

Independent Study Project

(1 course credit = 4 semester units)

The Independent Study Project is a chance for students to explore in-depth an aspect of Nepal in which they are particularly interested. Project topics range from the empirical investigation of a research question to internships with development organizations. The three weeks allotted for the project come at the end of the program when students' language skills are strongest, thereby allowing them to travel and do research independently as well as draw upon the cultural knowledge and information they have acquired throughout the semester. Students begin formalizing ideas for their projects during the second month of the program, developing an initial proposal for a topic and plan for their research. These proposals are then discussed and refined in consultations and advising sessions with program staff, Tribhuvan University professors and experts in the student's field of interest. During the actual project period, students function independently with program staff and advisers available for assistance when needed.

Specific Elements of Project Development and Completion

- **Proposal:** In the second month of the program, students are asked to formally describe the topic, question or issue they are interested in examining as well as develop a plan for completing their research.
- **Consultation:** After developing a proposal for a manageable project, students meet with program staff, university professors and/or experts in their field of interest to discuss possible research locations, contacts, resources and methodology.
- **Outline:** Before leaving Nepal, students are required to submit a detailed outline of what they have learned during the Independent Study Project period, including an introduction to their topic, a description of methods, discussion of findings and results, and an initial analysis of these findings.
- **Presentation:** In addition to the outline, students are expected to make a formal presentation of their research and findings to fellow students and staff at the final seminar, during the last week of the program.
- **Written Report:** Students must submit a final written report of their research, due at Pitzer College in Claremont one month following the last day of the program.

Assessment for the Independent Study Project will be based on the following criteria:

10 % – Project Proposal

30 % – Annotated Outline

10% – Presentation of project to students and staff at final seminar

50% – Final Written Report

Representative Titles of Recent Student Projects

- A “People’s” War: Pawns in the Battle for Nepal’s Future The Impact of the Nepali Civil War on the Residents of Simigaon, Nepal
- The Language Speaks: Case Study of Ethnic Relations and Language Dynamics in a Multilingual Village in Nepal
- Modernization is in the Eye of the Beholder: A Case Study of Development in the Village of Bandipur
- “Beings like Gods” Stories, beliefs, and superstitions concerning Simigaau ghosts
- Let’s Talk About Sex, Baby: An Exploratory Study on Sex and Sexuality in Nepali Relationships and Marriages

- Community Structure, Relationships Within it, and Responsibility towards it: a Case-study about these Issues in One Middle Hill Village in Nepal
- To Heal, to Protect, to Give Hope: A Case Study of the Work of Jhankris in Simigaun
- Women, Work and Food: The Central Aspects of the Daily Life of the Sherpa/Tamang Women of Simigau.
- Tsho Rolpa: The Science, Flood Hazard Mitigation Projects, and the Local Perceptions of Tsho Rolpa, Nepal's Largest Glacial Lake
- International Labor Migration in Nepal
- Fighting Education: Methods of Overcoming Obstacles in Higher Secondary Schools in Bandipur, Nepal
- Chang Goggles: A Glimpse into Sherpa and Tamang Drinking Culture Through the Lens of Alcohol
- Community and Grassroots Democracy
- Rote Memorization and SLC: A Brief Look at the Current State of Education in Nepal
- Eco-Undertones in Nepali Religious Tradition
- The End of Freak Street: Drug Abuse in Nepal: History, Treatment and Policy
- The Sickle and the Cleaver: A Look into the Efficiency, Health and Sustainability of the Newari Food Production Skilled Labor Castes
- What Do They Do and To What Do They Aspire?
- From Bottom to Top: Nepal's Peace Process and PLA Integration as Seen From all Ranks of the Nepali Political Machine
- Dukha Nani, Dukha – My Search for Depression in Alampu
- Marriage and Sexual Practices of Simigaau, Nepal
- The Yarchagumba and the Buddha: Life in the Village of Nar