

**Course Description:**

**HAA 1908 – Independent Project. 1 – 3 credits; S/N grade OR Letter Grade**

This course enables students to receive academic credit for an independent project that is approved as equivalent in rigor to a traditional classroom-based course, and is directly supervised by and evaluated by a faculty member.

Students and faculty who agree to partner in an independent project are required to submit a signed contract to the department during the add/drop period in the semester in which the project will occur, which is subject to approval by the undergraduate committee. This course can be taken for 1, 2 or 3 credits. Please consult the departmental contract (below) to determine how many credits are appropriate.

**HAA 1908: Independent Project  
GUIDELINES + CONTRACT**

**Students undertaking an independent project should:**

- Be University of Pittsburgh undergraduate students in good academic standing with a GPA of 2.75 or higher.
- Meet regularly with the faculty member throughout the semester.
- Work responsibly toward the completion of assigned tasks by the required due date.
- Be prepared to provide an evaluation of the learning experience to the department upon completion of the project.
- Be prepared to provide their completed project to the department's undergraduate committee for review and assessment

**Faculty members who are working with students on independent projects should:**

- Assist the student in completing the independent study contract, providing clear expectations for work the student will produce and how it will be evaluated.
- Meet with the student regularly throughout the term.
- Review and provide feedback on any work the student has produced in a timely manner.
- Maintain an educational environment.
- Notify the chair of the undergraduate committee and the student if the quality of work and/or effort is insufficient to earn a passing grade for the course PRIOR to the monitored withdraw deadline.
- Provide an evaluation of the independent study and the student's performance to the department upon completion of the project.

**Earning Credit**

A student should receive credit through the departmental course HAA 1908 commensurate with effort (i.e., the number of hours per week the student works on the project). The following correlates the number of hours a student spends per week on the project and academic credit:

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Number of Credits to be earned | Student Activity: meeting with faculty mentor and others deemed appropriate, skill development or training, completing assignments and tasks related to and supporting the broader project, including research and/or creative activity |
| 1 credit                       | 3 – 5 hours per week  |
| 2 credits                      | 6 – 10 hours per week   |
| 3 credits                      | 12 – 15 hours per week  |

## Grading

HAA 1908 can be taken *either* with the **S/N grade option** or the **Letter Grade option (default)**. If students are pursuing these credits for a letter grade, they must complete Sections A and B of the contract. If students are taking HAA 1908 for the S/N grade instead of a letter grade, they must complete a **Grade Option Request Form** and submit this to 140 Thackeray by the Dietrich School deadline at the beginning of the semester. Students who do not submit the Grade Option Request Form will automatically be evaluated using the Letter-Grade option and will be required to complete Section B of the contract. Students must earn the equivalent of a “C” on their work in order to receive the S grade.

## Policy on Academic Integrity

Cheating or plagiarism on any assignment will not be tolerated. A student found to be in violation of academic integrity will receive a failing grade for the course (N) and the student will be referred to the dean's office for disciplinary action pursuant to the University's Academic Integrity Code (<http://www.fcas.pitt.edu/academicintegrity.html>).

## Disability Policy

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you must contact your faculty mentor and the Office of Disability Resources and Services [216 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890; 412-383-7355 (TTY)] early in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

## E-mail Policy

Each student is issued a University e-mail address ([username@pitt.edu](mailto:username@pitt.edu)) upon admittance. This e-mail address may be used by the University for official communication with students. Students are expected to read e-mail sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. The University provides an e-mail forwarding service that allows students to read their email via other service providers (e.g. Hotmail, AOL, Yahoo). Students that choose to forward their e-mail from their pitt.edu address to another address do so at their own risk. If e-mail is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to official communications sent to their University e-mail address. To forward e-mail sent to your University account, go to <http://accounts.pitt.edu>, log into your account, click on **Edit Forwarding Addresses**, and follow the instructions on the page. Be sure to log out of your account when you have finished. (For the full E-mail Communication Policy, go to [www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/policy/09/09-10-01.html](http://www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/policy/09/09-10-01.html).)

Students must complete the information requested below with their faculty mentor, sign this document, and return it to the departmental office no later than the first day of class in the semester in which the independent project will occur.

|  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| STUDENT:   |                                    |
| SEMESTER:  |                                    |
| FACULTY MENTOR:  |                                    |
| # OF CREDITS TO BE EARNED BY STUDENT   |                                    |
| STUDENT WILL BE SEEKING:   | S/N GRADE OPTION      LETTER-GRADE |
| Indicate the dates or how often the student will meet with the faculty mentor this semester. <i>IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT STUDENTS MEET WITH THEIR FACULTY MENTORS EVERY TWO WEEKS.</i> |                                    |

This contract should be accompanied by a **1 – 2 page statement** that includes:

**SECTION A – ALL STUDENTS COMPLETE. BRING THIS COMPLETED PORTION TO YOUR FACULTY MENTOR FOR THEIR APPROVAL.**

- The main learning objectives and/or goals of the project
- A description of what the student seeks to produce or complete
- A timeline that outlines the major activities of the project and demonstrates how it will be successfully completed
- A description of the various assignments the student will complete
- A description of any travel or supply needs the student will require to execute the project
- A discussion of how the student’s work will be evaluated (see Section B below if the student is seeking a letter-grade).
- Note: if the project is collaborative, please indicate what role each group member will play in the execution of the project and clearly specify what time commitment will be required for each.

**SECTION B – COMPLETE WITH FACULTY MENTOR IF TAKEN FOR A LETTER GRADE:**

- A description of how the final grade will be determined, including how individual assignments throughout the semester will be weighted and when they are due. The grading expectations should be factored to correspond to the total # of credits the student is seeking. (See “Earning Credit” above.) For example, if the work the student is producing is equivalent to what typically transpires in a traditional course, then the student should be earning 3 credits for the project.

I have read the HAA 1908 guidelines listed above and the specific terms that pertain to my role in the specified course and I agree to abide by them.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Faculty Mentor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date