

Senior Individualized Project

The Senior Individualized Project (SIP)

The Senior Individualized Project is the capstone of Kalamazoo College's program of liberal arts education, offering students the opportunity to make use of all of their experiences at the College. The SIP is an occasion for independent scholarship, often in conjunction with an internship or other creative activity that results in a written report, performance, or exhibit. A number of departments host symposia, recitals, exhibitions, or theatrical productions in which results of research or creative work are featured. Rather than selecting only a subset of students to work on an honors project or thesis, the College considers such independent work a significant part of the education of all Kalamazoo College students and requires it of all seniors. The requirement is waived for students participating in approved 3/2 engineering or health professions early entry programs, as they are not at the College for their senior year.

Every student must complete a Senior Individualized Project of at least one unit. The SIP requirement is usually completed in the major department, although students may complete a SIP in any department or program of the College with the approval of the department chair or program director and a faculty SIP supervisor from that area. Each department sets its own requirements for senior projects done in that department, including the range of acceptable projects, the required background of students doing projects, the format of the SIP, and the expected scope and depth of projects. The amount of SIP credit (one or two units) is determined by the student and the SIP department at the beginning of the project. In consultation with the faculty SIP supervisor, and within the constraints set by the relevant department, students determine their project's form and the environment in which it is to be pursued.

The College reserves the right to archive student SIPs within academic departments, the Upjohn Library and/or an online digital archive, and to publish SIP titles and the titles of SIP presentations.

General Information about SIPs

- Every senior must complete a SIP in a department, program, or Independent Interdisciplinary Major. Every SIP must have a faculty advisor (also known as the SIP supervisor) within that department, program, or IIM committee.
- Each student must complete at least a 1-unit SIP. Departments and programs have the option of allowing or requiring a 2-unit SIP.
- A student may split a SIP between two departments, be it 1 or 2 units. In this case, the student may have more than one faculty SIP supervisor.
- The SIP does not necessarily have to be done in the major department, although most SIPs are done in the major or in one or both departments of a double major. Some majors strongly encourage their students to do their SIP in the major. Many departments have certain prerequisites that must be met before doing a SIP within that department.
- All departments and programs provide written guidelines or requirements for SIPs done within their disciplines. Ask your department or faculty advisor for guidelines early in the process. In general, SIPs take the following forms:
 - Research thesis or reading project culminating in review paper
 - Internship with a paper relating theory to practice
 - Laboratory or field research with a paper
 - Translation with appropriate explanation
 - Creative work culminating in an exhibition, performance, and/or written work
 - Under extenuating circumstances, with approval of the Department or Program Chair or IIM committee, advanced coursework at Kalamazoo College or another institution may be substituted for the SIP
- Departments and potential SIP supervisors are not obliged to approve every SIP proposal that is presented to them. You may have to meet certain prerequisites, or you may have to adjust your ideas or modify your proposal, before it gains the approval of a SIP supervisor. Enlist a SIP supervisor early in the process and then work with that person to develop a project that will be interesting, significant, and meaningful to you.

The SIP Quarter

- Each student must complete at least a 1-unit SIP. Departments and programs have the option of allowing or requiring a 2-unit SIP.
- A student may split a SIP between two departments, be it 1 or 2 units. In this case, the student may have more than one faculty SIP advisor.
- Students may conduct SIP work over the summer (as part of an extended fall term), during the fall quarter, or during the winter quarter.
- The SIP quarter will be included in any financial aid package you already receive. A SIP is charged as part of a regular quarter load (2 to 4 units of course work carries the same tuition fee). A summer SIP will be registered in the Extended Fall term and included in the Fall tuition billing.
- Students may not overload while working on their SIP. With the exception of performance-based SIPs in specific departments, which may have partial units spread over multiple quarters, students will have at least one “SIP quarter” in which at least one unit is devoted to the SIP. During this term students may take no more than 2 non-SIP courses (not counting partial credit courses)

Sip Units	Maximum Additional Coursework Allowed
1 Unit Summer SIP	3 courses (up to 3.9 units) in Fall
2 Unit Summer/Fall SIP	2 courses (up to 2.9 units) in Fall
2 Unit Summer/Winter SIP	3 courses (up to 3.9 units) in Fall; 2 courses (up to 2.9 units) in Winter; Summer component must be finished before Fall term
1 Unit Fall SIP	2 courses (up to 2.9 units) in Fall
2 Unit Fall SIP	1 course (up to 1.9 units) in Fall
2 Unit Fall/Winter SIP	2 courses (up to 2.9 units) each in Fall and Winter
1 Unit Winter SIP	2 courses (up to 2.9 units) in Winter
2 Unit Winter SIP	1 course (up to 1.9 units) in Winter
Multi-term Performance SIP in Art or Music	Depends on portion of SIP unit registered each term

SIP Registration Policies

The SIP counts as one or two course unit(s) for the term(s) during which it is counted, but the SIP is registered via a separate process from class registration. The SIP registration process involves a paper form (no online registration) which must be submitted to the Registrar's office by the student herself/himself. This paper form has its own set of deadlines:

SIP Quarter	Registration Form Due
All SIPs involving work over the summer (as part of an extended fall term)	Friday of 10th Week, Junior Spring Quarter
Fall and Fall/Winter SIPs	Friday of 1st Week, Senior Fall Quarter
Winter SIPs	Friday of 1st Week, Senior Winter Quarter

- Some departments may also require a *SIP proposal or contract*, which should be submitted to your SIP department. Your department's SIP contract deadline may be earlier than the normal SIP registration deadline, in which case it is recommended that you turn your SIP registration form in to the Registrar's Office at the same time that you submit the contract to your department. Some departments require all SIP proposals to be submitted in the spring. **Submitting a SIP proposal to your department does not constitute registration for your SIP; you must officially register by submitting a registration form to the Registrar's Office in order to receive a grade or earn credit for a SIP.**
- The SIP registration form requires your signature and the signature of your faculty SIP supervisor (the person who will evaluate and grade your work). Many departments also designate a SIP coordinator. Find out from your department who your coordinator will be.
- Any changes to SIP registrations must be made in the Registrar's Office by the end of the drop/add period of the quarter of registration (end of the first week of Fall quarter for Summer and Fall units; end of the first week of Winter quarter for Winter units). This includes dropping a SIP, changing your department or SIP advisor, changing the number of units, etc.
- After the end of the drop/add period, you may withdraw from a SIP as you would from any other class, and the SIP

will appear on your transcript with a grade of W. The withdrawal period for SIPs ends on Friday of the first week of the term following the SIP quarter (the end of the drop/add period for the following term).

- Overloading is not permitted during a SIP quarter. Work completed over the summer as part of an extended fall SIP is the exception; students with a summer SIP unit may either take up to 3 full-unit courses or 2 full-unit courses and a fall SIP unit during the regular fall term. (Registration above 3.9 units is considered an overload.)
- A student may not take 1 unit of SIP as their only course during a quarter unless that is the only unit they need to graduate.
- If a student drops, withdraws from, or fails a SIP, the original SIP advisor is not obligated to supervise a second SIP with that student.

SIP Deadlines for Students and Faculty

- Each Department, Program, or IIM Committee is responsible for establishing and implementing specific SIP deadlines within the SIP quarter (the term in which the bulk of the work on the SIP is to take place). This may include deadlines for drafts, interim feedback, revisions, presentations, etc.
- For all SIPs, the final copy (i.e., no more revisions) is due to the SIP supervisor no later than Friday of second week of the term following the SIP quarter. For Summer SIPs, this means second week of the Fall quarter, even though Summer SIPs appear with the Fall registration. Students are expected to be completely finished with all work associated with the SIP by that time, with the possible exception of departmental or program symposia in later terms.
- Faculty shall submit Credit/No Credit grades by Friday of 6th week of the quarter following a registered SIP unit. For departments with partial SIP units extending into Spring, that partial unit grade is due by 6th week of the Spring quarter. A grade of Credit may be upgraded to Honors (e.g., after a Spring departmental symposium) until the end of Spring quarter.
- The time lag between students turning in completed SIPs and faculty deadlines for turning in grades should not be interpreted as extra time for students to make revisions to the SIP. Work on the SIP in a quarter in which the student is not registered for SIP credit is considered an “invisible overload” for the students and is against College policy.

SIP Grades

- The SIP will receive a grade of Honors (H), Credit (CR), or No Credit (NC). If you complete a SIP in two departments, you may be graded separately by each department. The SIP grade is not included in the cumulative GPA calculation, though it is recorded on the academic transcript along with the title of the project. There are no college-wide rules regarding length or breadth of paper that determine the difference between a CR and an H; the grade is determined solely by evaluators within the academic department or program, with the input of any outside mentors the student may have consulted.
- Students who register for a 2-unit SIP but only complete enough work to earn 1 unit will receive a grade of CR for one unit and a grade of NC for the other unit. Faculty may also award a CR for one unit and an H grade for a second unit of a 2-unit SIP.
- An “In-Progress” notation (IP) indicates that a SIP is continuing beyond the end of the quarter.
- Incompletes will only be issued in consultation with the faculty SIP supervisor, and only in the event of a verified serious illness or family emergency. An incomplete will not be granted for poor or neglected work.

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