

Information on JS 297 and JS 298

JS 297 provides course credit (credit/no credit, 3 units) for an independent research project, and **JS 298** provides course credit (credit/no credit, 3 units) for a directed reading or independent study.

In general, students only sign up for these classes when they have a special topic they want to study or research that is *not covered* by one of our regular classes. In some cases, students may also sign up for JS 297 at the request of a faculty member conducting her/his own research, or a faculty member who needs a teaching assistant, and assist the professor with that research project or teaching assignment. Both JS 297 and 298 must involve the same amount of learning activity (research, reading, etc.) as a regular class. As these are 3-unit classes, that translates to a minimum of **12 hours per week**.

Students interested in JS 297 or JS 298 should contact a professor whose area of expertise is closest to their topic and see if the professor has the time and interest to supervise the student in a research project or directed reading. *Professors are not required to accept JS 297 or JS 298 students.*

For **JS 297** (research project):

- If you want to conduct **your own research** project, when you go to the professor to ask for 297 supervision, at a minimum you should be ready to discuss:
 - your research question and/or hypothesis
 - your proposed methodology
 - your timetable for completing your project

Once you and the professor have agreed on the project, you should

- *write up* your research question and/or hypothesis, your planned methodology, and your projected timetable
- *obtain* the professor's corrections or approval of your research plan
- *submit* one copy of this document to your supervising professor, one copy to the graduate coordinator, and keep a copy for yourself

With the supervising professor's approval, the graduate coordinator will provide you with a permission code to enroll in JS 297.

Note: if you will need IRB approval for your research, you should work on obtaining that the semester before you sign up for 297. Your supervising professor should be listed as the supervisor on the IRB forms.

- If you are working with a **professor** on her/his **research** project:
 - talk to that person about what your tasks are likely to be
 - write up a summary of your agreement
 - obtain the professor's corrections or approval of your summary
 - submit one copy of your summary to the professor, one copy to the graduate coordinator, and keep one copy for yourself.

- If you will be working with a **professor** as her/his **teaching** assistant:
 - ask the professor to specify what your duties will be, such as reading student assignments, grading papers, teaching a class, leading a seminar discussion, supervising a lab session, assisting in the computer lab, etc.
 - write up a summary of your agreed-upon duties
 - obtain the professor's corrections or approval of your summary
 - submit one copy of your summary to the professor, one copy to the graduate coordinator, and keep one copy for yourself.

With the written description and the professor's approval, the graduate coordinator will issue you a permission code to enroll in JS 298.

Note: Because you will be earning course credit, the graduate coordinator cannot approve 297s that lack an educational or learning component – e.g., you cannot obtain course credit if your *only* tasks are photocopying and setting up a projector for a professor's Powerpoint lecture.

For **JS 298** (directed reading/independent study), once you have identified a professor who might supervise your work, talk to the professor about what she/he expects.

- First, generally you come up with a reading list of relevant books and articles (again comparable to an extensive reading list in a graduate class) and go over this with your professor for additions or subtractions.
- Second, you negotiate with the professor about how often you will meet to discuss your progress (minimum is once per month in person, with email contact every week) and what kind of “product” you will produce.
- In general the expectation is 30 pages of analytical writing, which might be one 30-page research paper, two 15-page papers, or three 10-page papers. However, professors may require something different, like a combination of a short paper, a PowerPoint presentation to an undergraduate class, and a critique, for example. In addition, your professor may ask you to submit brief summaries of your reading when you meet during the semester, which does not count toward the 30-page writing expectation.

- Once you and the professor have agreed on your directed reading, write up your agreement, submit it to the professor for her/his corrections or approval, and then submit one copy of the (revised) agreement to the professor, one copy to the graduate coordinator, and keep a copy for yourself.
- With the written description and the professor's approval, the graduate coordinator will issue you a permission code to enroll in JS 298.