

WHAT IS A DIRECTED INDIVIDUAL STUDY (DIS)?

A Directed Individual Study (DIS) is a lot like what it sounds. A student works with a professor to set up a course of study about a particular topic or research area. A DIS provides students the opportunity to work one-on-one with faculty mentors through an open-ended, hands-on experience. At the end of the day, you (and the faculty member you're working with) decide what the DIS is about and how you will learn throughout the course. Often, what you do in your DIS depends on your discipline. Some examples of DIS courses that Honors students have completed in the past are:

- > Working with a professor in Psychology to run participants through studies regarding romantic relationships.
- > Working with a professor in Criminology to review research findings about cases of fraud in The Villages, Sumter County, Florida.
- > Working with a professor in French to prepare for the DALF French fluency exam.
- > Working with a professor in Biochemistry to conduct research on the synthesis, characterization, and reactivity of enzymes.
- > Working with a professor in History to do research in FSU's Tallahassee Civil Rights Oral History Special Collection.

DIS courses are accompanied by readings on the topic of research that the professor and student discuss together to augment understanding of the larger project. While DIS courses vary by discipline and project, most DIS courses have the following elements in common.

- > You're interested in a particular topic or research area that you would like to study further. Usually, this interest is prompted from a course you took.
- > You initiate the DIS by contacting a faculty member, usually someone whose class you've taken or worked with in some way. Never be afraid to ask! If they can't work with you, they might be able to suggest someone else who would be able to work with you.
- > Once the faculty agrees to work with you, they stipulate the terms of the DIS in tandem with you, such as setting goals for the DIS, establishing what you're expected to do, and how often you'll meet through the semester, and how many credit hours the DIS will count for (1, 2, or 3 credit hours).
 - o Since this is an Honors DIS, you and your professor will need to collaborate to determine what about this course sets it at the Honors level.
- > You and the professor meet throughout the semester to discuss readings and work on the final project.
- > There is some contracted outcome of the DIS, usually a research paper or project.

If a DIS sounds like something you would like to do, reach out to a professor, and then fill out the DIS Course Contract form.

