

# Independent Study (CMSC498A)

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In an ongoing quest to provide our undergraduates with innovative and challenging courses of study, the Department of Computer Science offers students an opportunity to pursue fields of study that are not currently a part of the Computer Science Undergraduate curriculum. We encourage all students to consider taking part in an independent study in order to broaden the scope of their knowledge in this ever-changing field. The purpose of an Independent Study (498A) is to allow advanced undergraduates to pursue an individualized course of study. Generally, a student interested in completing an independent study contacts a faculty member who is working in (or knowledgeable about) a particular field in which a student has developed an interest. The student then asks the faculty member to help him or her complete the Independent study. More often than not, a student works on an independent study with a faculty member who is already familiar with his or her class work. Once the student and faculty member decide on the course of study for the semester, it becomes the student's responsibility to set up a meeting schedule with his or her faculty sponsor; it is also the student's responsibility to maintain contact with his or her faculty sponsor throughout the semester. It is the faculty member's responsibility to make sure that he or she is available to meet with his or her student(s). The student fills out an application form, writes a short description of what will be covered during the semester, and has the faculty sponsor sign the application form. The application form acts as a contract between the faculty sponsor and student to ensure that both parties meet the expectations that are set out during their initial meeting. Students are expected to have completed CMSC330/ CMSC351 prior to taking CMSC498A. CMSC298A is an option for those who have not, but please note that CMSC298A does not meet a CS major requirement.

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1. Schedule a meeting with a CS faculty member regarding sponsorship for independent study.
2. If the faculty member agrees to become your sponsor, determine the scope of your independent study and outline the work that you will complete throughout the semester. At this time, the faculty member should explain to you how your work will be evaluated.
3. Fill out an Application for Undergraduate Independent Study form [PDF]  
([/sites/undergrad.cs.umd.edu/files/images/uploads/2021/08/CMSC498A\\_CMSC298A%20Application\\_Fall%202019.pdf](/sites/undergrad.cs.umd.edu/files/images/uploads/2021/08/CMSC498A_CMSC298A%20Application_Fall%202019.pdf)).
4. Submit your application to your academic advisor by the first day of the semester.

**Contact Our Office**

**CS Undergraduate Office** (<https://undergrad.cs.umd.edu>)

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