



**The John Marshall Law School
Center for Information Technology and Privacy Law**

**IT 897 – Independent Research in Information Technology Law
Guidelines for Independent Research Projects**

Students in the LL.M. and M.S. programs in Information Technology Law (including joint degree J.D./LL.M. students) may register for IT 897, Independent Research in Information Technology Law, with the permission of the program director. Students may register for either 1 or 2 semester hours of credit in IT 897 in a semester or summer term. A student who has previously received credit for IT 897 may register for additional IT 897 credit in a subsequent term for a different research project. However, a maximum of 3 credit hours for IT 897 may be counted toward the LL.M. or M.S. degree, and a maximum combined total of 4 credit hours may be counted for Independent Research (IT 897) and Journal of Computer & Information Law (IT 818).

An independent research project must be approved by the program director. An independent research project requires scholarly research resulting in a quality written product that makes a significant contribution to the field of information technology or privacy law. The appropriate length of a paper that results from an independent research project will vary depending upon the nature of the project. However, it is expected that a 1-credit paper will normally be at least 6,000 words in length (about 20 to 30 pages, depending on type size), and 2-credit paper will normally be at least 10,000 words (exclusive of footnotes in both instances).

An independent research project is to be completed under the supervision of a full-time or adjunct faculty member. The student should submit the topic and a timetable within the first two weeks of the semester, and both are subject to approval by the faculty member. ***In some instances, the supervising faculty member may be assigned by the program director after the student has proposed a topic.*** The timetable should include, at a minimum, dates for the submission of a scope memorandum, an initial draft, a revised draft, and the completed paper, with reasonable time for feedback and revision following the submission of each draft. The due date for the completed paper ordinarily should be no later than the last day of classes for the semester, although it may be extended to as late as the last day of exams with the approval of the program director. Four copies of the completed paper are to be submitted: one for the faculty supervisor, one for the Center Director, one for the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and one for the Records Office.