REGISTERING FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY, MASTERS THESIS, OR DOCTORAL DISSERTATION CREDITS

Individually-tailored study and research credit hours provide a registration mechanism by which graduate students can pursue individualized, in-depth study in specialized areas of interest to the student, conduct the research necessary for their Masters Thesis or Doctoral Dissertation, or prepare for major or minor exams. Such courses are sponsored by the student's advisor, members of their Masters or Ph.D. committees, or other appropriate faculty members with whom the student shares areas of interest.

Once a student identifies a faculty member willing to undertake this teaching responsibility, the two meet to discuss the substantive content, goals, and scope of the course. After the student and faculty member have come up with a plan of study, the student completes and submits a registration form (below) to the Department's Graduate Program Advisor. The Graduate Program Coordinator then reviews the plan of study. Usually the plan will be approved and the student will be registered for the requested credits. If the plan of study is substantially at odds with usual practice in the department, the GPC may consult with other members of the Graduate Program Committee; after this consultation, the GPC may request modification before approving the registration request.

- Departmental Registration Form for SOC 600, 700, or 800 Credits
- General Guidelines
- Specific Guidelines
- Procedures
- Sample Plans of Study

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

- Individually tailored study and research courses vary widely depending on the basic purpose of the course, e.g., selected readings and writing for the General Exam would be different from work undertaken to prepare a grant proposal or work on the Masters Thesis or Doctoral Dissertation.
- Regardless of purpose, individually-tailored study and research hours are viewed as graduate courses and thus students and faculty should establish objectives, develop a structured set of activities to achieve the objectives, and determine how progress will be evaluated. A written product at the end of the quarter (or other documented work comparable to a paper) is generally expected as an outcome. Whenever possible, students are encouraged to write defendable or publishable papers as part of their individually-tailored courses. Realistically, publishable work often involves an investment of time and effort beyond what is possible in a single quarter; however, the Sociology Department encourages students to produce publication-quality written work in the course of their independent study or research hours.
- The number of credit hours assigned in a particular quarter should accurately reflect the course's objectives, content, and expected workload. When determining the number of credits to request, students should follow the Graduate School formula of about 3 hours total effort per week per credit hour.
- All individually-tailored study and research credit hours are graded CR/NC.

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES:

Sociology 600: Independent Study or Research

- 1-10 credits allowed during the autumn/winter/spring quarters. 2-10 credits in Summer.
- Requests for more than 3 credits of Soc 600 require special justification.
Sociology 700: Masters Thesis

- 1-10 credits allowed during the autumn/winter/spring quarters. 2-10 credits in Summer.
- A minimum of 9 credits of Sociology 700 is required for the MA Degree
- Credits may be spread over multiple courses with various MA committee members or may be taken all with the Chair.

Sociology 800: Doctoral Dissertation

- 1-10 credits allowed during the autumn/winter/spring quarters. 2-10 credits in Summer.
- A minimum of 27 credits of Sociology 800, spread over three quarters, is required for the Ph.D. degree.
- Credits may be spread over multiple courses with various Supervisory Committee members or may be taken all with the Chair.

**PROCEDURES, FORM, AND SAMPLE PLANS OF STUDY:**

Graduate students do not register themselves for Independent Study (SOC 600), Thesis (SOC 700), or Dissertation (SOC 800) hours.

The Graduate Program Advisor will notify you and the professor upon registration.

**REGISTERING FOR THESE CREDITS:**

1. Download and read through the [Departmental Registration Form for SOC 600, 700, or 800 Credits](#). The top of this form provides important information about the written plan of study.
2. Consult with a faculty member to develop your plan of study.
3. Develop a written plan of study. Do not exceed one page of text. Be sure to cover these six areas (as outlined in the form instructions): a brief course description, meeting schedule, learning goals/purpose of course, expected outcomes/product, course structure and learning resources to be used, method of evaluation. Sample plans of study can be found at the bottom of this page.
4. Complete the form, and attach your one-page plan of study.
5. Obtain faculty signature.
6. Submit the form (including your plan of study attached) to the Graduate Program Advisor.
7. It will take a minimum of two business days to review and approve your plan of study, and register you for your credits.
8. Original signatures are always preferred. However, if either the student or the professor (or both) are not available in Seattle to provide a signature, this may be done by email as follows:
   - If you are easily able to provide scanned signatures, these will be accepted. If not, an email from either the student and/or the professor from their UW email address can be used in lieu of a physical signature, following these guidelines.
   - After finalizing their plan of study with their instructor, the form and plan of study may be sent around via email in place of physical signature.
   - **Any signatures to be replaced by an email must have the plan of study and the registration form attached to that email** such that when the email is printed the titles of the attachments can be seen and printed. I.e., when forwarding, make sure the form and plan of study stay attached to the email.
   - Student should send their request and attachments to the Graduate Program Advisor in addition to their professor. The professor may then either print out the email request and both attachments, sign, and return to the Graduate Program Advisor. Or, if approving via email, **forward the email including the attachments** with their approval to the Graduate Program Advisor.

**AVOIDING LATE REGISTRATION FEES:**

- It will take two business days to review and approve your plan of study and register you for your credits. Please pay attention to registration deadlines to avoid any unwanted fees.
- Any late registration fees are the responsibility of the student if the form is submitted without the
requisite two business days to complete the process prior to any deadlines where registration fees will be required by the University.

**SAMPLE PLANS OF STUDY:**

- Independent Study, SOC 600
- Masters Thesis Credits, SOC 700
- Doctoral Dissertation Credits, SOC 800

Source URL: https://soc.washington.edu/registering-independent-study-masters-thesis-or-doctoral-dissertation-credits