



Computer Science (COMP) 692

Independent Study (Revision 1)

Status:	Replaced with new revision, see the course listing for the current revision
Delivery mode:	Individualized study online
Credits:	3
Area of study:	Information Systems
Prerequisites:	Students must contact the FST Graduate Program Advisors
Precluded:	None

Faculty: Faculty of Science and Technology 

Instructor: Dr. Larbi Esmahi

Overview

The purpose of *Independent Study* credits is to provide a means by which students can focus on, elaborate or broaden their understanding in an area of interest not provided for in the formal core curriculum or elective courses. An *Independent Study* course can either be initiated by a student to address his/her own learning needs or by a faculty member to offer an in-depth learning opportunity on a particular topic to a select number of students beyond the available core and elective courses. In both cases, students will work with a faculty member to meet the learning objectives of their customized course.

An *Independent Study* course is not meant to act as a place to conduct original research which requires data collection. It is also important to recognize that an *Independent Study* course cannot be approved as a substitute for existing curricular offerings, even when schedule problems occur. Further, *Independent Study* credit will not be granted for proposals that simply replicate knowledge and skills acquired in previous courses or are somewhat larger projects than students have conducted in their assignments. However, *Independent Study* credits can be used to go beyond existing course content and extend the skills learned in courses already completed by students.

Eligibility

All MSc CIS program students are eligible to register in up to two, three-credit *Independent Study* credits while ensuring that they meet the program requirements of the specific route of the program (for example, in Project and Thesis routes, only one elective is possible, while in Essay route, students can take up to three electives). These will be assigned numbers (COMP 692/693) and names. Names will be derived from the *Independent Study* proposals. Non-program students are not permitted to take *Independent Study* credits.

In case of student-initiated course, a one-page written proposal that includes the rationale for the course, several learning objectives, a study plan, and a minimum of two proposed assignments must be submitted to the MSc CIS Program Director a minimum of one month before the course registration deadline. In case of faculty-initiated course, students must use the content for one-page written proposal as provided by the respective faculty member. In both cases, student must attach a cover page to the proposal that includes his/her name, email address, course number (e.g., COMP 692 or COMP 693), title of the proposed course, and a list of courses taken previously in the MSc IS program (students must have completed a minimum of two MSc CIS courses before they may apply for an *Independent Study* course). Approval will be contingent on the **acceptability of the proposal and the availability of an appropriate supervisor**. Proposals that do not contain all of the above (learning objectives, proposed assignments, etc.) will not be considered.

All *Independent Study* proposals must be signed by a proposed supervisor prior to submission to the MSc CIS program director. The approved *Independent Study* proposal becomes the contract for the *Independent Study* credit. The faculty supervisor will be responsible for providing a mark according to the MSc CIS program marking and grading scheme for work completed (or not completed) according to the contract.

Independent Study credits are recorded on the student's transcript using the appropriate course number, as indicated above, along with the number of credits (3), a numeric and alpha grade (e.g., 95% A+).

Minimum Requirements for IS Credits

All *Independent Study* proposals must meet the following minimum standards:

- the work proposed must be demonstrably at the graduate level;
- the magnitude of the work must be equivalent to that required by core and elective courses (e.g., approximately 150 hours of work, 2-3 products or evaluative activities, etc.); and,
- the proposal must contain documentation and evidence that appropriate supervision and evaluation has been planned.

Outline

COMP 692/693 are asynchronous, individualized study online courses. This means that there is no predetermined time when students must log in to complete course work. Students should, however, complete the course work within the semester time frame in which they are enrolled. A Moodle workspace will be created where students and their Independent Study course supervisor will communicate.

Objectives

At the end of the course, a successful student will be able to:

- apply theories appropriate to the topic domain;
- analyse problems, arguments, methods and technologies appropriate to the topic domain;
- synthesize and connect concepts and models in the topic domain; and,
- develop or design tools, procedures or methods appropriate to the topic domain.

Evaluation

The Independent Study proposal must outline a proposed assessment structure which must include a minimum of two assignments. The assessment structure for each Independent Study proposal must comply with the learning outcomes of COMP692/693.

MSc CIS Faculty Profiles

Details of the academic background and interests of the faculty members may be helpful in planning Independent Study activity and supervision. Students are advised to check faculty profiles on the Faculty of Science and Technology website.

In order to **receive credit** [↗](#) for COMP 692 or 693, you must achieve a cumulative course grade of **B- (70 percent)** [📄](#) or better.

Materials

There are no required textbooks for COMP 692/693. It is expected that students will consult reference materials—including textbooks, journals, and Internet resources—for information directly related to their learning proposal.

Important links

- › [Future Course Offerings](#) [↗](#)
- › [Important Dates and Deadlines](#) [↗](#)

[› MSc CIS Contact Information](#)

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery modes may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

Updated August 6, 2026
