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Course Description: An experience planned cooperatively between a student and a faculty member within the biology department. The faculty member serves as the supervisor. The course does not fulfill any requirements for the biology major; however, successful completion of a 4 sh research independent study can fulfill the research requirement for the molecular biology major (but only after receiving approval for such a purpose prior to starting the Independent Study).

Prerequisite: instructor and program/division approval after discussion of an independent study project prior to starting the independent study. Discussion should include what the student plans to do and how they plan to accomplish their goal(s). Appropriate authorization documentation will be submitted to the division and requires instructor, chair and administrative approval.

Course Objectives: The outcomes of the biology independent study are achieved in students who:

- demonstrate an ability to apply biological concepts and principles learned from Westminster courses in an independent manner;
- utilize observational, investigational, and critical-thinking skills, including the ability to evaluate, interpret, and assess information and data with minimal guidance from the faculty supervisor;
- acquire and utilize knowledge and skills that enhance future success within the corresponding field;
- demonstrate initiative, responsibility, and accountability;
- demonstrate a capacity for decision-making;
- communicate their experience using a poster or oral presentation at a conference such as the Westminster URAC, an undergraduate conference, or a professional conference.

Course Grade: Students who register for an independent study within the biology department will earn a letter grade for the course. The supervisor will assign a letter grade based on materials submitted, materials presented, and the quality of completing course objectives.