

VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES, RESEARCH & OUTREACH
BACHELOR OF INDIVIDUALIZED STUDIES DEGREE

INDS-301, LIFE/WORK PETITION - 1 SH

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Catalog

Description: Required course for students seeking credit for learning from life/work experience.

Restriction: Enrollment in INDS-301 is restricted to matriculating students in the Bachelor of Individualized Studies degree program at Virginia State University. This is an elective course to be taken only by those students who wish to petition academic credit based on life/work experience.

Text: Since all petitions are course-based, it is necessary that the student review a current copy of the *VSU Undergraduate Catalog*. The current undergraduate catalog can be found on the VSU website: www.vsu.edu

Description: This course serves as the vehicle through which a student in the BIS degree program prepares a portfolio to petition for the award of academic credit based on learning attained through life/work experiences. The instructor and the student will identify and document those learning experiences and competencies that equate to the content and competencies addressed in University courses. Each portfolio must contain, as a minimum, a petition for credit for a course listed in the current Undergraduate VSU Catalog; a narrative resume; a detailed description of the work or life experiences upon which the petition is based; a clear explanation of specific learning outcomes resulting from the experiences; and documentation of the work experience and learning gained. Credit earned through portfolio petition is applicable only to the BIS degree.

Objectives: The student should be able to identify and document competencies and learning that equate to similar competencies and learning objectives of selected courses offered by the University. The student will learn the necessary components of an acceptable portfolio and be able to accomplish the required introspection and research necessary to document prior learning for which college credit is sought.

Procedure: A student matriculating in the BIS degree program who wishes to petition for

academic credit based on work/life experience must first register in the course INDS-301. This course carries one (1) semester hour credit. The course will be conducted on an individualized basis with the instructor. The student is responsible for scheduling an initial appointment and subsequent appointments as necessary for development of the portfolio(s) for petition. Student research begins with the *Graduation Requirements Summary*, provided by his/her advisor, and a resume developed during the orientation course, INDS-302. The resume helps the student identify previous learning experiences; and the *Graduation Requirements Summary* identifies credit already earned and thus eliminates duplication of credit. The next step is to identify courses offered at the University, which most closely match the student's previous learning experiences. The student must consult the most current University Catalog to identify those courses. Students are advised to pay special attention to any **course prerequisites** when identifying courses to petition. Unless the student has met the prerequisites, through course work or comparable experiences, the student is advised not to petition such courses. In addition, students must be aware of the fact that **upper division course work** (300-400 level) often incorporates theoretical investigations, which are seldom experienced through work/life experiences. Therefore students are advised that petitioning credit for upper division courses necessitates exceptional, professional work/life experience. The student may be advised to first schedule a meeting with the chairperson of the department housing the course being considered for petition for advice prior to preparation of the portfolio. The BIS Director can identify the appropriate chairperson and help set up this meeting.

Preparation of the portfolio: The instructor will provide the student with a sample format for portfolio submission. This sample format (final page of this syllabus) includes space for the course name and number; the department offering the course; the course description (taken directly from the current VSU Catalog); a short justification statement in which the student states how he/she acquired the knowledge/skills offered in the course; and documentation attached to substantiate the justification. In order to address the justification statement, the student is advised to contact the department, which offers the petitioned course, and obtain a **current syllabus**. The syllabus will state expected knowledge, skills and abilities for the course, and the petition should directly address these KSAs. Documentation to support the justification might take the form of a job description, letters of reference, certificates, diplomas, etc., relevant to the content of the petitioned course. Documentation might also include courses/instruction offered by employers or other non-academic sources. A final review of the completed portfolio should be arranged prior to submission. The completed portfolio is to be submitted to the Director of the BIS degree program. The fee for evaluation of work/life experience is based on the number of credit hours and is tied to the tuition per credit hour (please consult the current effective *Student Guide for Tuition, Fees and Other Financial Information*). This fee is payable in the Cashier's Office, Virginia Hall. The BIS degree office will send each portfolio to the chair of the academic department, which offers the petitioned course. It is the responsibility of that department chair to select the appropriate faculty member(s) to review the portfolio and to either recommend or deny credit for the petitioned course. In the event that credit is not recommended, the faculty reviewer is asked to provide an explanation for the denial.

In the process of determining whether or not to award credit by petition, an academic department may make any additional appropriate requests of the student so as to facilitate their decision.

This might include requests for additional supporting materials, a personal interview, a written test, or other appropriate sources of information.

The Portfolio Assessment Results Form, indicating approval or denial, will be signed by the department chair and the appropriate school dean, and returned with the entire portfolio to the School of Graduate Studies, Research and Outreach. The final steps include approval by the Dean, School of Graduate Studies, Research & Outreach, and submission of the approved credit to the Office of the Registrar for the course(s) and credits to be posted to the student's official transcript. Each course successfully petitioned, and the course credit awarded through petition, is entered on the student's University transcript **without a grade**, much like transfer credit. For this reason, the hours earned by petition do not count in the calculation of your grade point average (and do not count towards the hours used to determine eligibility to graduate with honors). The hours do count towards the total hours required to complete the degree. A maximum of thirty (30) semester hours of credit may be earned through portfolio petition; and a maximum of 15 semester hours of credit awarded through petition may be used to meet the VSU residency requirement.

Please use the formatted page which follows as the cover page for each course petitioned.

Revised 9/10/07

VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY
School of Graduate Studies, Research and Outreach
Bachelor of Individualized Studies

Petition for Academic Credit

Student Name: _____ SS#: _____

Local Address: _____

Telephone (home): _____ (work): _____

****PETITION INFORMATION****

Course Number & Title (from VSU catalog; go to www.vsu.edu): _____

Course Department: _____ Semester Hours: _____

VSU Catalog Course Description:

Justification for Request: (Short summary of how you have learned, through work experiences and/or other experiences, the content of the course petitioned. Be sure that your justification directly addresses the requirements in the syllabus for this course.)

Documentation: (summarize attached documentation which supports your justification)