COGNITIVE SCIENCE INDEPENDENT STUDY

Students must submit a proposal (see COGS thesis proposal and independent study form) to the steering committee by the eight week of the spring term prior to thesis work beginning in the fall, and by the fifth week of the fall term prior to thesis work beginning in the winter.

Since independent studies vary so much in content, there is no template to follow. Minimally, the proposal needs to include a rationale for what you hope to accomplish, a work plan (equivalent to the week-to-week description given by most syllabi for regular courses), a clear indication of how you will be assessed by your advisor and a bibliography for the readings you will be doing—of course, this might change over the course of the term, but to be approved, a proposal needs to demonstrate some pre-planning. As a rule of thumb, the workload should mimic that of a typical class.

Criteria for approval include whether the proposed plan is significantly different from what is available in course offerings, whether the plan is well conceived and concrete, and whether it includes sufficient means of assessment.

To find an advisor: start with the faculty members with the closest expertise to your topic. Often, this is someone with who you have taken a class. If not, e-mail the faculty member and ask to meet. IS advisors are encouraged to work with the student to develop the proposal, and must sign the IS/Honors form. Most Independent Studies involve a weekly meeting with the advisor. Students are encouraged to submit well in advance of the deadline. Approval will be at the chair’s discretion, with borderline cases sent to the committee for review.