

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

BOSTON UNIVERSITY • 725 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215

Independent Work for Distinction Guidelines

Work for Distinction is an opportunity for seniors in College of Arts and Sciences to conduct in-depth research in the major or minor field. It is the most stimulating intellectual enterprise in which an undergraduate can engage, demanding dedication and the ability to exercise independent judgment.

To graduate with distinction, students must complete a thesis, which will be presented to a committee of the faculty. The committee will consider both the thesis and the result of the oral examination to determine whether the student will receive distinction in the concentration. A grade of B+ or better in each semester is also required to receive distinction.

Application Guidelines

The minimum grade point average of 3.00 is required for students applying for Work for Distinction. Some departments require a higher GPA in the concentration to be eligible for distinction. Please check with your department for its GPA requirement.

Please complete the attached application for Work for Distinction, in consultation with the faculty project advisor. You must choose a faculty advisor who is a full-time CAS faculty member. The materials to be included in your application are listed on the second page of the application.

The faculty advisor must complete the reference sheet, evaluating the student's potential success in the project. After the application is signed by the student and by the faculty advisor, you must submit the form to the department to be approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies and Department Chair. Once all of the necessary signatures and approvals have been met, the complete application should be turned into the CAS Academic Advising Center, 725 Commonwealth Avenue, Room 105.

Deadlines to submit applications for Independent Work for Distinction for project beginning:

**FALL
SPRING**

**May 15*
November 15***

*If you need an extension, please contact the Work for Distinction Coordinator in CAS Advising Center before the deadline. Applications **MUST** be processed by *the last day to add courses* of the semester you begin the project.

Each applicant will be notified of acceptance or rejection by email, and the appropriate course will be added to the student's schedule by the CAS Work for Distinction Coordinator.

Other Important Information

Phi Beta Kappa:

- Successful completion of Work for Distinction with a grade of A- in each semester is one criterion for nomination to Phi Beta Kappa.

Study Abroad/BU Programs Outside of Charles River Campus:

- The Work for Distinction project is designed for seniors to work on a two-semester independent study while on campus during their final two semesters. Both the faculty advisor and the student have to be on campus while working on the project.
- If you will not be on campus during the first semester of your project and want to appeal this requirement for strong academic reasons, please contact the Independent Work for Distinction Coordinator.

BUCOP (Boston University Collaborative Degree Program):

- Students enrolled in BUCOP may apply to do Work for Distinction if their programs will allow for this flexibility. Students should confer with their advisors on program requirements.

Seven-Year Medical Program and BA/MA Programs:

- Students in the Seven-Year Medical Program and some of BA/MA programs may be allowed to work on Work for Distinction project during their last year of undergraduate program. Please contact the Independent Work for Distinction Coordinator for more information.

Part-time:

- If a part-time status is approved by CAS, it is acceptable to be enrolled part-time for one of the semesters in which a student is registered for Work for Distinction. If you are considering a part-time status as a senior student, please contact CAS105.

UROP (Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program):

- Students undertaking Independent Work for Distinction projects may (but are not required to) participate in the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP).
- Students performing Work for Distinction may apply for UROP funding for a supplies grant (FROG) to supplement the costs of their research supplies. However, while a student is performing Work for Distinction (for academic credit), he may not receive a stipend grant (FMG or SRA) from UROP.
- For information about academic year and summer funding opportunities from UROP, please visit the UROP website at www.bu.edu/urop
- You may also contact the UROP staff at urop@bu.edu or 617-353-2020

*****Please detach and retain this information sheet for your records*****

APPLICATION FOR INDEPENDENT WORK FOR DISTINCTION

Student Information (Please print all information)

First and last name: _____

ID number: _____

Mailing address: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Major / Minor *in which you are pursuing distinction*: _____

Expected graduation date (month/year): _____

Semesters working on project: _____

Grade Point Average: _____

Faculty Project Advisor information (Please print all information)

First and last name: _____

CAS Department: _____

Email address: _____

Office mailing address: _____

Office phone number: _____

Title of project:

Date of Submission to CAS Academic Advising: *(Office use only)*

Application Check List

Please include the following materials to your application.

- ☐ Provide a brief description of your intended project. Outline the significance of the proposed work, the method of investigation that will be employed, and the ways the result of the investigation will be analyzed.
- ☐ Include a bibliography of readings that are relevant to your work.
- ☐ Explain how this project fits in with your academic and career goals.
- ☐ Attach an unofficial copy of your BU transcript.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

To be completed by the faculty project advisor:

Student's name:

How long and in what capacity have you known the student?

Please evaluate the applicant's aptitude for independent research according to the criteria listed below. Please add any applicable comments.

	Exceptional	Good	Fair	Poor	Unable to judge
Native intellectual ability					
Breadth of knowledge in subject					
Written communication skills					
Ability to work independently					
Level of initiative					
Level of motivation					
Laboratory skills (if applicable)					

Comments:

I have read the student's proposal and recommend that it be accepted as an Independent Work for Distinction Project.

Faculty Project Advisor (PRINT)_____Date:_____

Faculty Project Advisor (SIGNATURE)_____Date:_____

Director of Undergraduate Studies (PRINT)_____Date:_____

Director of Undergraduate Studies (SIGNATURE)_____Date:_____

Department Chairman (PRINT)_____Date:_____

Department Chairman (SIGNATURE)_____Date:_____

CAS Work For Distinction Coordinator_____Date:_____