

Guide to Setting up a Directed Research Class

Students who wish to engage in independent study with a professor may, by agreement with the professor, enroll in a Directed Research class.

Directed Research may be taken for 1, 2, or 3 units of credit. Students must complete 42.5 hours of work for each unit of credit.

Securing a Professor

A student is responsible for seeking a professor who is willing to supervise the student's independent study project. Ideally, the student will have a topic in mind, or at a minimum, a field of interest. Meet with the proposed instructor during office hours, or request an appointment to discuss Directed Research. Some faculty are open to general discussions about a paper topic, and will help students narrow their research. Others require a well-thought out thesis and research design.

Full-time faculty, and staff who also serve as Unit 18 Lecturers, may supervise Directed Research. Students must obtain written permission from the Dean of Students and the supervising instructor to enroll in Directed Research with an adjunct, visitor, or non-staff Unit 18 Lecturer.

A clear understanding of what the instructor requires is vital to the success of a Directed Research project. At a minimum, the student and professor should agree to the following in writing:

- The minimum length of the paper
 - Double or single-spaced
 - Should footnotes be at the bottom or end of the paper, and if at the end, whether they count in the page total
- The number of drafts required
- Deadlines for the course requirements, such as outlines, drafts, and the final paper
- Whether the paper will earn a letter grade or S/U (the default is a letter grade)
- The frequency of meetings to discuss the paper's progress

If the paper builds on previous work completed by the student, this must be disclosed to the instructor, and cited appropriately.

File an Academic Petition

File an Academic Petition/Directed Research form after meeting with the instructor. Go to Student Portal/Registration/Academic Petitions/Directed Research. The Petition should include the instructor's requirements on the form's "Description of the Course."

The instructor must sign the form.

- Scan and email the form to the instructor, who can sign it either by pen or digitally

-or-

- Print the form and obtain the instructor's signature on it.

Turn in the signed form at the front reception desk, or scan and email it to the Dean of Students. If approved prior to the end of the second week of the semester, the Law School's Registrar or Assistant Registrar will send instructions on how to enroll in the course. If approved after the second week of the semester, the Law Registrar must hand-enroll the student in the course.

Main Campus Courses

A 4 unit quarter class = 2.6 Law units. Some professors will allow students to add one quarter unit of Directed Research so students can earn a total of 3 units for the course. Students are required to write a longer paper or complete additional assignments to earn the extra unit.

Timesheet

Students must complete an on-line timesheet throughout the semester. Faculty have access to the timesheet and can check it regularly during the semester. The instructor cannot enter a grade unless the student has fulfilled the time requirement (42.5 hours/unit of credit).

Go to the Student Portal/Registration/Forms/Credit Hours Timesheet for instructions on filling out the timesheet.

Fulfilling the Upper Level Writing Requirement

Students may enroll in Directed Research to fulfill the Upper Level Writing Requirement. For more information about the writing requirement, see the [Academic Requirements page](#).