

Inside Independent Learning

Meet Our IL Students

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Independent Learning students can sign up for their IL course online, anytime, from anywhere. IL students benefit from the flexibility built into our courses. They can complete their coursework at the time of day that works best for them. They can take longer to master the material than a semester schedule allows, or they can dedicate extensive time to their coursework and finish in a short period of time.

Independent Learners look to our courses to help fulfill requirements that do not fit into their regular course schedule, for courses that are not offered when they need them, to retake courses,

to see if college is right for them, to get a jump start on their education, to complete their degrees, and many other reasons.

Individual instructors can note enrollment trends in their specific course(s), but have no way of knowing how trends in their course enrollments relate to other subject areas

or the program as a whole. So, who are our students? Where do they live and how do they find IL courses?



Majority Demographics

As a UW System member with courses that are included in the UW System transfer wizard, it is not surprising that most IL students are in Wisconsin and are students at UW-System schools. Almost 60% of IL students are from Wisconsin, and just over half are enrolled at one of the UW System schools. Just under half of the IL students are in the 20-25 age range. IL students are also predominantly female: over 60% of students self-identified as female.

From this information, we can see that Independent Learning serves college-aged students and offers students opportunities to enroll and complete prerequisite courses that they are

not able to register for on their home campus. This means that, because of Independent Learning, students are able to meet their general education requirements on their own schedule and progress through their degree program as scheduled, even when a general education course is full or not offered. Students who need more time with a course's material to achieve mastery and need to retake a general education course can also stay on track in their degree programs, thanks to Independent Learning courses.



**Announcing the next
Quarterly DCS IL Instructor
Appreciation and Professional
Development Meeting:
A Working Lunch—
Communication of Instructor
Expectations**

**November 20, 1-3 pm
Room 7045, 21 N. Park Street
Madison, WI 53715**



Continuing Studies
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Minority Demographics

If approximately half of our IL students are Wisconsin college students, which students make up the other half? Independent Learning courses offer a great opportunity for high school students who are interested in taking more challenging courses and earning college credit while they complete their high school education. Independent Learning courses are also a great solution for high school students who wish to take a course that is no longer offered at their high school. Nearly 20% of Independent Learning students are under the age of 20.

Independent Learning courses are also great options for nontraditional college students, adults considering returning to college, professionals in need of continuing education credits, and adults interested in continuing education for their own personal enrichment. 32% of our learners are adult students, with an additional 2% of IL students in the 60+ age group.

As can be expected, the majority of Independent Learning students who do not live in Wisconsin live in the surrounding states: Iowa, Illinois, Michigan, and Minnesota. However, Independent

Learning currently attracts students from 48 states and nine countries, including Canada, Mexico, Uganda, and Mongolia.

As you can see, Independent Learning is a good fit for students of a wide variety of backgrounds for a wide variety of reasons. Some students who study abroad are able to stay on track with their degree programs in the U.S. because of Independent Learning courses. Some international students take Independent Learning courses to see if they are ready to study abroad in the United States, or to prove their competency in the English language.

One of the things that makes Independent Learning courses a good fit for such a wide variety of students is the dedication of individual course instructors. IL instructors are able to work with students individually on the course material, guiding student learning at a pace appropriate for each individual student. Because IL instructors teach through feedback, the feedback a student receives on IL assignments is personalized, pitched at the student's current



level of understanding, and specifically designed to guide the student toward greater understanding of the material. Often, students who do not meet the learning objectives of a specific unit have the option of resubmitting an assignment with revisions based on instructor feedback, and sometimes even retaking an exam. This makes Independent Learning a truly personalized learning experience for the student.

Coffee with Sarah

This year's schedule is as follows:
 September 23, 2015—10 am, Cargo
 October 22, 2015—2 pm, Manna Café
 November 13, 2015—10 am, Beans & Cream, SP
 December 21, 2015—10 am, Cargo
 January 19, 2016—2 pm, EVP Midvale
 February 24, 2016—2 pm, Barriques MID
 March 24, 2016—10 am, Manna Café
 April 22, 2016—2 pm, Barriques S. Park
 May 23, 2016—2 pm, Beans & Cream, SP
 June 21, 2016—10 am, EVP Midvale
 The coffee shop name abbreviations and addresses are:

- ⇒ **Manna Café**—Manna Café and Bakery, Lakewood Plaza Shopping Center, 611 N. Sherman Ave., Madison
- ⇒ **Barriques MID**—Barriques, 1901 Cayuga St. # 101, Middleton
- ⇒ **Barriques S. Park**—Barriques, 961 S. Park St., Madison
- ⇒ **Cargo**—1309 S. Park St., Madison
- ⇒ **Beans & Cream SP**—Beans n' Cream Coffeehouse, 345 Cannery Square, Sun Prairie
- ⇒ **EVP Midvale**—EVP Sequoya, 555 South Midvale Blvd., Madison



Good Practice Reminder: Recording Grades in LRMS/LPV

LRMS is the official student record system used by Independent Learning. You might be familiar with this system as "ILPV," Independent Learning Partner View, or "LPV," Learning Partner View.

In addition to recording student assignment feedback via the dropbox in D2L or Istudy, IL instructors are required to update the official student grades in LRMS. If grades are not updated in LRMS, student midterm and final exams will not be sent. Students will be delayed in completing their IL courses.

To enter grades into LRMS, go to the following website:

<https://admin.wlearn.com/logon.asp>

Then enter your individual username and password. (Most user names will be the instructor's last name followed by "_il" Contact student services if you need a new username

and password.) Once you are logged in, you can search for students using the student last name or the registration number. Open the student record and click on the appropriate course if needed. Be sure to enter assignment grades, exam grades, and lesson averages as a percent of 100. The final grade must be entered as a letter grade. Be sure to click the blue "save" button. Entering grades this way is vital in case a student contests a grade.

We are in the process of designing a pilot based on LRMS/LPV grade entry. It is our hope that a report generated through LRMS/LPV may be able to take the place of instructor tally sheets for payroll purposes. Look for more information on this pilot in coming editions of the Inside IL



Newsletter.

D2L Gem: Printing

With Independent Learning courses moving to the D2L platform, some instructors may wonder how the course can remain accessible to students who do not have ready access to the Internet or who prefer to read on paper, instead of a computer screen.

It is possible for students to print course content from their D2L course. This means that students who prefer to read the course study notes on paper can print them. It also means that students who prefer to access their courses while offline are able to open the relevant pages and save them as pdf's to their computers or jump drives.

To print a page in D2L, students should first open the page, then scroll to the bottom of the page, and select either "print" or "download."

Students can also download the study notes by clicking on the triangle that follows the "Study Notes" heading.

group of students, even after the course is moved to the online, D2L platform.



Students who want the headings of the table of contents and each unit can use the "print" icon on those pages.

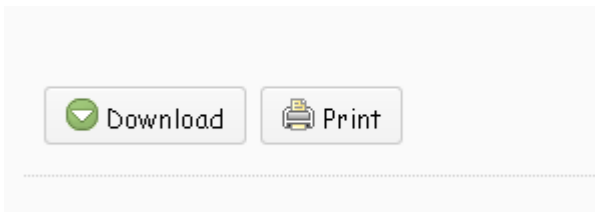


Instructors who have been with Independent Learning for some time can testify to the importance of Independent Learning courses for incarcerated students.

Incarcerated students often cannot access the Internet in order to complete their coursework, and systems are in place for serving this important

Instructors are also able to print student assignments from the dropbox, and students are able to print instructor feedback from the dropbox.

Offering Independent Learning courses in the online platform allows us to reach even more students, prevents assignments and exams from being lost in the mail, and accommodates both learners who thrive in online learning environments and students who prefer to work on paper.



Next Coffee with Sarah:

September 23, 2015—10 am,
Cargo

Cargo—1309 S. Park Street,
Madison

Save the Date:

Next DCS IL Instructor Meeting: A Working Lunch

November 20 from 1-3 pm
Room 7045, 21 N. Park St.
Madison, WI

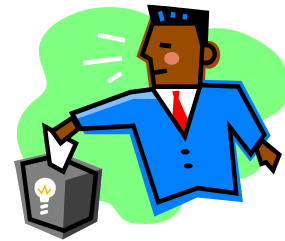
UW-Madison Distance Teaching & Learning Conference

August 9-11, 2016
Madison, WI
dtlconference.wisc.edu

Coming Next Month: Student Completion Rates

Remember, if you have any questions or concerns that you think would be of interest to your IL colleagues, please submit them for future IL newsletters.

Email ideas to:
skorpi@dcs.wisc.edu



Introducing: David Werther



My academic interests have always been at the interface of theology and philosophy. After completing a master's degree in theology, I decided to pursue graduate studies in philosophy. However, to do so, I needed to fulfill a prerequisite in logic. As I worked two jobs to pay off student loans, taking a classroom course was out of the question. A friend recommended Independent Learning and I registered for the IL logic course. Taking that course turned out to be more significant than I could have ever imagined: the course author, Prof. Keith Yandell, would become my major professor in the UW-Madison Philosophy Department, and I would eventually take over the course instruction. And that teaching assignment would lead to others in Independent Learning, such as Business Ethics and Philosophy of Religion.

When I completed my graduate work in philosophy, I continued to teach Independent Learning courses and worked in the UW-Madison Division of Continuing Studies as a program manager in Independent Learning. As a manager, I had the pleasure of meeting and working with some very talented and dedicated instructors: Jac Bulk, Jeanne Connors, Irene Fraczek, Matt Hogan, Stan Nichols, and Jackie Splitter among others.

For the last five years, I worked in the UW-Extension Division of Continuing Studies, Outreach & E-Learning. As a big-picture person, I appreciated the opportunity to work with gifted colleagues in student services, program management, marketing, and course development, and to become better acquainted with the UW

System: visiting most of the 26 campuses, serving on a system-wide committee on remedial education, and participating in the launch of the Flexible Option Program. Off the job, I kept my academic interests alive, coediting two books: *The Christian Worldview: Analysis, Assessment and Development* with Mark Linville, and *C. S. Lewis's List: The Ten Books That Influenced Him Most* with my wife, Susan Werther.

One of the highlights of my work at UW-Extension was meeting Dr. Sarah Korpi. I quickly came to admire Sarah for her commitment to academic excellence, service to students, and her administrative and technical know-how.

After five years of administrative work at UW-Extension, I longed for a return to teaching and more direct contact with students. In my new position, I will be teaching philosophy, working more directly with students, and assisting Sarah Korpi as she continues to grow the Independent Learning Program. I am overjoyed to be back in the Division of Continuing Studies and look forward to working with all of you.