

## **Cohasset High School Independent Study Program**

### Guide to Independent Studies

So, you want to pursue an Independent Study? This is a great place to start. The following information will help you develop your idea, propose your project, and complete a successful Independent Study quarter at Cohasset High School.

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#### **FAQs**

##### **Logistics:**

##### **What is an Independent Study?**

At CHS, the Independent Study program is designed to give students the opportunity to engage in independent, self-directed learning experiences. You will develop and propose an idea, in collaboration with a faculty mentor, for a project that you can undertake throughout the course of a quarter.

##### **Who can participate in Independent Study?**

Independent Study projects can be undertaken by all students, but priority is placed on junior and senior students who have more flexibility in their schedules and a sense of the ways in which they can deepen their learning beyond the course selections at CHS.

##### **When do I need to apply?**

Applications are due approximately one month prior to the start of the quarter in which you plan to complete your work. Specific dates will be posted for each school year.

##### **Where can I get updated information on deadlines and other important points?**

For the most up-to-date information, join the Independent Study Google Classroom (see the coordinator for the code) and continue to check the Independent Study website.

##### **What is the time commitment?**

You will work on your independent study during a designated class period, chosen in conjunction with your faculty mentor. You will also have regular utility cohort meetings with the coordinator and all students working on independent study in the same quarter.

##### **Idea/Proposal Development:**

##### **What makes a good Independent Study?**

A strong Independent Study project provides a framework for a deep study of an area of particular interest to a student that goes beyond the current curriculum. A good Independent Study represents a meaningful area of study that you can pursue through concrete work products. Your Independent Study should culminate in a final product that can be shared with the school/community. This [rubric](#) will give you more information as to how your project proposal will be evaluated.

##### **What are the Core Values and Student Expectations for Cohasset High School?**

Cohasset High School is an inclusive, supportive, and safe learning environment committed to excellence and growth. Our community values experiential, collaborative, active

learning that is rigorous and relevant, and fosters creative, responsible contributors to a global society.

### **How do I find a faculty mentor?**

Speak with teachers who work in the department that aligns with your interests. If you have an area of interest but are not sure which teacher to ask, see the independent study coordinator. Teachers may not be able to accommodate requests, depending on scheduling. Speak directly with teachers to learn about their expectations of independent study students and their availability to mentor students. Once you have a faculty mentor, be sure to keep them informed of your progress through the interest and proposal phases.

### **How do I write SMART goals for my independent study?**

The SMART goal format is a way of organizing your goal-setting process so that you focus your efforts and increase your chances of success in your Independent Study. The acronym SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound. See the [Resources](#) page for templates and guiding questions to help you set your goals. Your faculty mentor or the independent study coordinator can also assist you in developing your SMART goals.

### **During the project:**

#### **How do I track my progress throughout the Independent Study?**

You should develop a system with your faculty mentor to track your progress. This tracking should involve steps in your project, work completed, and resources consulted. The Resources page in this document contains links to templates and sample work trackers. You will also have a progress meeting with the independent study coordinator during your independent study quarter.

#### **What role should my faculty mentor play in my Independent Study?**

Your faculty mentor is responsible for supervising your progress as you work through your project. You should meet regularly with your mentor (weekly at minimum) to touch base and discuss your work. These meetings may need to take place during utility if your faculty mentor teachers during your independent study block. Use your faculty mentor as a support and a resource to help you independently move ahead on your project or course of study.

#### **What responsibilities do I have during the quarter?**

You will work on your project during your assigned class period throughout the semester. You will update your work tracker and meet regularly (weekly at a minimum) with your faculty mentor to discuss your progress and to reflect on your work. You will also meet biweekly with the cohort of students working on independent study projects in each quarter. These meetings give you an opportunity to work alongside other students, share ideas, and practice presenting your work prior to the end of your project. Finally, you will present your work to a small committee of faculty members (including your mentor) at the end of the quarter, and then participate in a showcase to share your work with the larger community.

#### **How will I be graded for my independent study?**

Your faculty mentor will determine the grade you will receive, assessing your work product, presentation, and work progress throughout the quarter. He/She may receive input from the independent study coordinator.

### **Completion:**

#### **How long will my independent study last?**

Most independent study projects last for one quarter in the school year. You may have the option to extend your work, depending on your progress and your faculty mentor's availability.

#### **What will happen at the end of the independent study?**

You will be expected to have produced a final product at the end of your independent study. You will present your work for final approval to a small committee of faculty members, including your faculty mentor. You will also participate in a showcase to share your work with the school/community. The format for the presentations will be included on the [Resources page](#) soon.

#### **What will appear on my transcript for my independent study?**

See your guidance counselor for more information about how your independent study will appear on your transcript.