**Relates to:** Chapters 4 through 7

## SCHOOL FOR NEW LEARNING

#### INDEPENDENT LEARNING PURSUIT

#### WORKSHEET

Independent Learning Pursuits (ILPs) give you the opportunity to earn competency credit for learning you have done outside of school. Keep in mind, however, that not every experience will lend itself to an ILP, that you need to show how your learning fits the criteria for a competency statement, and that you need to demonstrate that you have gained college-level learning from your experience.

This guide is a resource for School for New Learning students interested in developing an ILP. Your Faculty Mentor may ask for additional information during the process in order to assist you in successfully demonstrating competency.

In addition to your Faculty Mentor, we recommend that you work with the DePaul Writing Center (<http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/>) as you prepare your ILP for submission.

**Step One:** **Preview the Requirements**

Two persons will review your ILP: your Faculty Mentor and a specialist in the competency area. If your ILP is in your focus area, your Professional Advisor will be the specialist reviewer.

Your ILP will be assessed using the standards in the table that follows. Before you proceed, read these standards carefully so you know you what you need to do.

**Standards your work will need to meet.**

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| **Content and Communication Standards** |
| Student’s work addresses the competency at a college level of proficiency. |
| Student describes and reflects on own experiences/knowledge. |
| Student relates others’ views to own learning experiences and/or demonstrates the ability to view experiences from multiple perspectives. |
| Assertions are supported by evidence. |
| All information and statements from source are cited. |
| Focus and/or conclusions are clear. |
| Presentation format is well organized, coherent, skillfully executed and appropriate to both the topic and audience. |
| Grammar, syntax, spelling are correct. |
| Citations and bibliography are consistently provided using APA or MLA format. |
| Submission to Turn-it-In confirms that all works from other sources have been cited. |

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| **Standards to be used to assess specific content area or Focus Area** |
| Student demonstrates the competency at a college level of proficiency. |
| Student demonstrates learning consistent with contemporary standards of the field. |
| Student addresses the complexity of a subject, skill, or practice. |
| Relevant resources are incorporated. |
| Another criterion may be set by the Professional Advisor. |

Before you proceed to plan the ILP, check with your mentor—ask if the focus of the topic or project you plan to work on is appropriate to meet the competency requirements. If so, then proceed to Step Two.

**Step Two:** **Organize your ILP Proposal**

Use the form that follows to organize a proposal for your ILP.

**COVER PAGE FOR THE ILP PROPOSAL**

(Create a cover page—this is just a draft but it’s important to provide the following information.)

### Student Name / ID Number

**Phone Number / Email**

**COMPETENCY STATEMENT**

**When I plan to complete this ILP:**

**ILP PROPOSAL**

**Project Overview**

*Describe briefly what the project will be. For example, if you plan to prepare a blueprint for a house to demonstrate your ability to apply principles of design, state that you will prepare that blueprint and also will prepare a paper in which you indicate which principles, concepts and theories you incorporated in the design. Or if you will report on a program you completed in the past on becoming a volunteer at the Zoo, explain that you will provide a certificate of completion for that program as well as a journal you completed during that program and a summary of how and what you learned.*

**Assessment Criteria**

In column 1, list Criteria that relate to your ILP. See the SNL website for competencies and criteria. *If you designed the competency statement, list criteria for the competency that you clarified with your Faculty Mentor or Professional Advisor.*

In column 2, note how your ILP will meet those criteria.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Criteria for this Competency*** | ***How this project relates to each criterion*** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**How did/will you develop this competency?**

For example, it could be that you developed initial knowledge about the competency in a previous course and then through independent reading and project work you gained greater competency.

**Evidence I will include documenting this Project:**

**Resources: What books or other sources will I consult in preparing the ILP?**

To achieve a broader perspective about your topic and bring it to college level may require more research on your part. Make connections between your experience and that of others by examining, and appropriately referencing, the ideas and views of published experts in their field, as well as the ideas and views of others who have shared similar experiences.

**Step Three:** **Request input regarding your ILP Proposal from your Faculty Mentor (and Professional Advisor if this is to demonstrate a Focus Area competency).**

Based upon this feedback, revise your proposal as necessary. Note that several iterations may be needed.

**Step Four: Prepare evidence and supporting materials you will utilize in demonstrating your development of this competency.**

After you receive initial authorization for the ILP, you will need to prepare the evidence of your development of the competency. If it is a project you need to complete, do that work. If you have completed the work, then collect your evidence.

Your evidence may be an artifact, a certificate, an oral report, an essay or some other written document. Very often students demonstrate their learning and its fulfillment of a competency with a research paper. For example, a student who has worked in training demonstrated his development of the S-3-F competency with a fourteen-page research paper on “The Changing Role of Technology in Educational Settings.” **Please note: your ILP proposal and the rationale statement you complete in Step Five below are not the same as a research paper submitted as evidence showing that you have attained the competency.** However, your ILP proposal will help you start developing your ideas for such a paper.

**Step Five:** **Prepare your ILP Rationale Statement**

The ILP Rationale Statement must be submitted for all ILPs along with the evidence and supporting materials.

**RATIONALE STATEMENT**

**In addition to the evidence you are submitting, prepare and write a rationale for your independent learning. The purpose of the rationale is to clarify the basis for the correlation of your work with the requirements of the competency.**

You need to prepare a one-paragraph statement regarding each of the items described below. You may either insert your paragraphs after each question, or, you may prepare a separate essay in which you include your responses.

**1) Context**

*Describe your own background—how does this experience on which you are basing the ILP relate to your work or studies?*

**2) The Experience(s)**

*Describe the experience(s) that led to gaining competency. What did this (these) involve, and how did you participate?*

**3) Relevance to Competency**

*How does (do) this (these) experience(s) relate to the competency you developed?*

**4) Reflection**

*What insights did you gain from your experience(s)?*

**5) Ideas**

*What theories, ideas, concepts, or principles did you learn as you completed this work? For example, if you took that role as a Zoo Volunteer, what principles or ideas of animal care did you learn such as “observe the animal’s behavior to figure out its needs,” or “animals in captivity need to maintain as much independence as possible”. If it’s that design of a home, what principles of architecture did you learn, such as “form follows function” or another design principle?*

**6) Application**

*How did you apply these ideas in your experiences, and/or how might you apply the competency you gained from this (these) experience(s) in the future?*

**7) Self-Assessment**

*You’ll be attaching documentation of the development of this competency. Based on a review of the standards for its assessment (see next pages), assess your work—how clearly does the work you did align with the competency?*

**8) Future Applications**

*How might you apply this competency in the future?*

**Any statements from a source must be cited using APA or MLA style.**

**Step Six:** **Decide on whether to submit the ILP**

Now that you have completed the ILP proposal, what next?

After having received feedback from your faculty mentor, you may decide to submit the ILP for assessment and approval by SNL’s Teaching, Learning and Assessment committee (TLA). To do this, you should consult with your faculty mentor further to ensure that your Rationale Statement, Evidence, and any supporting materials are ready for submission.

Find the Independent Learning Pursuit (ILP) Submission Form to turn in the final ILP at [http://snl.depaul.edu](https://scps.depaul.edu/). It includes a cover page, your rationale, and two additional pages for the assessors to complete. Your faculty mentor can guide you in the submission process.

**NOTE:** Relates to Chapter 7, “Learning From Experience and the Independent Learning Pursuit”