Independent Study Project

Today we are going to be starting something quite different from what you are probably used to doing in a classroom.  We are starting our independent study projects.  The goal behind this project is to challenge you to take control of some of your own learning, inspire yourself to try something that you wouldn’t normally do, and develop a creative environment that will help develop valuable learning skills.

Based off the idea originally started by 3M and carried on to this day by large industry leading companies such as google this project gives you the autonomy to pursue your own passion.  There will be requirements and deadlines to meet along the way but ultimately you have control over what you do for this project and how you go about doing it.

Basic rules:

1. You will spend time once a week or every other week
2. You may work alone or with a small group.
   * Decide carefully.  If you choose a small group, you will have to compromise with your group and deal with other personalities.  If you work alone, you have complete autonomy but you are responsible for the outcome.
   * Is this person a worker or floater?
   * Can I get along with this person for the entire semester?
   * Is this person going to keep on track or distract me?
   * This is not about hanging out with friends, but making something really cool.
3. Choose a project that is new to you and something you wouldn’t normally do in another academic class.
   * If you are stuck, do some research on educational 20% projects and take another look at what Google has done.
4. You must produce a product or achieve some sort of goal.
5. Write up a proposal that includes a purpose, audience, timeline, and resources you will need to complete the project.
6. If you know of someone who can act as a mentor or guide for you that can be a great help. There will be many areas that you are interested in that I might not know much about.
7. Reflect and track the progress of your project throughout. We will do this through updates on our edublogs.
8. If, at any moment, you feel lost, overwhelmed, or uninspired, talk to me and we can find a solution. I’ll be able to help guide you but won’t be giving you a specific idea for your project.
9. At the end of the year, you will present your project and reflect on the process in a five-minute TED-style talk.
10. Failure is an option.  Simply learning from your mistakes teaches you a lot.