Choosing a Concentration

Thursday, October 8, 2020
Advising Programs Office
Concentration Declaration: A Sophomore Year Milestone
A student’s concentration is a commitment to a particular discipline, field, or specialization. All concentrations provide students with opportunities for appreciating, assimilating, and making applications of a coherent body of knowledge.

Harvard offers more than 3,700 courses in 50 concentrations within and across the following disciplines:

- Arts and Humanities
- Engineering and Applied Sciences
- Social Sciences
- Sciences
The Concentration Experience

- Courses required
- Thesis
- Research opportunities
- Advising structure
- Co-curricular opportunities
  - Study Abroad
  - Internships
  - Public Service
  - Student groups
- Community
Concentration Declaration: How to Think About It
Concentration Declaration: How to Think About It

- What questions should you ask?
- Who do you ask?
- How do you frame the conversation?
Questions for Pre-concentration advisers

- What are the different “tracks” I might complete as I fulfill concentration requirements? E.g. pre-professional/thesis/non-thesis/elective, etc.
- How can I best balance studying a breadth of subjects and exploring particular interests in sufficient depth?
- How do your department’s course offerings align with my interests?
- What are some opportunities for me to develop/explore new interests?
- Is there a way for me to get involved in research? (whether in a lab, or working with a local community, or joining an archival/library project)
- What is the process for completing a thesis?
- What are the most challenging aspects of completing this coursework, and what departmental resources are available to help students develop the most crucial skills necessary to thrive in your program?
- What have past concentrators of your program gone on to do after graduation?
- How is this concentration different from similar/adjacent fields of study? (E.g. applied math v. engineering v. computer science, or English v. History and Literature v. Comparative Literature). What can I do here that would be unavailable to me if I declare concentration in one of these adjacent fields?
The Process of Concentration Declaration

- Concentration declaration process
- Not streamlining or condensing.
- Rather, figuring out:
  - Which settings
  - With which people
  - In which ways you like learning and thinking the most

**Question: How do you think?**

- Utilize your resources!
  - Director of Undergraduate Studies
  - Peer Concentration Advisors
  - Sophomore Advisors
  - More
Concentration Declaration: How to Declare
Declaring Your Concentration

Declaration of Concentration Due for o...

Thursday, November 19, 2020 11:59pm to 11:50pm

I'm Interested

Bachelor of Arts
Harvard College:
Bachelor of Arts
Expected Graduation Date:
5/28/2020
Social Class:
2020
Year In School:
Junior
House:
Winkley House

Concentration(s):

Secondary Field(s):

Declare Concentration:
Declare Secondary:

Academic Requirements

The advising report tracks progress towards Harvard College requirements and does not include concentration requirements at this time. Concentrations may view the courses being counted toward their concentration for individual students in the concentration work center. If you have any questions regarding the advising report, please email enrollment@fas.harvard.edu.

Note that this report might be blocked by your browser’s pop-up blocker. See directions for turning off your popup blocker for help.
Declaring Your Concentration, continued

Some concentrations require additional actions in advance of completing the Declaration of Concentration form.
Concentration Declaration: Resources
Possible Conversation Points:

- How your concentration choice aligns with your academic goals
- Balance and Intensity of schedule (overall and each term)
- How this plan aligns with your experience and preparation
- Your motivations as you plan each semester/build an academic plan -- and how that fits into academic/intellectual pursuits each semester, during your 8 semesters at Harvard, and beyond
- Ways you can pursue academic interests outside of coursework -- e.g. internships, volunteer opportunities, study abroad programs, and fellowships
- How to identify and approach a potential mentor, resources for academic support when struggling with a particular skill, how best to utilize office hours, how to find a study buddy or group
Virtual Resources

- Visit the Harvard College Handbook for Students
- Connect with pre-concentration advisers
- Explore Fields of Study information for pre-concentrators
- Check out concentration websites (linked on Fields of Study pages)
- Participate in concentration declaration events to learn about opportunities and experiences in the concentration, as well as the declaration procedure.
Concentration Declaration Events on College Calendar
Questions?