



GUIDELINES: INDEPENDENT/DIRECTED STUDIES IN NURSING

Note: This document is best viewed as an electronic reference as it includes links to appropriate policies and web pages related to the content discussed. Links appear in [underlined blue](#) type.

OVERVIEW

Guided Independent or Directed Studies Courses can be listed as a course in the MSN or MN-NP program or in the PhD program (**NURS 590: Directed Studies in Master's level Nursing** / **NURS 690: Directed Studies in Doctoral level of Nursing**).

DEFINITION

A directed study is intended to serve as a learning experience in a coherent area of study initiated by a student in consultation with a faculty advisor. The courses are intended to complement core courses and support learning and to prepare for the masters completion projects or doctoral theses.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Typically, courses are 3 credits. However, directed or guided independent study courses can have a 3 credits or 6 credits value, depending on the learning contract established between the directed study supervisor & student.
- MSN students may take up to 6 credits of directed or guided independent study courses and doctoral student may take up to 12 credits of directed or guided independent study courses over their entire programs.
- The start and end date for the course should normally match start and end dates of UBC Terms as specified by the [UBC Academic Calendar: Term Dates](#).
- All directed or guided independent study courses involve a written contract between the student and a faculty member with whom the student negotiates a course.
- In rare instances approved by the Program Coordinator, two or more students may coordinate their directed or guided independent study course to make optimal use of faculty advisement and peer consultation in meeting shared learning needs.
 - ◆ In such instances, each student's learning contract will outline the components of the course that are common as well as individualized outcomes (such as papers or other projects) that will be the basis for evaluation.
 - ◆ Group directed studies will be planned in such a manner to allow for the flexible re-negotiation of individual contracts as necessary so that students are not dependent on each other for course completion.



PROCESS FOR SETTING UP & COMPLETING A GUIDED INDEPENDENT OR DIRECTED STUDY*:

1. In consultation with the MSN, MN-NP, or PhD Program Coordinator, a student selects a faculty member from the School of Nursing who will be responsible for the course. This faculty member serves as the **Directed Study Supervisor**. The student will work with that faculty member on the directed study.
2. Occasionally, a **Consultant** may be selected with the approval of the faculty member. A consultant is a second faculty member or practice partner in the School of Nursing community.
3. The student develops a contract for the study in consultation with the Directed Study Supervisor. A contract template is provided in Appendix A.
4. The student sends an email to academic.support@nursing.ubc.ca with the following information:
 - Their full name & student Number
 - The full name of the Directed Study Supervisor (and Consultant if applicable).
 - The start & end date of the Directed Study Course
 - An electronic (Word or PDF) copy of the Learning Contract for the Directed Study
5. The Student Support Office will process the request, obtain approval from the MSN Program Coordinator, and register the student in the appropriate course.
6. The student begins the contracted activities which are normally completed within the learning contract terms.
7. Students and faculty members arrange meetings as necessary to fulfill the requirements of the contract.
8. The supervising faculty member receives any products for evaluation, evaluates the products based on the stated criteria, and returns the product with a mark and feedback.
9. After completion of the contract, the supervising faculty member submits the final grade via email to the [Manager, Student Support Services](#).

**At any point, please direct all questions to academic.support@nursing.ubc.ca and we are happy to help you!*

COMPONENTS OF A DIRECTED STUDY CONTRACT (TEMPLATE PROVIDED IN APPENDIX A):

- A general statement of the student's goals/purposes and a statement of the specific objectives/learning outcomes to be accomplished by completion of the contract;
- A description of learning activities to be completed by the student and any resources;
- A description of the specific products (paper, oral presentation etc.) upon which the learning outcomes can be evaluated;
- Identification of the evaluation process and criteria (Optional: a maximum of 15% of the total grade can be based on student self-evaluation);
- A list of the responsibilities for the faculty member and the student;
- A time frame;



EXTENDING A GUIDED INDEPENDENT OR DIRECTED STUDY:

One month prior to the original end date for the directed study (as negotiated in the learning contract), it is recommended that the student and faculty member review the student's progress in the course.

Below are the steps for extending the Guided Independent or Directed Study:

1. Should there be a renegotiation of the contract to allow for extended time, the faculty member should send an email to the Program Coordinator / Advisor, the student, and academic.support@nursing.ubc.ca with the new end date of the course.
 - ◆ Please attach an updated electronic (word or PDF) copy of the revised learning contract.
 - ◆ It is recommended that the end date match the end dates of UBC Terms as specified by the [UBC Academic Calendar: Term Dates](#).
2. Once this documentation has been received, the Student Support Office will give Continuing Status (T) to the course the student is currently registered in, register them in the appropriate course for the upcoming term, and confirm this with the Directed Study Supervisor & Program Coordinator.



APPENDIX A: GUIDED INDEPENDENT OR DIRECTED STUDY LEARNING CONTRACT TEMPLATE

Nursing 690 Directed Studies: Title, Term Dates (Course Start & End Dates)

Student:

Student #:

Student email:

Student phone:

Faculty:

Faculty email:

Faculty phone:

Purpose:

Objectives:

Learning activities (i.e. reading list, relevant literature):

Assignments: (Outline number of assignments, due dates & weighting of each)

Assignment #1: Title

Remember to include evaluation criteria for all assignments in detail

DUE DATE: _____

Marks: _____

Assignment #2: Title

Remember to include evaluation criteria for all assignments in detail

DUE DATE: _____

Marks: _____

Faculty Approval: _____

Date: _____