

ANA G. MÉNDEZ UNIVERSITY STUDENT CONSUMER INFORMATION INDEPENDENT STUDIES POLICY

Introduction/Purpose

The Ana G. Méndez University (AGMU) has distinguished itself by carrying out academic processes with the rigor and structure necessary to offer an education of excellence and quality. The different study modalities offered by the AGMU allow the student to have valid educational alternatives to achieve their academic goal successfully. Success in achieving the academic goal is also made possible by providing alternatives for offering courses under special conditions. Courses offered as independent studies allow the student to fulfill, under specific conditions, their sequential curriculum in the year of graduation. This policy describes the processes and provisions that allow for submitting and approving the offering of courses for independent study at AGMU.

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Establish guidelines for the provision of independent study courses at AGMU.
2. Offer an alternative for students who require a course from their curricular sequential that is not scheduled in their graduation year.
3. Establish the conditions under which the offering of independent study courses is identified.
4. Establish uniform rules and procedures for the approval process of the application for independent study courses by the corresponding bodies in harmony with the statutes and other regulations applicable in the AGMU.
5. Establish an alternative for cases where the intercampus course modality cannot be offered.

Scope

This policy applies to all academic levels of all academic divisions, specialized schools, departments, programs, and localities of AGMU.

Definitions

1. **Academic offer** – any program, concentration, specialty, or set of academic programs of post-secondary education approved and contemplated in the license granted by the Commission on Independent Education.
2. **Curricular sequence** – a document that establishes the order of the courses corresponding to a program or academic offer according to its level. Identifies the courses that constitute a program

- or academic offering and the requirements for completing the degree.
3. **Intercampus course** – a course in which two or more sessions are consolidated. Please see the *Intercampus Policy* for detailed information.
 4. **Independent study** – independent study is a contractual modality between the student and the institution, which allows the student to enroll in a course that is required in their curricular sequential. The institution is committed to safeguarding academic quality in each independent study that is authorized.
 5. **Mode of study** – the various teaching-learning methodologies in which an academic program or course can be offered.

Procedure

Independent study courses will be offered as an alternative for those students who require a course not scheduled in their graduation year. Courses may or may not be offered by independent study if they meet the following specific eligibility or exclusion conditions.

1. Eligibility:
 - a. The course is not scheduled or available as an intercampus course at another AGMU location.
 - b. The course content cannot be substituted by another. There is no equivalent course available.
 - c. The course will not be offered in the year the student will receive their academic degree, according to the sequential academic program in which they are enrolled.
 - d. The course is required in the student's sequential curriculum.
 - e. Students may take up to 25% of the courses in their curricular sequence as independent studies modality.
 - f. The student can apply for independent studies for the same course only once; if the student fails, the course cannot be repeated under this modality.
 - g. If the student obtains an F in a face-to-face course, they will not be able to apply for it in the independent study modality.
 - h. Special cases will be evaluated on their merits by the associate dean of the academic division, specialized school, the department director, or the director of the program offering the course.
 - i. As part of special cases to consider, the associate dean will submit an annually updated course list by August 1 to the course scheduling unit of programs with the internal moratorium or with a low admission rate that is eligible under this procedure.
 - j. If the courses have objectives that develop techniques and skills for group interaction, the faculty must adjust the assessment activity to ensure to comply with the course objectives.
2. Exclusion:
 - a. Laboratory courses that require preparation of materials or use of specific media (e.g., chemistry, biology, nursing, etc.) that are onerous for single-student work.
 - b. Courses that involve the development and measurement of psychomotor skills.

- c. Seminar-type courses that require group activities related to internships.
- d. Courses that involve developing techniques and skills for group interaction and communication.
- e. Laboratory courses that require immediate production and application of knowledge and skills (e.g., nursing, massage, and the like).

Each academic division or specialized school will identify courses that should not be offered through the independent studies modality. The academic division associate dean will submit an annually updated course list by August 1 to the course scheduling unit. The course scheduling unit will include this information in the bulletin of courses not offered under the independent studies modality.

Procedure

1. The student requests the independent studies course to the academic division, specialized school, or locality to which they belong according to their curricular sequence.
2. The academic division associate dean, specialized school, academic director, program director, or corresponding officer will analyze:
 - a. The student's academic evaluation and class schedule for the term in which the student requested to seek independent study.
 - b. The current academic year's schedule.
3. The course will be scheduled in the system after the course is authorized by the division associate dean, specialized school, academic director, program director, or the corresponding officer. *A request must be sent to the scheduling department.*
4. The faculty member will be identified, and the student will be notified of the procedure to be followed (enrolling in the course, etc.).
5. If the requested course pertains to another academic division or university location, the associate dean or corresponding officer of the academic division, specialized school, campus director, or program director will submit the application along with the academic evaluation to the academic division, specialized school, or university location that corresponds to the course.
6. If the course is approved, the appropriate associate dean or officer will submit the form to the registrar's office for processing and placement on the student's record. *The independent study will not be effective if this document is not submitted to the Registrar's Office.*
7. The academic division, specialized school, or university location that offers the requested course may authorize or deny the application. In any case, the student must be notified of the university unit of origin, indicating the reasons.
8. If the request is not recommended, the student's retention officer will notify the student via email, stating the reasons for the decision.
9. The student may request a reconsideration from the academic dean. The decision of the academic dean will be final and cannot be appealed.

Administrative Provisions

1. The faculty may concurrently have a maximum of five (5) students per independent study in a section and offer no more than three (3) different courses per academic term.
2. An independent study section will have a maximum of five (5) students.
3. The academic division associate dean, specialized school, academic director, or designated officer will assign the faculty member who will offer the course.
4. The faculty will dedicate a minimum of eight (8) hours of one-on-one meetings with each student per semester in a three (3) credit course.

Number of Students	Contact Hours
1	8
2	16
3	24
4	32
5	40

5. Salary compensation for AGMU faculty will follow the compensation table established by the Office of Human Resources.
6. The process of approving or rejecting the application for independent studies must take no more than fourteen (14) calendar days from the date of receipt of the application.
7. The application for a course in independent modality cannot be submitted after the enrollment closes.