INSTRUCTORS:  
Jason Pallas  jason.pallas@gmail.com  
Mary Scott-Boria  msboria@aol.com  
(Each individual instructor will provide a detailed schedule and additional information regarding their class).

CREDITS:  Most students receive 4 credits or the equivalent of one regular course on campus.

Meeting Times:  Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons for the first 7 weeks of the program then individual/group meetings (Please check with the instructor as well as the Chicago Program Google site calendar for specific dates/times.)

Description:  The Independent Study Project (ISP) is designed to give students the opportunity to delve more deeply into a topic, a field, or discipline of their choosing. Students practice using the resources of a major metropolitan area to propose, complete and present a phase or phases of a substantial, self-generated professional, scholarly or creative project.

Combined ISP Group Meeting (all workshops are held at the CP office)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, September 3rd</td>
<td>ISP Orientation</td>
<td>11am – 12:30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, September 10th</td>
<td>Initial Expertise Sharing</td>
<td>2pm – 4pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, September 22nd</td>
<td>ISP Proposal/Project Management Workshop</td>
<td>10am – 12pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, October 29th</td>
<td>ISP Interviewing Workshop</td>
<td>2pm-4pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, November 24th</td>
<td>ISP Presentation Workshop</td>
<td>10am – 12pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, December 7th</td>
<td>ISP Symposium</td>
<td>all day</td>
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LEARNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Identify a topic of inquiry relevant to the Chicago experience.
- Develop self-directed skills in primary and secondary research, identifying local resources, developing and executing a plan of inquiry and contributing to the knowledge base of the city.
- Keep track of work and work habits.
- Document and present work.
- Seek, receive, and use criticism from peers and experts.
- Effectively critique your own work.
- Plan projects effectively (making use of time, money, materials, people, and institutions).
- Work independently.
- Give an effective presentation of work and analysis of an issue or topic.

TYPES OF ISP'S

Professional:  A focused project that provides a valuable contribution to an organization and enables the student to gain professional experience. Professional ISP's are project-based and require student to work in conjunction with faculty approved third party beneficiaries. Students must provide details of the agreement such as timeline, deliverables and submission of final product with the third party as part of the
ISP proposal. Examples include: developing marketing materials such as newsletters, websites, brochures; creating a volunteer or employee curriculum/training session or guide; analyzing data and making recommendations; designing an employee/volunteer/client satisfaction survey, etc.

**Creative:** A project that involves some form of creative expression that has a specific purpose and is meaningfully connected to the final body of work. Students working on creative ISP’s will be responsible for documenting the evolution of the project, and reflecting on the creative process as well as being accountable for industry/professional standards. Examples include: A compilation of original photos; audio, video, podcast documentary that tells a compelling story about an issue or situation you are passionate about; production of a theatrical, musical or artistic performance; paintings, drawings, poetry, etc.

**Scholarly:** Developing a research question, utilizing primary and secondary documented sources to support the analysis, and establishing conclusions. Scholarly ISP’s take the form of a formal research paper no less than 10 pages in length, double-spaced, and no more than 12-point font. Past ISP Titles have included: “The Chicago 2016 Olympic Bid: An Analysis of the Community Benefits Agreement”; “Subprime Lending in Chicago and the Disproportionate Impact on Neighborhoods”; “Issues and Images: Chicago Artists Contemporary Portraiture”

**Experiential:** Active engagement and exploration around an issue, organization, training certification or career preparation. Examples include: A social action project, a significant volunteer experience with a Chicago non-profit organization – ie: participation in a mentoring/tutoring program, performing an ongoing service to a designated population, or life skill challenge – ie: attending training/workshops to enhance or build relevant skills. Students choosing this option are expected to commit a minimum of 50 hours towards the project.

**NOTE:** Internships sites can be an extremely useful resource for students as potential projects are considered for completion of the ISP component. Students are encouraged to leverage these opportunities. It is essential that the ISP have separate, distinct tasks and expectations from the Internship component. Students interested in leveraging their Internship as a resources for any type of ISP, must receive approval from the ISP faculty member who will verify the project with the Internship faculty member.

**ISP REQUIREMENTS:**

**Submission of a Formal ISP Proposal:** Your formal proposal should describe the objective of this project including some contextualization of your topic (how is this relevant to the community and/or city?), include a bibliography that identifies relevant resources (organizations, people, written, audio and visual materials) and outline all relevant work/tasks, including a working timeline. At this time, you should also submit your list of questions for your in-depth interview and a draft of your thesis statement.

**Completion of an In-Depth Interview:** You are required to conduct at least one, one hour, in-depth interview with a person related to the ISP topic. Your instructor can provide support for your interview prospects. The goal of the interview is to assist in anchoring your ISP through conducting primary research. You are required to submit a detailed summary of the interview containing the name of the person, date and location of the interview and the questions asked. It must be a minimum of three- five typed, double-spaced pages. The name of this person must be included in the formal proposal, see above, and approved by your instructor.

**Documentation:** You will be monitoring your time working on the ISP and should average 7-10 hours of work per week on your project equating to a minimum of at least 50 hours. This time will normally be outside of formal class or consultation sessions. You are required to keep a log of your ISP activities and the hours spent performing them. Logs will be reviewed at your consultation meeting with your instructor and will be factored into your final grade at semester’s end. You will find that an honest accounting of your
time will expose your work habits and tendencies. In addition, knowing precisely how much time and energy it took to bring your project to completion will allow you to plan future projects more effectively.

**Bibliography:** All ISP's must be accompanied by a comprehensive bibliography containing no less than 5 credible sources in addition to the in-depth interview.

**Project Length:** Research papers should be no less than 10 pages in length. For projects that are creative or professional, consult your Practicum leader for guidance on length of submissions. Academic guidelines must be followed. Students are required to submit an abstract stating the purpose and overview of their project.

**Project Title and Abstract:** All final submissions of ISP's must be accompanied by a title and a two-three sentence description of the project and methods used. Final abstracts should be submitted along with your final ISP.

**Presentation & Visual Support:** You are expected to publicly share the key aspects of learning that relate to your ISP. Each student's presentation should focus the process of their ISP (interest in the topic, what they discovered/learned through completing the project). Presentations will be limited to 5 minutes with opportunities for the audience to ask questions. You will also be required to create a visual element that effectively complements showcasing your learning (again focusing on the process of completing your project).

**GRADING:**

**Chicago Program Grading Scale**

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F -</td>
<td>59% and below</td>
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**Grading Interpretation**

**A:** The work is outstanding and exceeds the stated criteria in each assessment area. The information can be easily interpreted and is well organized.

**B:** The work meets all standards and exceeds them in a few areas.

**C:** The work meets all standards and the stated criteria. There are no areas of weakness and there are also no outstanding elements.

**D:** The work is significantly deficient in some way.

**F:** The work does not meet the assignment requirements in any way.

**Academic Honesty**

Please familiarize yourself with the ACM Chicago program policy on Academic Honesty as stated in the Student Handbook. When in doubt find a way to give credit to an idea's originator, even if that person's work is in the public domain. This may require some creative citations in non-written projects. Remember that is is also considered academically dishonest to recycle work you have completed for another class, past, or present, here or there, without permission of the instructor. Any changes or exceptions to this syllabus are at the discretion of the instructor.

**ISP GRADE DISTRIBUTION**
Pre – ISP:
Preparation Assignments (See individual faculty section for detail) 200 points

ISP:
ISP Proposal
Due 10/8 75 points

Individual and group meetings (average)
Ongoing 150 points

Interview Write-up
Due 11/19 150 points

Presentation & Visual
Due 12/7 200 points

Title and Abstract
Due 12/9 25 points

Final ISP
Due 12/9 200 points

Total Project Related Points 800 points

TOTAL ISP POINTS 1,000 Points

Final Grade Disputes

Students have the right to appeal final grades for courses. They must do so in writing within 30 days of receiving the grade and provide rationale for the basis of the dispute.

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND PROCESS:

ISP Evaluation Criteria: (review ISP grading rubric)
Your ISP Instructor will serve as your primary advisor on your ISP project. During the first portion of the course the faculty member will begin to encourage you to begin considering potential ISP topics. The full ISP proposal must be submitted to your ISP faculty leader by week 7. You are expected to consult with your ISP Instructor prior to submission of your ISP proposal. Follow-up sessions will be required to report on the progress of your project. Some sessions will be individual meetings and other sessions will be focused on sharing with the rest of the group. It is important to stay in consistent communication with your ISP Instructors so that they know whom you are working with and where you are going for assistance. Be sure to copy your ISP Instructor on all email correspondence you may have with professionals in your chosen field. Your ISP Instructor functions as your coach, and must be kept abreast of all your activities, triumphs as well as stumbles.

Throughout your ISP, considerable emphasis is placed on the value of critiquing both your processes and your product. You are expected to actively seek out feedback from experts in your field and from your peers, as well as engage in rigorous self-critique. Below are the five criteria used to evaluate Independent Study Projects. Please refer to the grading rubric for the ISP component for more specific assessment information.

- Level of Challenge
- Level of Execution (process, product and documentation)
- Level of Engagement with Chicago Resources (at least one face to face interview is required).
- Level of Critique
“Making Space and Innovating In Chicago”

Fall 2015
Orientation Week: August 31 – September 4
Final ISP presentations: Monday, December 7

Instructor: Jason Pallas
Contact Information: jason.pallas@gmail.com 832.628.3038 (cell)

Meeting Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons/evenings, and select special events (meeting time and place will vary – check Chicago Program Google site)
ACM classrooms and offices: 11 E. State Street
Office hours following class and by appointment

Any changes or exceptions to this syllabus are at the discretion of the instructor.

“Chicago is an artful construct. A city grown from an onion-infested swamp, burnt to the ground and rebuilt. A city shaped by industry and railroads, then reshaped by urban renewal and interstate highway construction. A city shaped by segregation and neighborhoods seemingly transported whole from some distant motherland. The parks and lakefront, lovely meadows and beaches, coyly looking natural but all designed in some workshop and built on landfill, over railroad tracks and on the site of defunct factories. The city with its miles of walls and rolling stock challenges artists to create.”
- Nathan Mason

Course Description

Under close mentoring each student will develop a substantial creative project of his or her own design due at the end of the semester and presented professionally as part of the ISP Festival. Past projects have included a series of short films, a book of poetry or comics, in-depth creative investigations in drawing, painting, ceramics, etc., a series of stand-up performances, completing the first draft of a novel, creating and operating a community website, etc... The ISP should be part of a trajectory, springboarding from your previous work and interests, taking advantage of the unique opportunities and resources present in Chicago, and propelling you into new heights for future explorations. The ISP process should involve a vigorous personal engagement alongside the supportive network of your peers, professors, and program staff. The process of pursuing your ISP will involve experiential immersion in Chicago, new ways of thinking and learning, and will be a complement to your on-campus education. Additionally, it cannot be overemphasized how often the Seminar and/or Core curriculum as well as Internship related experiences have influenced, inspired and informed past ISPs.

We kickstart the semester with group outings, readings, discussions, and exercises meant to familiarize
ourselves with Chicago and to formulate an ISP proposal. We engage in mini-sections with creative projects meant to build some of the skills and community necessary to successfully accomplish an ISP. These sections allow us to conduct multiple field visits and investigate various aspects of the creative process with the goal of defining a direction for the project. We meet often with the other ISP section to discuss project progress and get peer feedback. And we meet individually each week throughout the process to track project development and discuss remaining steps. We present the products of our labor at the end of the semester - first to our ISP group for dedicated critique and discussion, and then to the entire program for polished presentations and questions.

**Resources and Readings**

This course does not have any required texts that need to be purchased or read in advance. However, the instructor will regularly assign essays, articles, podcasts, videos, websites, and other supplementary materials to guide group discussion. Moreover, the instructor will assign a good deal of individual research dependent on each student’s ISP. Depending on the shape your ISP takes, you may need to invest in referential or creative resources. You will determine what makes the most sense for your specific project, in consultation with the instructor.

**Scheduling, Topics, Grading, and Absence Policy**

By default, the class will meet on Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons. However, there are many occasions when we will need to alter the date or time of our meetings to take advantage of opportunities in the city. The course schedule is maintained electronically on a Google Calendar to allow maximum curricular flexibility and the most efficient use of Chicago. The calendar includes times and locations (by address) of each class session. Remember to allow plenty of time to navigate Chicago and always plan to arrive at least 10 minutes early, especially to unfamiliar places. It is your responsibility to check the calendar regularly to avoid schedule conflict and know where you are headed.

Roughly the first third of the course will be devoted to an interdisciplinary group “Innovation Workshop”, consisting of field visits, classroom discussions, and creative projects. This group portion of the class establishes a framework to explore the ISP process toward a defined goal. The second half of the course will be dedicated to the development of individual ISPs. While there will not be required mini-projects during this part of the course, we will continue to conduct some site visits and have group discussions and critiques.

Should students have a conflict with the grading of an assignment, course content, pedagogical approach, etc. they are expect to discuss the issue with the faculty member directly. If the conflict is unresolved students should are encouraged to speak with CP Director, Robyne Hart. Students have the right to appeal final grades for courses. They must do so in writing within 30 days of receiving the grade and provide rationale for the basis of the dispute.

Absences will only be excused at the instructor’s discretion and in advance of the date in question. You must communicate ahead of time why you need to miss a gathering, and it is your responsibility to determine what you missed and make it up. It is also your responsibility to check the Chicago Program Google Calendar regularly to make sure you know of all scheduled activities in this program. Outside jobs are not encouraged and will not be accepted as excuses for missing class and/or events.