that evaluative comments and grade can be submitted to the Registrar's Office.

Duration

Independent study courses are a maximum of eight months in duration. Extensions may be granted in extenuating circumstances (refer to Academic Policies, page 4 of these guidelines). The final grade must be submitted to the Registrar's Office within nine months of the course start date.

Appointment of Instructors

Students take the initiative to seek out suitable instructors for their independent study course. Students must explore, with the individual under consideration as instructor, the feasibility of doing the independent study course with them, and receive assurances of their willingness to teach. Potential instructors must provide brief biographical and professional information, and a *curriculum vitae*, using the form accompanying this document. Students forward this information to the Chair/Associate Chair of their Department (or the Registrar if student is not in a degree or

certificate program at the College), along with the proposed course outline. The Chair/Associate Chair or Dean will signify approval by signing the form, and the Registrar's Office will advise the student of course approval. The student then registers/pays for the course and commences course work.

Forms of Communication

There are several ways that the communication required for an independent study course can take place. Students and instructors can communicate through a combination of email, phone, video-conferencing or mail. Students residing in the same community as the instructor may arrange face-to-face meetings as well as using the other forms of communication noted above.

Number of Meetings between Student and Instructor

There must be a minimum of four meetings, using the agreed upon form(s) of communication:

- an initial meeting where the course outline is given, and timelines are determined,
- a second meeting to ensure that the student has gained a sufficient understanding of the general aspects of the course through the required reading; an assignment can be required beforehand,
- a third meeting where the student and instructor agree on the focus of the major assignment topic, review general content of the assignment, and resources,
- a fourth meeting where the student receives feedback with respect to assignments and final grade (the Assignment Form is used as written documentation of this evaluation); alternatively, a final take-home exam may be assigned.

Authority and Accountability

The instructor is considered Associate Faculty of the College during the course. The instructor therefore has a dual accountability: to the student for the terms negotiated, and to the College through the Chair/Associate Chair of the student's department or the Dean. In the sensitive matter of evaluation of the quality of the student's work, the primary accountability of the instructor must be to the College and its published standards. Such primary accountability is meant to enhance the instructional relationship.

Academic Guidelines: Doctoral Level 3-Credit Course

1. Extensive reading in the literature of a particular topic with emphasis on primary sources. (At least 10 classic or up-to-date articles plus research on philosophically based books.)
2. One major assignment (eg. specialized paper or project) weighted approximately 40% of the course mark. If a specialized paper it should be at least 4000-5000 words (16-20 pages double-spaced) with proper annotation and bibliography of significant works (normally 8 books and 8 articles) in the area. It should include works that represent at least 2 viewpoints and perspectives. A project should be the equivalent amount of research and work.
3. A number of minor assignments weighted approximately 10-25% of course mark (eg. book report, class presentation, mini-project, reflective writing, or examination).
4. Should the course lend itself more to smaller assignments in lieu of 2 and 3 above, there should still be a minimum of 7500 words (thirty pages double-spaced, not including cover page, figures, tables, artwork, appendices, or references/bibliography) of writing for the course.
5. Attendance and class participation will be given due recognition. Online courses will maintain the class participation requirement by means of email or online discussion groups; independent study courses will be exempt, putting more weight on the other course assignments.
6. Through their assignments, students must demonstrate an advanced understanding of, and cultural interaction with some original thought which advances knowledge and its integration. Command of the English language and the ability to understand and communicate clearly, verbally and in writing, will also be expected.
7. The above guidelines are to be considered the norm for St. Stephen's College. However, St. Stephen's College may approve a 3-credit course with divergences of teaching methodology and assignment structures if the instructor provides a rationale to justify such divergences.
8. A doctoral student is expected to perform to a minimum grade level of 66% in an individual course, while maintaining a grade average of 70% in her/his program.

Academic Guidelines: Master Level 3-Credit Course

1. Approximately 1000 pages of reading including textbook(s) and 4 classic or up-to-date articles.
2. One major assignment weighted approximately 40% of the course mark (eg. technical paper or project). If a technical paper, it should be at least 4000-5000 words (16-20 pages, double-spaced) with proper annotation and bibliography of at least 6 books and 6 articles reflected in the paper. A project should be the equivalent amount of research and work.
3. A number of minor assignments weighted approximately 10-25% of course mark, eg. book report, class presentation, mini-project or examination (totaling 10-15 pages, double-spaced).
4. Should the course lend itself more to smaller assignments in lieu of 2 and 3 above, there should still be a minimum of 7500 words (30 pages, double-spaced) of writing for the course, not including cover page, figures, tables, artwork, appendices, or references/bibliography.
5. Attendance and class participation weighted approximately 10% of course mark. Online courses will maintain the class participation requirement by means of email or online discussion groups; correspondence and independent

study courses will be exempt, putting more weight on the other course assignments.

6. The above guidelines are to be considered the norm for St. Stephen's College. However, St. Stephen's College may approve a course with divergences of teaching methodology and assignment structures and weight if the instructor can academically justify such divergences for a 3-credit master level course.
7. Students must demonstrate an advanced understanding of the subject matter in terms of philosophical analysis and critical assessment—with some original thought which advances knowledge and understanding of it—as well as command of the English language and the ability to understand and communicate clearly in it, verbally and in writing.
8. A graduate student is expected to perform to a minimum grade level of 66% in an individual course, and also maintain a grade average of 70% in her/his program.

Academic Guidelines: Master Level 3-Credit Art Therapy Studio Elective Course

The objective of Art Therapy studio courses is the development of studio skills for competent Art Therapy practice. The studio skills may include, but are not limited to, a working understanding of fine art materials and processes, a working understanding of elements of design/aesthetic theory, various approaches to the creative/therapeutic process, ability to attend to imagery and symbolism in one's own work, the ability to establish and facilitate a functional art therapy studio environment, and the ability to model and facilitate a therapeutic environment conducive to creative exploration and therapeutic work.

1. Approximately 500 pages of reading including book(s) and/or articles.
2. One major assignment weighted approximately 40% of the course mark (eg. arts-based project or integrative paper). An integrative paper should be at least 16-20 double-spaced pages (not including cover page, figures, tables, artwork, appendices, or references/bibliography), with degree-designated (APA or Turabian) formatting, and must include at least 2 books and 1 article. An arts-based project should include a coherent series of creative works developed during the course or one integrated piece of art with an accompanying 10-12 page reflective/integrative component.
3. A number of minor assignments that will be weighted according to guidelines provided by the instructor.
4. Attendance and class participation will be weighted according to guidelines provided by the instructor. Online courses will maintain the class participation requirement by means of email or online discussion groups. Independent study studio elective courses may include participation in group studio activities; if not, more weight will be placed on other course assignments and independent studio work.
5. The above guidelines are to be considered the norm for St. Stephen's College. However, St. Stephen's College may approve a course with divergences of teaching methodology and assignment structures and weight if the instructor can academically justify such divergences for a 3-credit master level course.
6. Students must demonstrate an advanced understanding of the subject matter in terms of philosophical analysis and critical assessment—with some original thought which advances knowledge and understanding of it—as well as command of the English language and the ability to understand and communicate clearly in it, verbally and in writing.
7. A graduate student is expected to perform to a minimum grade level of 66% in an individual course, and also maintain a grade average of 70% in her/his program. Studio courses are graded on a pass/fail basis; a grade between 66%-100% would earn an 'S' for Satisfactory.

Academic Guidelines: Bachelor Level 3-Credit Course

1. Approximately 800 pages of reading including textbook(s) and 2 classic or up-to-date articles.
2. One major assignment weighted approximately 40% of the course mark (eg. technical paper or project). If a technical paper, it should be at least 3500 words (14 pages, double-spaced) with proper annotation and bibliography of at least 6 books and 3 articles reflected in the paper. A project should be the equivalent amount of research and work.
3. A number of minor assignments weighted approximately 10-25% of course mark (eg. book report, class presentation, mini-project or examination).
4. Should the course lend itself more to smaller assignments in lieu of 2 and 3 above, there should still be a minimum of 5500 words (22 pages, double-spaced) of writing for the course, not including cover page, figures, tables, artwork, appendices, or references/bibliography.
5. Attendance and class participation weighted approximately 10% of course mark. Online courses will maintain the participation requirement by means of email or or online discussion groups; independent study courses will be exempt, putting more weight on the other course assignments.
6. The above guidelines are to be considered the norm for St. Stephen's College. However, St. Stephen's College may approve a course with divergences of teaching methodology and assignment structures and weight if the instructor can academically justify such divergences for a 3-credit undergraduate level course.
7. Students must demonstrate an understanding of the subject matter in terms of content, with some ability to philosophically assess and engage it, as well as command of the English language and the ability to understand and communicate in it, verbally and in writing.
8. A Bachelor level student is expected to perform to a minimum grade level of 50% in an individual course, while maintaining an overall grade average of 62% in her/his program.

ST. STEPHEN'S COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES

Course Completion Policy

Students are expected to submit assignments required for credit courses by the deadlines given by the instructor in the course outline. Final assignments are due the last day of the course (eight months after the start date for Independent Study courses). If the final assignment is not submitted to the instructor by the deadline, or the negotiated extension to that date (see Course Extension policy below) and provided no formal withdrawal from the course has been requested, the final grade will be based on work completed.

Course Extensions

In extenuating circumstances, (ie. medical reasons) students may consult with the instructor before the due date and request an extension to the deadline. Instructors may grant a maximum of two one-month extensions; the terms of the extension will be based on the circumstances of both the instructor and student. Students are reminded that they are expected to set realistic goals and timelines for themselves to complete assignments that are due, particularly in situations where they may enroll in several courses at the same time. Exceptions to course completion and extension policies will be allowed for extreme extenuating circumstances only, and must be approved by the Department Chair/Associate Chair of the student's program. To request an extension for a final course assignment beyond the two-month extension granted by the instructor, students must (1) receive instructor's agreement, and (2) petition the Department Chair/Associate Chair (email), citing in detail the grounds for their request. The petition approval and extension date will be forwarded to the Registrar's Office, and a copy kept in the student's file.

Course Withdrawal

Students who wish to withdraw from an Independent Study course and receive a grade of 'W' must notify the Registrar of their withdrawal within four months of the start date, or within four months after registering. If a withdrawal request is not made by the date specified, the final course grade will be based on total work completed in the course. Withdrawal policy in regards to refund of course fee: Withdraw prior to the course start date to be eligible for a full refund of the course fee minus a \$75 administrative fee; withdraw four weeks after the start date of the course or four weeks after registering to be eligible for a refund of 50% of the course fee minus a \$75 administrative fee.

Submitting Final Grade to Registrar's Office

Instructors are expected to submit the final course grade to the Registrar's Office at St. Stephen's College one month after the final assignment due date. ***Interim marks for work done throughout the course, and the final percentage grade, must be submitted on the Assignment Form, with copy of the final major paper.*** Instructors send a copy of the Assignment Form to the student indicating their final grade. If a transcript is desired, students can request one using the Transcript Request Form (<http://ststephenscollege.ca/student-log-in/forms>).

Evaluation Standards and Grading System

A+	90 - 100%	Exceptional	Superior performance. Displays great originality and depth. Comprehensive understanding of subject matter, with original insights.
A	85 - 89%	Excellent	Above normal expectations. Occasionally surprises the reader with insights or deft presentation. Strong evidence of maturity, independence and control of the subject. Any lapses in logic and style are few and minor.
A-	80 - 84%		
B+	77 - 79%	Good	Meets normal expectations. Solid, accurate and integrative, convincing. Lapses in logic or style are uncommon and not serious.
B	73 - 76%		
B-	70 - 72%		
C+	67 - 69%	Adequate	Barely meets normal expectations. Covers the ground, but rarely adds anything new or personal. Heavily dependent on sources and authorities, with accurate but awkward handling of concepts. [Course Pass for Masters and Doctoral students: 66%]
C	63 - 66%		
C-	60 - 62%		
D+	57 - 59%	Poor	Below normal expectations. Disorganized, frequent lapses in logic and style, superficial with no evidence of personal involvement. Inability to use theory. [Course Pass for Undergraduate students: 50%]
D	53 - 56%		
D-	50 - 52%		
F	0 - 49%	Failure	Far below normal expectations. Massive structural or other academic defects, evidence of dependence on sources and authorities bordering on plagiarism. [Clear Failure][Grade of 0% calculated in overall grade]
W		Withdrawal	Withdrawal from course with permission within established deadlines. [Not calculated in overall grade]
WF		Withdrawal-Failure	Withdrawal from course after established deadline for withdrawing without academic penalty but before final assignment due. [Grade of 0% calculated in overall grade]
INF		Incomplete-Failure	Course work not completed within established academic deadlines: ie final assignment due date. [Grade of 0% calculated in overall grade]
IP		In Progress	Course in Progress: Extension or rewrite of final assignment granted by Instructor or Dean

St. Stephen's College Instructor Profile and Independent Study Course Proposal

STEPS REQUIRED TO ENROLL IN AND COMPLETE AN INDEPENDENT STUDY COURSE

1. This form, with course syllabus attached, is signed by instructor and submitted to Chair/Associate Chair of Department of student's program, or the Dean, for approval/signature.
2. Registrar's Office notifies student of course approval.
3. Student registers and pays for course (pays course fee in effect on start date of course).
4. Student and instructor start course.
5. Instructor submits final grade (**with interim marks, and copy of final major assignment**) to Registrar's Office, and instructional fee is paid to instructor.

Persons considering serving as Instructors of Independent Study courses are asked to provide the following information, as well as a *curriculum vitae*, for the purpose of evaluating suitability in regard to the student's proposed course.

STUDENT INFORMATION	
Student Name	
Student Email	
Student Program (DMin, MPS, MPS-AT, PMATC, MTS, BTS, Grad Certificate, 'Open Studies')	

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION	
Instructor Name	
Instructor Mailing Address	
Social Insurance Number	<i>Associate Faculty who receive payment for teaching or supervising students are asked to provide their social insurance number to the College by phoning 780.439.7311 or 1.800.661.4956 [ask for Assistant Registrar]. Confidential information is kept in a secure location at the College.</i>
Instructor Email	
Instructor Phone	
Position Held Currently	
University Degree Attained	
Theological Degree Attained	
Other Professional Training	
Professional Experience (responsibilities assigned in last five years relevant to course)	
Other Comments (anything else that would help us recognize the appropriateness of your appointment as Instructor for this student)	

PROPOSED COURSE AND DATES	
Title of Course	
Brief Course Description (attach detailed course outline/work plan)	
Course Level	<input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral (700) <input type="checkbox"/> Master (500) <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor (300)
Proposed Start and End Dates (maximum 8-month session)	
Which program requirement are you planning to satisfy with this course? (i.e., elective, theology, etc.)	
If you are currently an Open Studies student, but have applied to a Degree program, indicate which program:	

INSTRUCTOR SIGNATURE	
<p>In signing, I am indicating my availability and interest in serving as an Independent Study Course Instructor, and my willingness to consult with the Chair/Associate Chair of the Department for the student's program, or Dean as needed, as well as abide by St. Stephen's College academic policies and rules of confidentiality. Signing also signifies acceptance of the terms of the instructional fee (\$370Cdn).</p>	
Signature	
Date	

APPROVALS: INSTRUCTOR APPOINTMENT AND COURSE CONTENT	
Approval is based on suitability of instructor, and suitability of course content/method for student's program.	
Department Chair/Associate Chair Signature (Degree students and applicants)	
Dean Signature (Open Studies students only)	
Date	
Department Chair to choose subject category of course from choices below, so that course number can be assigned: <input type="checkbox"/> Applied Practice or Arts in Theology(SSC580/PPSYC580 or SSC780/PPSYC780) <input type="checkbox"/> Art Therapy Studio (ARTST580) <input type="checkbox"/> Methodology (SSC570 or SSC770) <input type="checkbox"/> Sacred Text (SSC500 or SSC700) <input type="checkbox"/> Sacred History (SSC520 or SSC720) <input type="checkbox"/> Spirituality (SSC550 or SSC750) <input type="checkbox"/> Theology or Ethics (SSC510 or SSC710)	
DEPT CHAIR/ASSOC CHAIR FORWARD FORM/SYLLABUS TO REGISTRAR'S OFFICE. REGISTRAR'S OFFICE NOTIFIES STUDENT VIA EMAIL WHEN COURSE IS APPROVED SO THAT STUDENT CAN REGISTER.	

<p><i>FOR REGISTRAR'S OFFICE USE ONLY</i> Copied for student file _____ [Asst Registrar retains original until grade received] Instructor entered in database _____ Student notified of approval _____ Instructor paid _____</p>

St. Stephen's College

8810-112 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2J6
 Phone 780.439.7311 Fax 780.433.8875
www.ualberta.ca/ST.STEPHENS/

ASSIGNMENT FORM

STUDENT SECTION		Complete this section and attach the form to your assignment. If your instructor has given you the option of emailing your assignment, email it to your instructor and ask the instructor to confirm receipt. Keep a copy of your assignment for your records.		
STUDENT INFORMATION		INSTRUCTOR	ASSIGNMENT	
NAME			COURSE NAME	
EMAIL			COURSE DATES	
PROGRAM			DATE SUBMITTED TO INSTRUCTOR	
			DATE RETURNED TO STUDENT	

INSTRUCTOR SECTION	Instructors complete Assignment Form and return to student with assignment. Forward to St. Stephen's College Registrar's Office (st.stephens@ualberta.ca), with copy of final assignment . Keep a copy for your records. Attach separate page if comments do not fit below.
INFORMATION CONTENT	
THEOLOGICAL COMPONENT	
ORGANIZATION	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	
OTHER COMMENTS	

EVALUATION STANDARDS/GRADING SYSTEM	INTERIM ASSIGNMENT MARKS (as applicable)	FINAL GRADE (percentage)
90-100% (A+) Exceptional	ASSIGNMENT 1	
80-89% (A-, A) Excellent	ASSIGNMENT 2	
70-79% (B-, B, B+) Good	ASSIGNMENT 3	
60-69% (C-, C, C+) Adequate (Pass for Graduate/Doctoral students: 66%)	FINAL ASSIGNMENT	
50-59% (D-, D, D+) Poor (Pass for Undergraduate students: 50%)		
0-49% (F) Failure		
W Withdrawal with permission before deadline		
WF Withdraw-Fail (Withdrawal after deadline)		
INF Incomplete-Fail (Work not complete by final assignment due date)		

OFFICE USE ONLY		
Date received:	Date entered in record:	Initials of recorder:

Distribution: 1. To student with assignment 2. Registrar's Office st.stephens@ualberta.ca 3. Instructor