

Department of Animal and Range Sciences
Statement on Graduate Topics and Independent Study courses

The Curriculum Handbook from the SDSU Office of Academic Affairs and the Graduate Catalog spells out the purpose and use of x91 Independent Study and x92 Topics courses at SDSU. It reads as follows:

x91 Independent Study

Includes Directed Study, Problems, Readings, Directed Readings, Special Problems, and Special Projects. Students complete individualized plans of study which include significant one-on-one student-teacher involvement. The faculty member and students negotiate the details of the study plans. Enrollments are usually 10 or fewer students. Meeting depending upon the requirements of the topic. Instructional Method: I.

x92 Topics

Includes Current Topics, Advanced Topics and Special Topics. A course devoted to a particular issue in a specified field. Course content is not wholly included in the regular curriculum. Guest artists or experts may serve as instructors. Enrollments are usually of 10 or fewer students with significant one-on-one student-teacher involvement. Instructional Method: X.

In the Department of Animal and Range Sciences these courses correspond to AS 591, AS 592, RANG 591, and RANG 592. The Graduate Studies Committee of the Department recognizes the value of Independent Study and Topics courses in presenting an effective graduate curriculum to our students. These courses are not, however, designed to be used for increasing the GPA of graduate students that fall below a 3.0 in their coursework. In cases where graduate students have GPAs less than 3.0 near the end of their coursework, it is critical that they meet with their graduate committee to develop a plan for a remedy or withdraw from graduate school. It may be advisable to take additional courses in subjects pertinent to the thesis work or in supportive areas to strengthen their job marketability.

ARS Guidelines for Graduate Students (Sept. 1996) states the following with respect to GPA and represents departmental policy:

Graduate students must have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 in their major and minor (or supporting course work) at the end of the second semester of graduate school to be on assistantship. If after the first semester the student has a GPA <3.0, they will be placed on departmental academic probation. The student will receive formal notification that they are on probation prior to the start of the next semester and that the failure to raise the cumulative GPA to ≥ 3.0 by the end of the next semester will mean withdrawal of the assistantship and change to Special Status. Students in this category must convene a meeting of his/her graduate committee prior to the start of the next semester, develop and receive approval of a Plan of Study. During the second semester, courses used to raise the student's GPA must be on the Plan of Study. The Plan of Study must be approved and on file no later the end of the second semester of enrollment. If after two semesters a student must be reclassified as a Special Student, the terms for being reinstated as Unconditional will accompany the formal notification. Reinstatement of an

assistantship will require re-evaluation by the Department Head after terms for meeting Unconditional status have been met. When it is necessary to terminate an assistantship, this will occur at the end of the month that the semester ends.

(March 14, 2007)