

# Independent Study 2021

## GROUP PROJECTS (IS 3125)

**Eight** projects will be offered.  
Registration can be completed through MyUSAO.

## INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS (IS 3115)

Individual projects will require approval from:

1. Faculty member who will supervise the project.
2. Division Chair.

To enroll in an **Individual Project**, bring **completed** Independent Study Application (last page of this brochure) and enrollment form to Registrar's Office, Troutt Hall, room 204.

**Course: IS -3125-01**

**Instructor: Dr. Kevin Crow**

**TITLE:** *Revolt of the Masses*

**DESCRIPTION:** This Independent Study Project will examine the phenomenon of Mass Culture, its impact on shaping the modern world, and the challenges it presents both to Western Civilization and traditional cultures around the world.

**METHOD OF ACHIEVING PURPOSE:** Students will read José Ortega y Gasset's *Revolt of the Masses* and view a film illustrating the impact of mass culture on human societies. After examining these works, students will discuss and evaluate the impact of mass culture on human societies.

**Students will meet every Tuesday during the five-week Independent Study summer session from 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM. In addition, students will meet one evening (time will be arranged during the first meeting) during the Independent Study to view a film focusing on the impact of mass culture on modern society. Students must attend each of these meetings. The first meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 27th.**

**METHOD OF STUDENT EVALUATION:** Evaluation will be based on student performance on three one-page reviews of their weekly readings and their contributions to class discussions.

**Course: IS -3125-02**

**Instructor:** Drs. James Finck and Jason Shaw

**TITLE:** *Mountain Man Experience*

**DESCRIPTION:** With COVID-19 restrictions instead of being able to take our normal trip down the Buffalo River we will complete a virtual outdoor experience instead. Student will still be expected to learn many of the skills we teach on our normal trip and still try to have an outdoor experience even if limited.

**METHOD OF ACHIEVING PURPOSE:** We will have weekly activities that students are expected to complete. These activities will include time in the outdoor hiking as well as making videos demonstrating outdoor skills such as setting up tents, building fire, and tying knots. They will also be required to read the book Into the Wild and write a report.

**METHOD OF STUDENT EVALUATION:** Students will be evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis. We will grade the students on their book report, their weekly videos, and their journal they keep describing their weekly outdoor experiences.

**Course: IS -3125-03**

**Instructor:** Dr. Christopher Garneau

**TITLE:** *Exploring the Criminal Justice System through Documentary Film*

**DESCRIPTION:** This course is a critical exploration of the criminal justice system in the United States. The primary mode of course study will be independent viewing of several television crime documentary series and listening to one podcast series. The class will independently view four television series and listen to one podcast series over the five-week course. This course will cover multiple criminological theories that apply to the cases presented in the documentaries. There will be multiple criminological theories discussed including routine activities theory, strain theory, control theory, labeling theory, and differential association theory.

**METHOD OF ACHIEVING PURPOSE:** The class will view or listen to one series per week over the course of five weeks. The instructor will post a video each Friday with a review of the prior episodes as well as supplemental information for the following week. There will be five discussion links posted on Canvas each week for the five-week course. The episodes for each week need to be viewed/heard and the discussions responses need to be posted by the time the next weekly video is posted. In total, to pass this course, students need to watch all six instructor videos and respond to each of the five discussion links each week (five per week for a total of 25 for the whole course). This means that students will need to stay active and engaged throughout the five weeks. This also means there is a lot of content each week so students should plan accordingly. I would recommend observing the episodes with full attention and without other distractions. For each discussion post, students can either make an original post or reply to another student's post. The idea is to get dialog going.

*\*Note: Students will need access to Netflix for the independent study term.*

### **Class Schedule**

4/23	Introduction Video	Assign: Making a Murderer Season 1
4/30	Review: Making a Murderer 1	Assign: Making a Murderer Season 2
5/7	Review: Making a Murderer 2	Assign: Serial Podcast (Season 1)
5/14	Review: Serial Podcast (Season1)	Assign: The Kalief Browder Story
5/21	Review: The Kalief Browder Story	Assign: Flint Town
5/28	Review: Flint Town / Class Summary	

**METHOD OF STUDENT EVALUATION:** A "Pass" grade will be assigned to students who satisfactorily complete ALL of the following:

- View/listen to all documentary series
- Write five original posts or comment to another student's post five times each week for each week (25 total posts)

### **CONTENT NOTICE!!!!!!!!!!!!**

The selected docudrama series for this course highlight important criminological concepts. While the explicit purpose of the content of these episodes is to encourage criminological study through film, there is a great deal of content that some individuals may find offensive. Some of the content that some might find objectionable include: very strong language, frequent obscenities, racial slurs, sexist slurs,

homophobic slurs, violent content, nudity, and strong sexual content including graphic visual depictions and testimonies of sexual violence. If you feel that viewing this kind of material is offensive, the instructor recommends withdrawing from the course. By remaining enrolled in this course, you are attesting that you have been informed of the nature of the course content prior to any viewing in the course.

**Course: IS -3125-04**

**Instructor:** Dr. Karen Karner

**TITLE:** *Special Olympics*

**DESCRIPTION:** The purpose of this project is to provide USAO students the opportunity to gain experience working with children, their caregivers, and families who have been affected by disabilities. Usually students of this course attend the Special Olympics in Stillwater. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the games will not be held in person. Adjustments are presented to here to allow for connections to be made with this population as in years past.

**METHOD OF ACHIEVING PURPOSE:** Each student will engage in the following assignments and activities to meet requirements of the project. Assignments will include viewing of films that involve the Special Olympics and/or the culture of disability. The class will meet weekly during the intercession for film viewing and class discussion about the film. Students will develop and lead activities to be presented through a live social media site advertised to the Special Olympics community in which athletes may participate. Students will join each other's live presentations. Written assignments will be summaries of films and discussions, critiques of activities, and timelines, journals, and written reflections of the development of activities and participation in events. Failure to attend all required class sessions or assigned activities will result in a Fail grade for the course.

**METHOD OF STUDENT EVALUATION:**

To successfully pass this course, each student must:

1. Attend the orientation session (1st meeting) at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, April 8, 2021, in Gary Hall 108, during which explanations of assignments and list of films will be given;
2. Attend weekly movie/discussion meetings during which students will view and discuss a fiction/nonfiction film that depicts either the Special Olympics or cultural awareness of disability at large. Discussion will follow a developed format, and students will summarize the discussion and submit comments weekly to the instructors as evidence of attendance and active participation.
3. Design a 20-30-minute activity in an area of their choosing (possibly related to their majors) that they will lead live on a designated social media site monitored by Special Olympics of Oklahoma. The purpose of the activity will be to lead special athletes attending the presentation through an activity that will improve their abilities in daily living (Examples: cooking, painting, music, health and fitness, smart shopping, organizing a get-together with friends). Students will attend each other's presentations. Students will write a proposal following a template provided by the instructors outlining the activity. Once approved, students will keep a timeline and journal of research and development of the live presentation.
4. Attend one event or athletic practice as organized by individual teams in the state of Oklahoma. The instructors will connect with coaches and teams to establish possible assignments. Students may, however, connect with their hometowns if they know of coaches and teams and attend those events as their choice. Students will keep record of the date, event, and a description of what assignment they fulfilled for the team. Students will obtain the signatures of the coaches or event coordinators as evidence of attendance and participation.

5. Conduct interviews with at least two coaches, two family members, and two special athletes during the event in #4 or over the course of the five weeks. Questions asked should be of substance. This is the opportunity for students to get to know athletes, families, and coaches, and ask them about their involvement in Special Olympics. A list springboard questions will be provided;
6. Complete a 750-1000-word, typed essay summarizing experiences and personal reflections on Special Olympics and cultural awareness of disability in our society following the guidelines of the DEAL model of reflection for experience learning (Ash, Clayton, & Moses, 2007; Kleinhesselink, K, et.al., 2015). Essays should reflect involvement in events and student-led activities as well as movies and discussions viewed in the class sessions.
7. Submit all written work for the class at the final class meeting Monday, May 24, at 1 pm., including typed interviews, a copy of the journal and timeline of their activity and essay. Students will share their reflections with the group.
8. In-person attendance in class will be required on the following dates: April 26, May 3, 10, 17, and 24.

**Course: IS -3125-05**

**Instructor:** Dr. Linda McElroy

**TITLE:** *Making an Impact: Choose your Own Adventure with Community Service Activities*

**DESCRIPTION:** A worthwhile objective for USAO students is to “Make an Impact” beyond your required coursework. The “Making an Impact” Independent Study allows you to choose ONE of the options listed below, or to combine more than one of the options.

Independent study projects are designed to “emphasize innovative educational approaches and individual creative learning”, and to “provide opportunities for intensive service learning activities.” You will be given specific guidelines and expectations for the option you select. However, YOU will be required to use your own creativity to plan and/or implement community service activities appropriate for your choice.

1. Preparing for Community Service in the Future: Making an Impact in your own field of expertise. You will be responsible for planning and preparing for Community Service beyond your USAO experiences. Dream big, and prepare for implementing your ideas in the real world in the future. Your preparation may include reading professional-level books in your field and/or in conjunction with Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS) courses, beyond the texts you will already read for your regular courses. You may consult with your advisor or IDS faculty for ideas, but selections must be your choices and must be approved by the Independent Study instructor (at least five professional-level books). OR...you might complete creative projects that you can implement in Community Service activities in the future (at least ten projects). OR...you might combine the readings and the creative projects to meet the criteria for five credit hours of course work, approved by the independent study instructor. You will meet with the instructor once a week during the five-week term, either in-person or virtually.
2. Supporting a nationwide Community Service project...Relay for Life. You will plan your own activities and implement them in support of the Grady County/Caddo County Relay for Life committee and Relay for Life events. You will research the American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life efforts, meet once a week with the instructor and other students during the five-week Independent Study term to plan and complete activities, and provide service to the event committee in preparing and completing the event. Structure of the Relay for Life events may be modified, depending on the status of COVID-19. You may be asked to provide help with virtual as well as in-person events. You may need to combine this choice with a different option in this project, if only limited options are available. We can tailor the project to fit our goals with the circumstances. If circumstances do not allow us to implement this option, you will be able to move to option 1.
3. Community Service in a New Setting...This project will support you if you join a community service experience that will introduce you to a new setting. It could be in Oklahoma, a different state, or an international experience. You need to join a project that is sponsored by a reliable group that can assure your safety and the validity of your experiences. For example, USAO’s Baptist Collegiate Ministry plans to offer a community service experience at a community in Oklahoma. The experience must be approved by the course instructor. You will research the community or culture you will be visiting and submit information to the course instructor before you travel, participate in extended Community Service activities at the

destination, keep a travel journal and photo journal of your experiences, and write a summary paper when you return to USAO. If circumstances do not allow us to implement this option, you will be able to move to option 1.

4. Paraprofessionals in the Public Schools...This project will allow you to work in the role of an unpaid paraprofessional (teacher assistant) in a school setting full time during the five-week Independent Study term. You will work with the course instructor to arrange placement and a supervisor at the school site. You will be required to complete a background check with assistance of the course instructor. You must contact the independent study instructor by April 8 (or earlier) to allow for arrangements to be completed. If circumstances do not allow us to implement this option, you will be able to move to option 1.

**METHOD OF ACHIEVING PURPOSE:** You must meet with the instructor by Thursday, April 15 for detailed instructions and expectations. You must complete ALL of the approved components of your project. You must submit a final summary report at the end of the project as specified for your project

**METHOD OF STUDENT EVALUATION:** A grade of "Pass" will be based upon the satisfactory completion of ALL of the components of the project and submission of all required paperwork to course instructor by the specified date for your project.

**Course: IS -3125-06**

**Instructor:** Dr. Matthew Reynolds

**TITLE:** *Dungeons and Dragons*

**DESCRIPTION:** Learn to play Dungeons and Dragons 5th edition. Students will work cooperatively and communicate with teammates creatively in conflict resolution exercises in a safe and controlled fantasy environment.

**METHOD OF ACHIEVING PURPOSE:**

Dungeons and Dragons isn't just a simulated fighting game, but one where individuals can increase their social-emotional learning and self-determination capabilities. No more than twelve students will join the class. Students will be divided into two groups and decide on session times. Two to three class sessions will happen a week for several hours each. During sessions, Dr. Reynolds will direct the group (DM) while students negotiate decisions together during the sessions. After each session students will journal, blog, or vlog (journaling) about their experiences and share with Dr. Reynolds. Various questions (see below) will be provided to students to help them in their journaling experiences.

1. What did you like best about the session and why?
2. What didn't you like about the session and why?
3. What kind of story arc are you creating for your character?
4. What plans do you have for your character or party for the next session?
5. Have you been able to take the actions you wanted during the sessions? Why or why not?
6. What things have worked when collaborating with your group?
7. What things haven't worked when collaborating with your group?
8. Do you feel empowered when playing a fantasy character? Why or why not?
9. Have you learned anything about yourself while playing?
10. What have you learned about working in a group to solve problems?
11. My D&D Experience Paper
  - a. Were you able to create the story arc you wanted for your character?

During the last week, students will turn in a summary paper of their experiences playing

**METHOD OF STUDENT EVALUATION:**

1. Journal about their experiences
2. Reflecting over their choices during the sessions
3. Writing their summary paper

**Course: IS -3125-07**

**Instructor:** Dr. Zach Simpson

**TITLE:** *Stoicism*

**DESCRIPTION:** The past year has presented numerous challenges to our health and well-being, both physical and mental. Many people have felt adrift, unable to find a way to cope with isolation, suffering, and realities which are out of their hands. In this Independent Study, we will study a philosophy – perhaps the only one in the West – which was designed to cope with suffering, helplessness, and a lack of control: Stoicism. The Stoics, a group of largely Roman philosophers, developed ideas and practices that helped them manage their own lives amidst a chaotic and unsettling world. We will study those ideas and employ those practices to see if they have any lasting utility for our own lives.

**METHOD OF ACHIEVING PURPOSE:**

For this course, we will read parts of three works by major Stoic philosophers:

1. Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, trans., Maxwell Staniforth (New York: Penguin Classics, 1964). ISBN: 978-0140441406.
2. Musonius Rufus, trans., Cynthia King. (CreateSpace Publishing, 2011) ISBN: 978-1456459666.
3. Seneca, *Dialogues and Essays*, trans., John Davie (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 2009). ISBN: 978-0199552405.

We will meet once weekly as a group to discuss the readings and to share our thoughts on the relevance of Stoicism for our own lives.

In addition to the reading, we will also participate in Stoic practices – meditation, journaling, and mental exercises – as a core part of learning and doing Stoicism. These will greatly contribute to both our understanding of the Stoic project and how it might affect our lives.

**METHOD OF STUDENT EVALUATION:**

1. Attending an orientation session at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, April 9, 2020 in Davis Hall 205, during which we will discuss the course outline and how we will meet as a class.
2. Reading assigned texts and preparing them for discussion (readings should be 30-35 pages per week).
3. Attending five in-person discussion meetings throughout the Independent Study period.
4. Maintaining a journal related to weekly Stoic exercises as assigned and agreed upon by the course members. (Students may find some sample Stoic exercises as part of International Stoic Week at <https://modernstoicism.com/stoic-week/>).

5. Writing a 1600-word essay which explains key ideas within Stoicism and how they might be of use, if any, in our own daily lives. How might Stoicism prepare us for suffering? How might we deal better with the challenges of our own lives? Or is Stoicism, on final analysis, inadequate to meet the demands of our modern world?

**Course: IS -3125-08**

**Instructor:** Dr. Misty Steele

**TITLE:** *Emotional Intelligence*

**DESCRIPTION:** Emotional Intelligence plays a vital role in personal and profession performance, satisfaction, and success. Enhancing emotional intelligence fosters the development of skills that promote the maintenance of healthy relationships. Emotional Intelligence (EI) is comprised of four domains: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Nested within each domain are learnable EI skillsets that provide the ability to appropriately respond to the world around us. These concepts include achievement, influence, conflict management, inspirational leadership, empathy, positive outlook, and self-control. Like many skills, these skills require practice and personal engagement with processes. It takes awareness, understanding, and practice for a clear path to personal change. Emotional Intelligence supports the ability to cooperate, collaborate, and communicate which are essential to developing happiness and success. This course is designed to encourage student autonomy and flexibility by meeting individual needs, career goals and personal/professional strengths.

After participating in this course, students will be able to:

- Describe the major concepts of emotional development.
- Formulate a personal/professional approach to promoting the nature and process of the emotional mind.
- Apply knowledge of self in the consideration of practical problems.
- Practice and monitor key skills for personal success.
- Practice and monitor the skills associated with self-management and motivation

**METHOD OF ACHIEVING PURPOSE:**

Students will meet have two in-depth class workshop sessions and then two self-assessment and independent research days:

Monday (April 26, 2021) 10:00 am – 3:00 pm (lunch break from 12:00-1:00)

Tuesday (April 27, 2021) \* Self-Assessment, Self-Discovery, Independent Research day #1

Wednesday (April 28, 2021) 10:00 am – 3:00 pm (lunch break from 12:00-1:00)

Thursday (April 29, 2021) \* Self-Assessment, Self-Discovery, Independent Research day #2

The course will focus each workshop on a four major emotional intelligence concepts and skillsets:

Workshop #1: Exploring the emotional system; developing an emotionally healthy mind; Interpersonal Skills (Assertion, Anger and Anxiety Management); Leadership Skills (Social Awareness, Empathy, Decision Making, & Positive Influence)

Workshop #2: Self-Management Skills (Drive, Self-Ethics, & Positive Change); Intrapersonal Skills (Self-Esteem, Stress Management); Self-Renewal and Personal Excellence (Belief, Guidance, Power, Balance, & Support Systems); Life-long Emotional Learning

Between and after course meetings, students will utilize the Emotional Learning System to monitor and record their progress on understanding and utilizing each week's concepts. This will involve self-assessments, practice, reflection, improvement planning, and application.

**METHOD OF STUDENT EVALUATION:**

Grades will be assigned on a Pass/Fail basis. A grade of "Pass" will be earned upon the student's satisfactory performance of ALL of the following:

- Participating in course meetings and discussions concerning the concepts.
- Documenting the completion of the Emotional Learning System for each skillset.
- Completing a Pre/Post-Test Personal Excellence Inventory
- Developing a Pre/Post-test Personal Improvement Plan
- Reflection Paper on personal growth and the most beneficial concepts they learned through the course
- Submit all required materials to course instructor by assigned dates.

# Independent Study Application for Individual Projects 3115

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

ID# \_\_\_\_\_ Major \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Project \_\_\_\_\_

A. Description of Project (Purpose)

B. Method of Achieving Purpose

C. Methods to be used by students in evaluating success of project

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty member who will supervise the Independent Study project

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Division Chair

Date