

BACHELOR OF INDEPENDENT STUDIES (BIS)

The Bachelor of Independent Studies (BIS) Program is the State University System External Degree Program. The universities currently involved are Florida International University, Florida State University, the University of Florida, the University of North Florida, and the University of South Florida. The administrative office for the statewide program is located at USF in Tampa.

Founded in 1968, the external degree program is for adults who find it difficult to attend regular university classes because of career or family commitments. The BIS student proceeds at his/her own pace and, for the most part, in his/her own setting. The exception is the summer seminars, which require periodic, short-term campus residence.

Admission Procedures

Applicants must qualify for admission to the University of South Florida and for admission to the B.I.S. Program. The USF Director of Admissions rules on the admission of an applicant to the university. The BIS Committee rules on admission of an applicant to the BIS Program. BIS applicants typically welcome the challenge of liberal studies and the rigor of independent study. BIS students pay regular USF tuition for undergraduate students.

Mechanisms for Recognizing Prior Learning

Individuals with an A.A. degree from a State of Florida community or junior college, and Registered Dental Hygienists, Registered Nuclear Medicine Technologists, Registered Nurses, Registered Radiologic Technologists, and Registered Respiratory Therapists with an A.S. degree from a state-approved program qualify for a "two-plus-two interface" with BIS requirements. In other words, those with an appropriate associate's degree complete two substantive study areas involving two tutorials and two seminars. The two study areas (Social Sciences & Natural Sciences or Humanities & Social Sciences or Natural Sciences & Humanities) are stipulated by the BIS Committee. The BIS Committee normally picks the two areas in which a student has the least background.

The Program is academically responsible to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The BIS Committee is advisory to the Provost.

For further information, contact the State University System, External Degree Program, Bachelor of Independent Studies (BIS) located at HMS 443, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida 33620-8400. Telephone: 813-974-4058. E-mail: bis@luna.cas.usf.edu

Recommended Prerequisites (State Mandated Common Prerequisites)

Students wishing to transfer to USF should complete the A.A. degree at the community college. Some courses required for the major may also meet General Education Requirements thereby transferring maximum hours to the university. If students transfer without an A.A. degree and have fewer than 60 semester hours of acceptable credit, the students must meet the university's entering freshman requirements including ACT or SAT test scores, GPA, and course requirements.