

Section 6 Directed Individual Study (DIS)

6.1 Purpose

The Directed Individual Study (DIS) program provides an opportunity for second- and third-year students to enrich their legal education by pursuing a research project in an area of particular interest under close faculty supervision. DIS project may be supervised only by a faculty member who holds a full time or courtesy appointment in the College of Law.

6.2 Scope

A DIS project requires the completion of a significant research paper of substantial length (normally 40-50 pages). DIS credit will not be awarded for paid work, work performed in a clinical program, work that is not under the direct supervision of a faculty member, or work that was completed for other academic credit.

6.3 Credit

A DIS project may be for one, two or three credit hours. The expectation is that a DIS project will receive two credit hours. A request to the curriculum committee for three credit hours should include an explanation from the student and the faculty director about why the project should be approved for more than the normal two credit hours. Three credit hours may be earned for a project that involves significant empirical work, that requires substantial translation of non-English language sources, or that is of a scope that warrants more than two credit hours. The length of a DIS

paper will not, by itself, be a basis for an award of three credit hours. No more than four DIS credit hours may be earned in a single semester.

6.4 Enrollment Procedures

- 6.4.1 All DIS projects must be approved by the COL Curriculum Committee before registration. To apply for a DIS, a student must submit to the Curriculum Committee a completed “Request for DIS” form. The request form must include the signature of the faculty member who will direct the study and must be accompanied by a memorandum that describes the aim of the project, explains its significance, and indicates the research plan that will be pursued.
- 6.4.2 DIS requests should be submitted to the Chair of the Curriculum Committee by the end of the semester prior to the one for which credit is being sought and must be submitted in time to allow for Committee consideration before the end of drop/add period for the semester.
- 6.4.3 Completed DIS requests will be considered by the Curriculum Committee as soon as possible after receipt, and approval will require the affirmative vote of a majority of the Committee. The Chair of the Committee will sign an approved request form and deliver it to the COL registrar’s office no later than the last day of the drop/add period for the semester and will inform an applicant of the reasons for the Committee failing to

approve a request. Registration for a DIS project will require a signed request form.

6.5 Grading

A DIS project will be graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis by the directing faculty member. A grade of S+ may also be awarded.⁸ No credit will be awarded unless one copy of the final DIS paper is submitted to the Curriculum Committee and certified by the Chair of the Committee as complying with the terms of the application as approved.

6.6 ULWR

A DIS may not be used to satisfy a student's Upper Level Writing Requirement during the student's last semester. (See section 1.2.6.4.)

6.7 In Residence Requirement

Because DIS projects are designed to allow a student to work under the close supervision of a faculty member, it is presumed that approval will not be given for a DIS during a term when either the student or the directing faculty member is not in residence at the College of Law. In an exceptional situation in which the Committee is assured by the supervising faculty member that an appropriate level of supervision will occur, this presumption may be rebutted.

⁸ Prior to Fall 2009, a grade of S- may also have been awarded for a DIS project.