Contract for Independent Study  
For Undergraduate Thesis or Undergraduate Readings

Background
The ability for Undergraduates to engage in one-on-one directed readings or senior thesis with a Professor is one of the distinct advantages offered by Rensselaer. Unlike classes, however, the meetings with professors for these courses are not regular and the exact amount and nature and timetable of the work is often defined as the work progresses. For strong students, this can be an ideal experience. However, as the rest of their curriculum proceeds at an unremitting pace, with twice-weekly meetings, assignments, papers, and exams, it is far too easy for the Independent Work, with its looser deadlines and largely self-determined tasks, to fall by the wayside. These are the problems addressed by the document online at: http://homepages.rpi.edu/~grayw/ugrad/ugrad_indpdnt_studies.html.

Initial here to indicate that you have read and understood the online document: _______

Meetings
At regularly spaced intervals and not less than 4 times each semester of your Thesis or Readings, we will meet to discuss your progress on your project. These meetings will be scheduled at the beginning of the semester.

Be sure to contact me 7-10 days before our scheduled meeting to make sure that it has not been preempted and needs to be rescheduled. Note that these 4 meetings are the regularly scheduled progress report meetings. We may have other meetings as your project requires that are not regularly scheduled. These other meetings will be in addition to the 4 regularly scheduled ones.

Complete First Draft
A complete first draft of your thesis will be due to me at least 4 weeks before the end-of-classes for that semester. The top grade possible for the thesis will be decremented by one grade increment (e.g., from A to A- to B+ to B to B- to . . . for each weekday the first draft is late). You should treat this date as you would any other hard date for an exam or assignment for any other class.

Additional Drafts
One to two additional drafts will be required as needed. In each case, we will set goals to be accomplished and deadlines for those goals to be met and for the next draft to be handed in. In no case will I ask you to write, nor will I read, more than three drafts. Likewise, the final draft (whether it is the 2nd or 3rd) will be due to me not later than one (1) week before the end of classes.

Final Paper
It will be your responsibility to deliver your final draft to me within 4 days from the end of classes. No late submissions will be accepted.

I have read the online material and this document and I will work with Professor Gray to complete this project in an exemplary manner.

____________________________________________________
Your Name

____________________________________________________
Your Signature

____________________________________________________
Today’s Date