

**INDEPENDENT STUDY**

An independent study may be arranged between a student and a faculty member on any subject appropriate to the theological curriculum that is not dealt with in a regular course. The privilege of taking Independent Studies (Reading Courses) is **reserved for students with a Grade Point Average of 3.0 or better.**

Independent Studies are not offered over material covered in the basic required courses. Students wishing to study these subjects outside the normal class framework should register for Credit by Examination.

**All independent studies for M.A. Students must be approved by the Director of the M.A. Program** before they can be accepted for registration. (See the Appendix for a sample of the forms to be used in seeking this approval.) The work projected should be equivalent to what would be required in a regular course. Independent studies, as the name implies, place the primary initiative upon the student. Most instructors arrange to meet several times during the term with students doing independent studies to discuss their progress.

There are two options for independent studies at LSTC.

1. **Reading course.** A reading course is an independent study in which the primary work is focused on reading and research, and normally culminates in a major paper. A reading course is planned in advance of the term for which it is registered, and a substantial bibliography, study plan, and agreement as to the material that will be submitted for evaluation is required at registration. The course is undertaken for a time-limited time (usually one semester) for one course credit.

Except by special permission, a student may not register for more than one independent study of this nature per semester, and may not undertake another in a subsequent semester if the work for the previous quarter's independent study remains incomplete.

2. **Field research course.** A student (or group of students) may design, with the assistance and supervision of a faculty instructor, a course that utilizes contact hours gained from workshops, seminars, or other forms of experiential learning in conjunction with reading and reflection over the course of an extended period of time. For example, students may undertake to engage in pericope studies over an extended period of time, supplementing the contact hours gained from such language study with other exegetical workshops and a project or paper. Students interested in exploring the role of church music in theological expression and community life may seek to use contact hours gained through participating in faculty/staff-supervised musical groups with reading or ministry practice with a particular form of music, culminating in a project or paper. Students interested in the relationship between theology and ethnography may desire a field research project in which some of the skills of ethnographic study (participant observation, field research notes/journals, interviews, cultural description and reflection) are practiced under faculty guidance and supervision.

All such courses, however they are designed, must have a faculty supervisor who is responsible for monitoring the construction of the initial proposal and for insuring that the student has completed sufficient hours (no few than 117 hours) of work for course credit. Unlike the reading course, the student works with the faculty supervisor until the faculty supervisor believes that the project is close to culmination, and the Independent Study form for Field Research is submitted during registration for the term in which the course will be completed.

Only one course credit may be earned through this kind of independent study.