

Independent Concentration Proposal Outline

- 1. Name of Concentration:** A title concisely describing the area of study addressed by the concentration.
- 2. Description of the Academic Aim of the Concentration**

This should include a clear description (one to two paragraphs) of the academic or scholarly goal of this concentration.
- 3. Justification for Creating a New Concentration**
 - a. A brief statement of your personal interest in this area
 - b. A statement of why this program of study cannot be completed through an existing concentration at Brown.
- 4. The Concentration in Context:** Description of the state of this potential area of study in the larger academic/intellectual world. What is the current state of this interest among scholars/practitioners in the field? What relevance does this concentration have for the broader academic community?
- 5. Research Methods and Related Disciplines:** What research methods/forms of inquiry will scholars use for academic work in this concentration? This section may include a discussion of research methods/theories from other disciplines as well as a discussion of courses and/or texts from other disciplines (as described in the Course List and Bibliography) that will be used to complete the concentration.
- 6. List of Core Courses and Related Courses**
 - a. Core Courses would be those courses required to complete the concentration. These can be both content and method courses. There should be at least ten courses, both introductory and upper-level.
 - b. Related Courses would include those courses that expand but are not essential to the concentration. There can be up to five related courses.
 - c. These lists should be annotated with brief descriptions of the academic material covered by each course, and the way(s) in which each of these courses is relevant to the proposed Independent Concentration.
- 7. Annotated Bibliography**
 - a. List at least ten books and/or articles, which you have already read or plan to read, central to your proposed concentration. Use standard bibliographic format:

Author. Title. Place: Publisher, date.

- b. This bibliography should be annotated with a brief description (1-2 sentences) of the way(s) in which each text is relevant to your concentration.
- c. Consult the *Chicago Manual of Style* or a similar style book (available at the Rock) for guidance on standard and advanced bibliographic formatting.

8. Capstone Project Proposal OR Honors Thesis Proposal, one page maximum.

Students doing Independent Concentrations **are required to do a one-semester “capstone” project, usually in the senior year.** The term capstone refers to any kind of extended project that draws on what you have learned in your concentration. An independent study culminating in a research paper is one obvious type of capstone. A performance or art opening is another. And, depending on your goals, a focused internship or other kind of educational work experience could qualify as a capstone. In the construction and implementation of the capstone project, the student works closely with a faculty member, often the faculty sponsor, to bring together the central themes of the concentration. Capstone projects are registered as one-semester Independent Study courses in the sponsor or advisor’s department.

OR

Instead of a one-semester capstone project, a student may choose to pursue honors in the concentration. **This requires a two-semester honors thesis.** It also requires three faculty readers of the student’s selection to be the honors committee (the advisor and two other readers of the thesis). One or more of the readers may be the sponsor(s) of the Independent Concentration. It is customary for the advisor of the thesis to serve as chair of the honors committee. The chair coordinates the evaluation of the thesis and submits the recommendation of the group to the student and to the IC Program at the end of the year, around the end of April. Dean Rodriguez should be consulted for the exact date each year. The student is responsible for identifying these three readers early in the senior year, and is advised to keep in touch with them during the research and writing of the thesis. The student registers for the two semesters of honors coursework in the thesis advisor’s department.