

Concentration/Certificate Advisor Handbook

2024-25



BROWN



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THE CONCENTRATION/CERTIFICATE ADVISOR'S ROLE

Thank you for serving as a concentration/certificate advisor or part of a concentration/certificate advising team. It is an important job, and doing it well can significantly impact our students' academic experience (and future lives).

As a concentration/certificate advisor, you deliver information about your academic program to current and prospective undergraduates. More broadly, as the primary academic advisor for your concentrators, you play a key role in providing academic advice and guidance, as well as in nurturing a sense of belonging, connection and self-efficacy in our students. In light of the increased pressures on your time, we have prepared this handbook to make the job a little easier for you. It provides an overview of the issues that you will typically face during the year, along with best practices culled from exceptional advisors across the University.

Brown's Open Curriculum is one of our great assets, embodying a philosophy of education that places intellectual weight on a student's right to choose. The choice of a concentration thus represents a major event of undergraduate academic life; the process of "declaring" is something both students and advisors should take seriously. Students must account for courses they will take and also — more crucially — write an essay contextualizing their concentration choice. You can make this process more meaningful for students by taking the time to meet with them to talk about their essays. These initial encounters will set the tone for your advising relationship.

You can also make a student's choice more meaningful by clarifying the dimensions of your field of study. What are its basic aims, or modes of inquiry? How do the requirements reflect these aims? The answers may seem obvious to you, but many undergraduates have only begun to explore your field. Our hope is that Brown students will expand their intellectual horizons while deepening their analytic capacities through the work they do in a discipline. You can play an important role by explaining disciplinary distinctions to students. We also suggest that you encourage your concentrators to pursue independent research, write an advanced paper, complete a creative project or draw together some aspect of your field's intellectual traditions through an integrated series of courses. Your encouragement will go a long way toward challenging students to get the most out of their education.

Closely monitoring your students can serve as another form of encouragement. Electronic tools such as [ASK](#) will aid you in this work. Some students may ask you to evaluate courses they have taken elsewhere in order to receive transfer credit from Brown or to satisfy concentration requirements, or both. Juniors and seniors may have questions about your honors program and timeline or need help formulating a capstone project. Please also consider pointing your concentrators toward research and fellowship opportunities, internships and other experiences. They will need you to clear them for graduation, whether in the fall or spring semester, so reviewing



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and discussing their concentration requirements regularly will ensure there are no surprises during their senior year. This handbook contains suggestions for managing all of these tasks.

Perhaps the most important thing you can do as an advisor is to get to know your concentrators. Because so many Brown undergraduates are self-motivated, we may mistakenly think that they neither need nor want our advice. The past few years have reminded us all of the importance of community and of mentoring relationships. Students regularly report that thoughtful mentoring from concentration advisors has been essential in helping them to choose courses, find fellowship and research opportunities and even select career paths. In other words, your efforts to reach out to concentrators and to connect them with other students and faculty in your department makes a difference.

College staff members are pleased to help, so feel free to call us with your questions and concerns. A list of contacts accompanies this booklet. We wish you and your students great success in the coming year.

Rashid Zia

Dean of the College



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Advising Fundamentals

ADVISOR ORIENTATION

The College offers an orientation session to support your work as concentration and certificate advisors. Those of you who serve as Directors of Undergraduate Studies for your department or program will also be invited to a series of gatherings throughout the academic year. During orientation, you will be able to ask questions, share advising tips with other faculty and review ASK, the electronic advising tool.

In addition to an orientation for new concentration/certificate advisors, the College offers two optional sessions a semester to facilitate connections and conversations among the Directors of Undergraduate Studies, other concentration/certificate advisors, and the managers associated with concentration/certificate processes. Topics vary year to year; examples of past topics include usages of the concentration declaration form in ASK, supporting F-1 visa holders with work authorization requests, supporting the course proposal and transfer credit approval process, supporting concentrators interested in fellowships, and strengthening connections between concentrators and faculty.

ASK: BROWN'S ELECTRONIC ADVISING TOOL

<p>Welcome Message</p>	<p>B I [List Bullets] [List Numbered] [List Lower] [List Upper] [Link] [Image]</p> <p>Your advisory assignment has been made via ASK. Please contact the advisor to whom you were assigned, and proceed with a program plan and writing up your concentration forms (or revising it) in ASK.</p>
<p>Override Required</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Override required</p>
<p>Override Required Message</p>	<p>B I [List Bullets] [List Numbered] [List Lower] [List Upper] [Link] [Image]</p> <p>Prospective concentrators should visit the BUE Advising & Declarations page to self-schedule a concentration planning meeting.</p>
<p>Advisor Selection Method</p>	<p>No Student Selection</p>
<p>Course Plan Message</p>	<p>B I [List Bullets] [List Numbered] [List Lower] [List Upper] [Link] [Image]</p> <p>Visit the Biology website for more details on the concentration: http://www.brown.edu/academics/biology/undergraduate-education/</p>
<p>Non-Brown Course Rules</p>	<p><i>If your concentration allows students to count transfer courses, APs, internships, etc., describe the relevant rules and expectations here. This should include documentation required for your review (i.e. work completed, syllabi, etc.), as well as any restrictions you have (i.e., a cap on the number of transfer courses, etc.).</i></p> <p>B I [List Bullets] [List Numbered] [List Lower] [List Upper] [Link] [Image]</p>



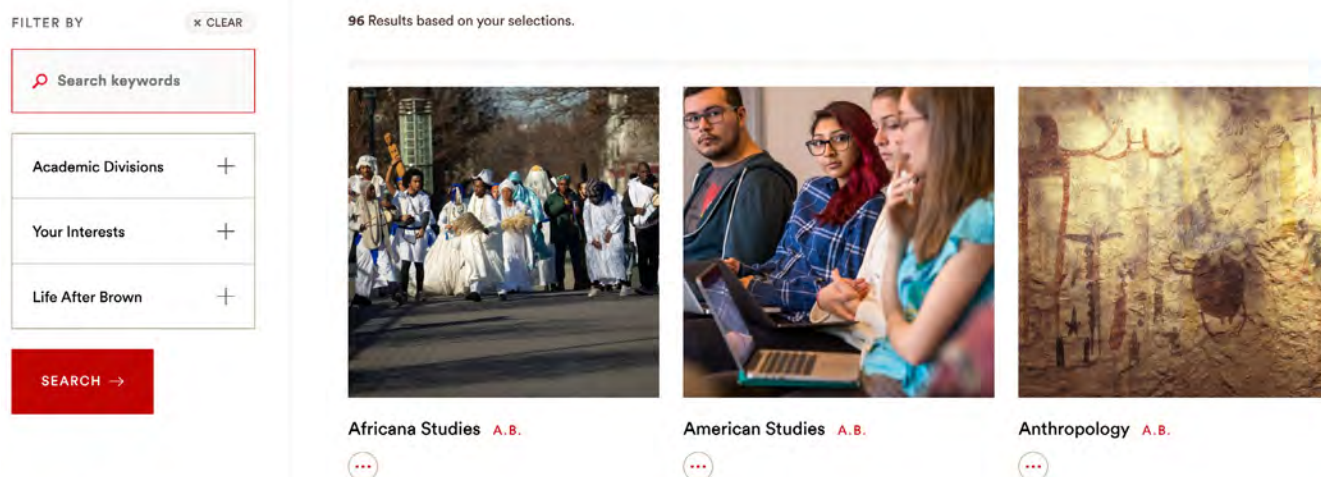
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ASK (short for “Advising Sidekick”) is an electronic advising tool that allows you to access student information, including your concentrator’s declarations, internal academic records, course enrollment and transfer credit approvals and a portfolio of past work. In addition to viewing student records, you may customize several key features, such as the advisor assignment method. Advisors are able to view students’ work all the way back to the summer prior to matriculation, and thus have concrete evidence of students’ growth over time. An electronic record also allows your department to document and keep track of approved exceptions or other nuances as advisors change due to sabbaticals and other transitions. You can also keep notes of your advising conversations with your advisee in their ASK profile. A set of user guides with screenshots and instructions is available at brown.edu/go/askhelp. For additional assistance, email focal_point@brown.edu.

Advising Sidekick | ask.brown.edu

FOCAL POINT: BROWN’S CONCENTRATION SEARCH TOOL

Most students will begin their research on Brown’s various concentrations by visiting the Undergraduate Programs: Focal Point website. Focal Point allows students to explore the many intellectual paths they can take at Brown. The site provides summaries of concentration and certificate offerings, enrollment statistics and the career paths taken by recent alumni, linking to data gathered by the Center for Career Exploration and the Office of Institutional Research.



Please be sure to email focal_point@brown.edu if there are changes to your concentration that should be reflected on the site. Note that the listing of requirements connects directly to the University Bulletin, which reflects the official requirements approved by the College Curriculum Council (CCC). The CCC must approve any changes.

Undergraduate Programs: Focal Point | brown.edu/undergraduate-programs



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The Concentration Declaration

All students are required to have an approved concentration by the middle of their fourth semester in order to preregister for their fifth semester. Concentration declaration is the culminating event of the sophomore year — the official beginning of your advising relationship with concentrators. It is also your first major responsibility as an advisor, and it can typically consume a fair amount of time during the spring semester. For students for whom the fourth semester is the fall term (typically because of prior leavetaking) the concentration declaration deadline falls in mid-October. However, this is typically a modest number of students. Whether in March or October, this section discusses the concentration declaration process in detail, and offers suggestions for how to manage it.

Because we want students to be deliberative and informed when they choose their concentration, we expect them to have met with you before completing their declaration. This can mean a lot of meetings for you, especially if your concentration is large. Needless to say, it is important to start early so that students have ample time to meet with you. You can encourage prospective concentrators to begin sooner rather than later in a number of ways:

- Schedule and publicize special CDD office hours early in the spring semester.
- Ask faculty in your department to announce your office hours in key gateway courses, and encourage prospective concentrators to make appointments early.
- Require concentrators to submit an early draft of their declaration. The deadline will motivate them to begin the declaration process sooner than they might have otherwise, and it promotes a more thoughtful approach to the entire process.



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- Ask your DUG to hold a concentration declaration workshop for prospective concentrators, and have students sign up for office hours at the workshop.

These suggestions prompt students to think about the relationship of their aims and aptitudes to your concentration, and help draw them to you well before the declaration deadline.

PRE-DECLARATION MEETINGS

Your initial meeting with a prospective concentrator should focus on the student's intellectual interests and the concentration's requirements. You might consider asking:

- What do you find compelling about this concentration?
- Do you consider it a bridge to something you will do after college?
- Will it be necessary or desirable to take one or more courses during summer session?
- How do you see your interests in the classroom possibly connecting with your interests in community engagement?
- Does it make sense to study away or abroad given your interest in this field?
- Will you be able to complete the concentration in the time you have remaining at Brown?

Many students face the task of choosing a concentration with some trepidation, feeling that they are making an irrevocable life decision. As a concentration advisor, you can remind students that their concentration choice does not determine the rest of their life. For instance, majoring in biology now does not eliminate the option of law school or social work at some point in the future. You can also help your concentrators understand how the competencies and modes of inquiry they develop in the course of completing your concentration, along with other elements of a liberal arts education, could be attractive to employers and graduate schools in a range of fields and will equip them to succeed in their careers and lives regardless of the paths they take.

If after this first meeting the student decides to declare, you should ask for a draft of the essays in the concentration declaration (described in more detail below).

By asking for a draft, you'll be able to gauge the depth of the student's seriousness and require revisions to the essays and course list, as needed.

Before meeting a second time with intended concentrators, ask students to bring a copy of their internal academic record at Brown (and, if relevant, a copy of transcripts from previous schools or study away/study abroad institutions). You will need this information in order to finalize the list of concentration courses they have already completed as well as the courses they intend to take. Review this course list along with the final version of the declaration essay.

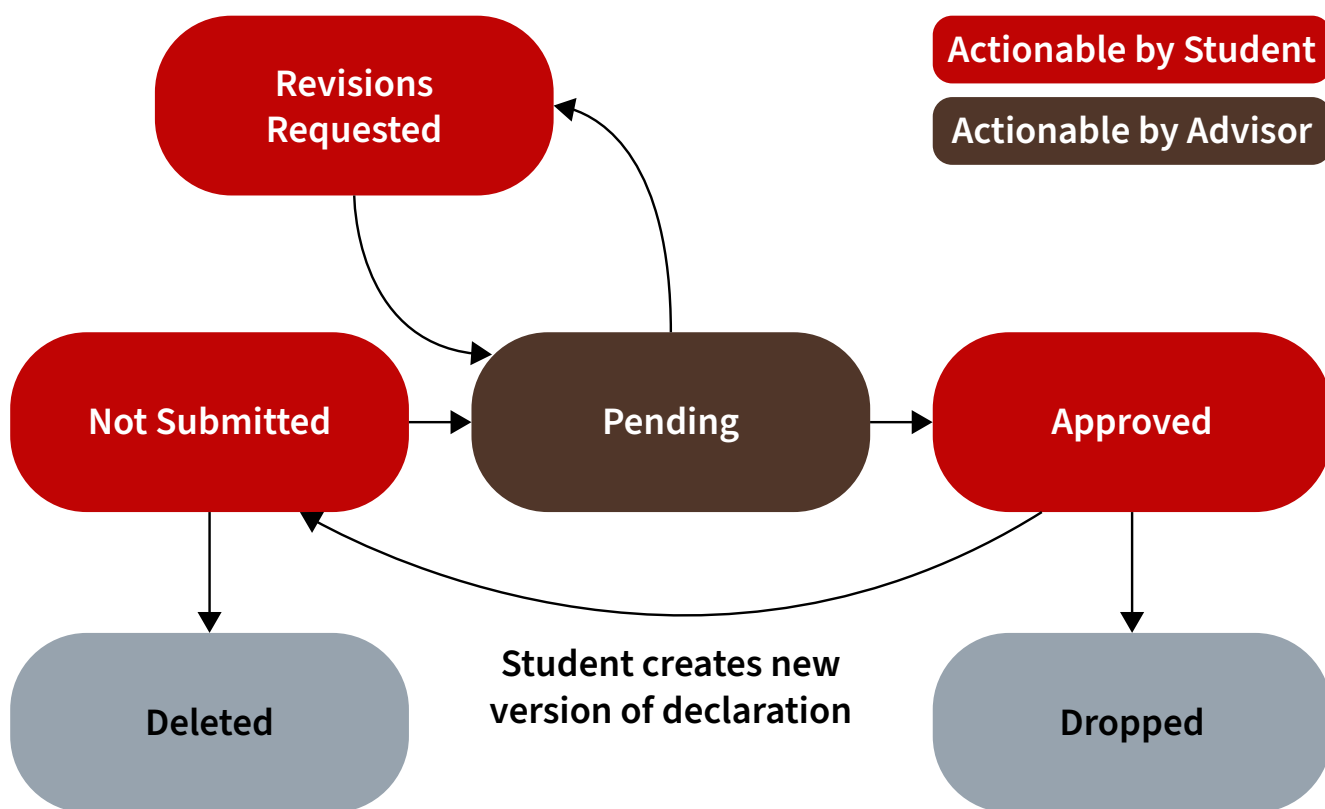


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ASK AND THE CONCENTRATION DECLARATION

Students are required to complete the concentration declaration in ASK. The declaration consists of three parts. The first is an essay representing the intellectual rationale for the concentration. It should articulate the student’s goals in the concentration in relation to the broader learning objectives of a Brown education—including the goal of improved writing skills. The second part is a list of courses already taken, and those that will be taken in the future, to realize these learning goals. The list should be realistic. Although students are not obliged to take every course on the list, they do need to have a reasonable plan for completing all required courses by the end of the eighth semester. The final section allows students to discuss additional academic goals outside the concentration and projects or research they hope to accomplish.

Declaration Workflow



In ASK, concentration advisors and department managers may customize what their prospective concentrators see upon starting a declaration in your field. For instance, you may add unique messages, concentration-specific questions and course attributes that require students to specify which requirement a particular course will satisfy. Some departments have their own worksheets for this purpose, but please keep in mind that such forms do not substitute for the official declaration in ASK.

The concentration declaration functions as a contract between you and the student and, by authorizing it, you become the student’s official advisor for the remainder of the student’s time at Brown. Once this occurs, the student may preregister for the next semester. Although students are the ones responsible for filing on time, you might want to remind them of the deadlines.



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Please review the deadlines for fourth-semester students to declare their concentration on the [academic calendar](#), as these deadlines vary slightly from year to year.

Students may change their concentration at any time prior to the end of their penultimate semester, under the condition that they complete all new concentration requirements by the end of eight semesters. Students who cannot complete within eight semesters of enrollment may consider petitioning the Committee on Academic Standing for an optional ninth semester, discussed later in this handbook.

TRACKING STUDENT PROGRESS

The concentration declaration is a contract with the student. Any changes to a student's plan must be entered there so that all advisors can track a student's progress toward graduation. Your concentration may regularly allow specific substitutions for required courses, or you may require concentrators to petition for such substitutions. Whatever your method, it is critical to document any authorized substitutions to preclude future misunderstandings and to have a record for a later advisor if you step down or go on leave. This will be especially important as a student enters the final two semesters of coursework. ASK allows you to share information about concentrators with other advisors and keep everything in one place yearly.

DECLARING A SECOND CONCENTRATION

Students at Brown are allowed to double concentrate if they can complete requirements for two concentrations in the standard eight-semester sequence of study. Some concentrations limit the number of courses that may overlap with a second concentration. Often, the maximum is two courses, and the maximum number of concentrations a student may declare is three. Students may seek advice from you on whether a second concentration is a good academic path for them.



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In general, students who have intellectual passions spanning two distinct areas are good candidates for a double concentration, but even they should leave room for other kinds of study. Students sometimes double concentrate because they think it will improve their chances of getting into graduate school. You might discuss with them the costs and benefits of declaring a second concentration. For some, the cost of limiting course selection will outweigh the perceived benefit of listing two concentrations on the transcript. Students who get the most out of their Brown degree often study just one discipline in depth and many others along the way, drawing out the connections among subjects. Those pursuing graduate school can easily highlight such intellectual connections in their applications, even without a second concentration.

If a student has determined they wish to add yours as a second concentration, the student must declare the concentration in ASK and you must approve this declaration by the final day of classes in their penultimate semester of enrollment. This deadline is published on the academic calendar. The process for declaring a second concentration is otherwise exactly the same as the process for declaring the first concentration. However, please note that a student may not declare a second concentration in ASK while the first declaration is pending. The student must have their first declaration approved by the concentration advisor prior to beginning a second declaration. Students or advisors experiencing challenges with the declaration or approval process should reach out to college@brown.edu for assistance.

A student who chooses to double concentrate will earn one baccalaureate degree with two concentrations. This student's transcript might list "Bachelor of Science: Sc.B.-Geology-Biology and A.B.-Math" or "Bachelor of Arts: A.B.-Africana Studies and A.B.-English." (If one or both of the concentrations is a Bachelor of Science program, the degree earned will be a Bachelor of Science.)



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Developing a Sense of Belonging and Community

Students appreciate opportunities to cultivate advising relationships and community. Given the period of social distancing and remote learning in the not-so-distant past, providing students with ways to cultivate meaningful social connections is more important than ever. You can enrich your students' experience of the concentration by helping them make connections with you, other students and faculty in your department. Such connections begin in individual meetings and continue through a whole range of group activities as they deepen their engagement in your concentration.

OUTREACH TO FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS AND SOPHOMORES

Each year, the College sponsors the Academic Expo during Brown's New Student Orientation to expose incoming students to the range of courses and concentrations available to them. We encourage current concentrators, and members of the Departmental Undergraduate Group, to represent their departments and provide a peer perspective for incoming students at the Academic Expo. Although first-year and sophomore students are assigned Exploratory Advisors, students are encouraged to speak with Directors of Undergraduate Studies and/or concentration advisors to review concentration requirements in preparation for their concentration declaration submission on ASK due in the middle of their 4th semester.

INDIVIDUAL CONCENTRATION ADVISING MEETINGS

Regular office hours are the usual way that advisors meet with current and future concentrators. Plan to set aside about two hours per week for this purpose, and post the times on your department's website. [Creating calendar appointment blocks](#) with your office number or links to Zoom or Google Meet can be particularly useful (be sure to [enable the waiting room feature](#) if you are holding one-on-one appointments via Zoom).

You'll encounter the heaviest traffic at the beginning of the semester and during the advising period during fall and spring preregistration (late October and early April each year). The advising period is a time when prospective concentrators will want to discuss the possibility of declaring, and other students may come with different concerns. The issues will vary by semester level. New concentrators might be interested in research opportunities or may be considering an undergraduate certificate. Those who hope to study abroad in future semesters may need to figure out how to fulfill concentration requirements at a university outside the U.S. First-year students and sophomores may be eager to get concentration requirements fulfilled before they have officially declared and will seek your counsel.



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Concentrators tend to seek out advisors about electives and possible/necessary adjustments to their course plan. Your guidance can help students plan for and balance these requirements with other goals they might have and enable them to continue exploring beyond the concentration. You can ensure a stronger relationship by requiring your concentrators to check in with you each semester. At the very least, you should require all seniors to meet with you at least once each term so that you can ensure they meet concentration requirements and clear them for graduation.

DEPARTMENTAL UNDERGRADUATE GROUPS

A Departmental Undergraduate Group (DUG) is a group of students who meet regularly with preconcentrators and fellow concentrators to facilitate connections with one another, faculty and alumni. DUGs contribute to enhancing the sense of community in a concentration in a variety of ways: by hosting events with concentrators, prospective concentrators and graduate students; by organizing guest lectures; by participating in concentration advising hours and fairs; and, in some cases, by contributing to departmental newsletters, websites and undergraduate academic journals. Some of the most successful projects have been organized collaboratively by departmental faculty and DUGs. Anything that brings your concentrators in contact with one another and with your faculty will help cultivate an intellectual community and make your department a welcome home for undergraduates.

A recent review of DUGs has revealed some best practices. Many DUGs highlight and encourage students to pursue undergraduate research, which facilitates relationships with faculty outside the classroom and showcases student work. The French and Francophone studies DUG, for example, publishes an undergraduate journal. The economics DUG has offered events with their faculty about applying to graduate school, and events specifically oriented for underrepresented students engaging in the job search. In previous years, the math, urban studies and modern culture and media DUGs have organized or helped departments organize conferences that bring together undergraduates, faculty, alumni and other scholars and practitioners. DUGs can also become a vehicle for collecting feedback about the student experience or communicating important information between declared and prospective concentrators, which doubles as a useful resource for chairs and concentration advisors.

With over 60 active DUGs representing over 70 concentrations, the College has nearly reached the goal of having a DUG in every concentration. If your department does not have an active DUG, you might try working with your students — ideally juniors — to create one. If you have eager students in mind, you might direct them to the DUG coordinators, student staffers at the Curricular Resource Center who advise their peers about the range of resources available at Brown. They can learn about DUG best practices and connect with DUG leaders in related fields.



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Each DUG is eligible for matching funds from the College. Funds matched by the concentration contribute to the total budget amount for the DUG. To apply, your DUG must have one or more student leaders, a faculty sponsor (which may be you) and a list of activities with an associated budget. Every DUG is expected to hold about two events each semester. One of these should be a social event welcoming new concentrators. Funding requests are submitted online by the DUG leader(s) and faculty sponsor via UFunds by mid-October (for fall activities) and by early February (for spring).

We recommend that you work closely with your DUG to ensure continuity from year to year, and to learn from your students about how they can help create a stronger community in your department. For more information about DUG events and funding, visit the website below or contact the director of the Curricular Resource Center, whose contact information is listed in the resource addendum that accompanies this booklet.

Departmental Undergraduate Groups |

crc.brown.edu/academic-communities/departamental-undergraduate-groups

CONCENTRATION DECLARATION DAY AND OTHER DEPARTMENTAL GATHERINGS

The beginning and end of the year are often good times to bring concentrators together with members of your department. In a typical year, many departments hold welcome-back get-togethers in the fall and some host holiday gatherings after classes have ended in December. While these events are not necessarily your responsibility to organize, you can make a difference by sending an email to concentrators reminding them of the date and time and inviting them to be present.

By hosting a Concentration Declaration Day (CDD), the concentration advisors have an opportunity to earmark a time to celebrate an important milestone in the life of every Brown undergraduate — declaring their concentration and formally joining their chosen academic community. Dozens of concentrations have held CDD receptions in April and early May, allowing new concentrators to mingle with professors and upper-class students. Some combine this event with celebrations honoring graduates. In such events, honors students often present brief accounts of their work and share valuable tips about their process, and the challenges and rewards of undertaking such projects. These community-building events have the added benefit of allowing students to learn firsthand about pathways for engagement within the concentration for juniors and seniors. In the coming year, we hope to have participation from even more concentrations. If you and your DUG are interested in jointly hosting a CDD event, begin by reaching out to the associate dean and director of the Curricular Resource Center.



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Supporting Your Concentrators: Delving Deeper

As concentrators approach their fifth semester, your role as an advisor will no longer be narrowly focused on the choice of concentration and whether or not a student can complete it. When meeting with your concentrators during individual meetings or group advising sessions, consider how your concentrators can discuss and share more about their goals and aspirations as well as some of the challenges they face as a Brown student.

Some questions you may want to ask during an individual appointment or advising event include:

- Are there fellowship, study abroad, research or internship experiences that they should consider that can amplify coursework in the concentration?
- Have they considered their senior capstone experience or pursuing an honors thesis?
- How are they planning to work on their writing abilities in their final two years? When will they complete their second WRIT requirement?
- Are they pursuing another concentration or a certificate program? Do they know where to find more information about these opportunities? Are they able to complete the requirements for both?
- Are they considering post-baccalaureate study and if so, are they planning to take time off before enrolling? What options are they considering during this time? Do they want to discuss their career objectives with concentration alumni, other faculty or advisors in Brown's Center for Career Exploration?
- How many faculty in the department know them well enough to write a letter of recommendation?
- Are there any ways that you can support their goals (including academic, social and overall wellness)? Can you connect them to resources on campus that supplement these goals?

Students report that the most meaningful advising encounters have emerged through conversations like these — when discussions of a concentration program expand to include broader questions. As you begin to work with your juniors, we encourage you to take your conversations to this next level.

PROGRESS TOWARD GRADUATION

While your primary job is to ensure your students are meeting concentration requirements, as the main academic advisor for your concentrators you are also responsible for shepherding them through their degree completion. Although Brown's Open Curriculum offers students enormous freedom to shape their own course of study, every Brown undergraduate has four basic obligations to fulfill before



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graduating. With the exception of concentration requirements, the University registrar and academic deans will be in touch with students who are not on track to meet graduation requirements, but you should discuss with your concentrators any issues or plans that might be affecting their ability to meet these requirements in eight semesters.

To meet the requirements for degree completion, students must:

- Complete at least 30 courses. A maximum of 15 transfer courses and no more than four summer courses (at Brown or elsewhere) and/or Winter Session courses (taken only at Brown) may count toward this requirement.
- Complete a concentration leading to either the Bachelor of Arts or the Bachelor of Science degree. (A small number of students will complete a five-year combined Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts degree, discussed earlier in this handbook.)
- Complete at least two writing-designated, comparative literature, English or literary arts courses: once in their first two years of study and a second time between their fifth and seventh semesters (more information is available below).
- Fulfill the eight-semester enrollment requirement (also known as 32 enrollment units, four of which are accrued in each of eight full-time semesters of enrollment), four semesters of which must be in residence at Brown during fall and/or spring semesters. Approved full-time study away during the school year at another institution in the U.S. or abroad may also count toward this enrollment requirement, though not as one of the four semesters minimum that must be completed at Brown. Students who successfully complete four Brown Summer Session and/or Winter Session courses — and who have completed all other degree requirements — may request advanced standing, a waiver of the eighth semester of the enrollment requirement. The enrollment requirement is distinct from Brown’s residential living requirement (visit reslife.brown.edu for more information).

BROWN’S WRITING REQUIREMENT

A final opportunity to emphasize with your advisees is the chance to improve their writing. Strong writing skills allow students to excel in all kinds of academic work. In fact, writing aptitudes lead to significant cognitive gains within a student’s concentration and are valued by future employers in nearly every field. There is every reason to urge your students to take the time in college to work on building these thought processes and skills — they may never have another opportunity to explore writing in such a way.

Even though Brown’s curriculum, by tradition, leaves open the question of “general education” requirements, the University has nonetheless maintained a requirement for the baccalaureate degree that all students demonstrate the ability to write well. All students must work on their writing at least twice — once in their first two years of study and again in semesters five through seven. Students meet the first part of this requirement by completing any comparative literature, English or literary arts



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course, as well as any of the hundreds of courses across the curriculum marked “WRIT,” for “writing-designated.” In semesters five through seven, students must take an additional writing-designated course. Because the concentration is the focal point of a student’s academic experience, it makes sense that students work on their writing in the context of their concentration, though this is not required. A small number of concentrations allow concentrators to upload to ASK work completed in the concentration to meet this requirement (biology, math and German studies). In this case, you or a colleague would review and approve the work in ASK. Questions about this option or any element of the writing requirement may be directed to Lindsay Garcia, associate dean of the College for junior/senior studies (lindsay_garcia@brown.edu).

Even if your concentration does not accept written work in lieu of a second writing-designated course, as an advisor, you will want to steer students toward courses that allow them to develop these abilities; indeed, you should encourage them to learn how to express themselves better in your discipline.

Writing Requirement | brown.edu/go/writing-requirement

ACADEMIC STANDING

Academic standing is determined by the number of courses that are successfully completed at Brown. At the end of each semester, the Committee on Academic Standing (CAS), consisting of faculty appointed by the Faculty Executive Committee and academic deans, reviews the academic progress of all students experiencing academic difficulty. Students who fall one or two courses below academic progress requirements are placed on Academic Warning or Serious Warning respectively, which includes a notation on their internal academic record that does not appear on the official transcript. All students reviewed by the committee are assigned an academic dean as a CAS advisor who supports their progress toward completion of degree requirements.

A student who is three or more course credits behind what counts as “good standing” in their coursework becomes eligible for academic suspension (a one-year administrative separation). Students with missing or incomplete grades or with special permission from an academic dean to take a final examination in the subsequent semester (an “ABS”) can receive a pending status that may be improved upon satisfactory completion of outstanding work by the University’s deadline. Exceptions to satisfactory academic progress may be considered when documented extenuating circumstances significantly interfere with a student’s ability to focus on their studies. In such cases, a student who might normally be eligible for academic suspension could, with approval from a Student Support Services dean, be approved for a “medical leave in lieu of suspension.” In other instances, a student with extenuating



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circumstances might be separated for a shorter period (usually one semester) with a status known as “refused registration by action of dean,” often pending completion of additional coursework, as an alternative to suspension. Detailed information about the various types of separation and status is available in the [CAS handbook](#).

Students experiencing academic difficulty will be encouraged and reminded regularly by the academic dean serving as their CAS advisor to reach out to you for help in developing a feasible pathway and timeline for completion of concentration requirements. As a concentration advisor, your guidance on what requirements the student has remaining and the options they have for completing these requirements is critical to degree completion planning. A student who may need an extra semester to complete requirements may also petition CAS for additional enrollment and seek your support for their petition and a feasible degree completion plan. (See below section entitled “Extra Semester Permission.”)

As an advisor, you have access to view your concentrators’ academic standing via students’ internal records in ASK.

Academic Policies | brown.edu/academics/college/degree/policies

Advisees Separated from the University

While not actively enrolled at the University, a student who has (1) taken a personal leave for work, service, travel or other personal reasons; (2) opted for a “medical leave” or a “medical leave in lieu of suspension”; or (3) been placed on academic suspension, refused registration or not completed degree requirements after eight or more semesters of enrollment (a status known as “enrollment satisfied, requirements pending [ESRP],” also discussed later in this guide) will continue to appear on your roster of concentration advisees in ASK. In such cases, you may be called upon — by either an academic dean or the student themselves — to consult on the student’s remaining concentration requirements and available options, per your program’s policies, for fulfilling these with non-Brown work. In short, your role in these instances is to advise the student on a revised pathway to completing the concentration that is consistent with your concentration’s policies and procedures, and then to approve any substitutions in ASK. Your outreach to those students who return after a separation of a semester or longer will be an important part of their transition back to the University and to the concentration.

While away from Brown, your advisee may also be working to finish incomplete courses for the concentration and may need continued access to Canvas, Brown’s online course management system, after the course has ended. The course instructor can provide such access to the student.

Enrolled Advisees Who Are Not in Good Standing

Each student on Academic Warning or Serious Warning is assigned to an academic dean and is expected to meet with this dean regularly to discuss course selection and



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a plan for utilizing resources that may support the student in getting back on track. A student who is on Serious Warning will also need to meet with their assigned — or any other — academic dean to obtain a “drop code” if they wish to drop a class in the final four weeks of the term. A student on Serious Warning will also need to meet with their assigned academic dean if they want to add a fifth course during the shopping period.

As a concentration advisor, your role is twofold: first, to discuss with your student a realistic plan for completing concentration requirements, which may include an adjusted timeframe and/or courses taken at another institution, and, second, to connect your student to academic, health and/or personal support resources if they are not already utilizing them. The list of contacts accompanying this guide is one useful place for you to start; Lindsay Garcia, associate dean of the College for junior/senior studies is another (lindsay_garcia@brown.edu). If you would find it helpful to meet with a student in concert with their CAS advisor, please email college@brown.edu to set up a group meeting. CAS advisors are eager to partner with concentration advisors to support students on their path to degree completion and may similarly reach out to you to do so.

Should a student on Academic Warning take five courses to “catch up” in the next semester?

A student on Academic Warning should choose four courses (not five) for the next semester, and should strive to find courses that are both interesting and manageable. While it is true that a student on Academic Warning can return to Good Standing after one semester by successfully completing five courses, the costs and dangers of attempting five courses, particularly for students who have failed to complete four courses in one or more preceding semesters, can be significant. It may be difficult to do one’s best work in five courses. Affirm that you believe in the student, their ability and intelligence; however, four courses is considered a full-time course load and completing that is an accomplishment and solid progress toward their degree. Moreover, students who attempt five courses after failing to complete four frequently fail two courses in the subsequent term, placing them even further behind. Caution students about taking on too heavy a course load. It is more prudent to take four courses and do well in those. Students who complete four courses in two consecutive semesters may return to Good Standing, at the discretion of their CAS advisor, even if their cumulative count would otherwise place them on Academic Warning or Serious Warning.

Should a student drop a course to avoid a “C” or a “B”?

No. Dropping a class because of fear about a particular grade should not be encouraged. This is true for philosophical as well as practical reasons. Students can become so focused on grades as a measure of performance that they overlook Brown’s academic progress expectations and find themselves on Academic Warning. If an advisee mentions that they may drop a class because of fear of a particular grade, the advisor can probe for reasons why the grade is so important to the student. Often it is because the student has plans for the future (e.g., law school or medical school) and believes these will be affected by a lower grade. Advisors can work to dispel the notion that a “B” or a “C” in one course will determine the student’s future. A referral to an



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academic dean, a preprofessional advisor or a career advisor may also be in order. Deans, in particular, are accustomed to addressing such misperceptions and can help students adjust their approach to their studies. If a student shares concerns with you about their ability to complete final assignments when these are due or take a final exam when it is scheduled because of extenuating circumstances, although they had kept up with the coursework otherwise, a conversation about the process for seeking an incomplete (INC) from the course instructor or an excused absence and makeup for a final exam (ABS) from the College with an appropriate referral may be in order.

Incompletes

In cases where a student has outstanding work in a course other than a final exam, a course instructor may choose to grant a grade of incomplete (INC) with a request from the student. A student who has experienced health, personal or other difficulties during a semester may wish to request an incomplete for one or more of their courses from their instructor(s), but may be unaware of the option to do so or unsure of how to make this request. As an advisor, you can help them navigate this situation. Your expertise regarding when required courses are offered, in what order requirements may be taken, and what combinations of courses are feasible may help the student determine if seeking an incomplete in a course is advisable relative to other options for completing requirements (such as retaking the course from the beginning or identifying an appropriate substitute for the course at Brown or elsewhere).

For a student who has one or more incompletes in the concentration, encouraging regular communication with their instructors and providing them with insights on how to communicate with your colleagues may also be helpful and keep course completion viable. The timeline for completion of incompletes is at the discretion of the instructor. Many instructors encourage completion before the start of a new term, while others allow additional time. Occasionally, instructors will accept work significantly after the end of the course. If more than one year has passed since the end of the course, the grade change must be petitioned through the Committee on Academic Standing by the instructor.

At around the mid-point of the subsequent semester, the grade on the transcript will change automatically from INC to NC; however, it may still be possible for the student to earn credit if the instructor agrees to allow the student to complete the course beyond that point. Students and instructors sometimes assume that a course cannot be completed when they see an NC from an expired INC on the student's transcript. However, because the NC may reflect an automated expiration and not an instructor's grade entry, the student's ability to complete the course depends on whether the instructor is willing to accept late work. While this is an important pathway to academic progress for some students, instructors should not feel pressured to accept work after the original timeline they agreed upon with the student.



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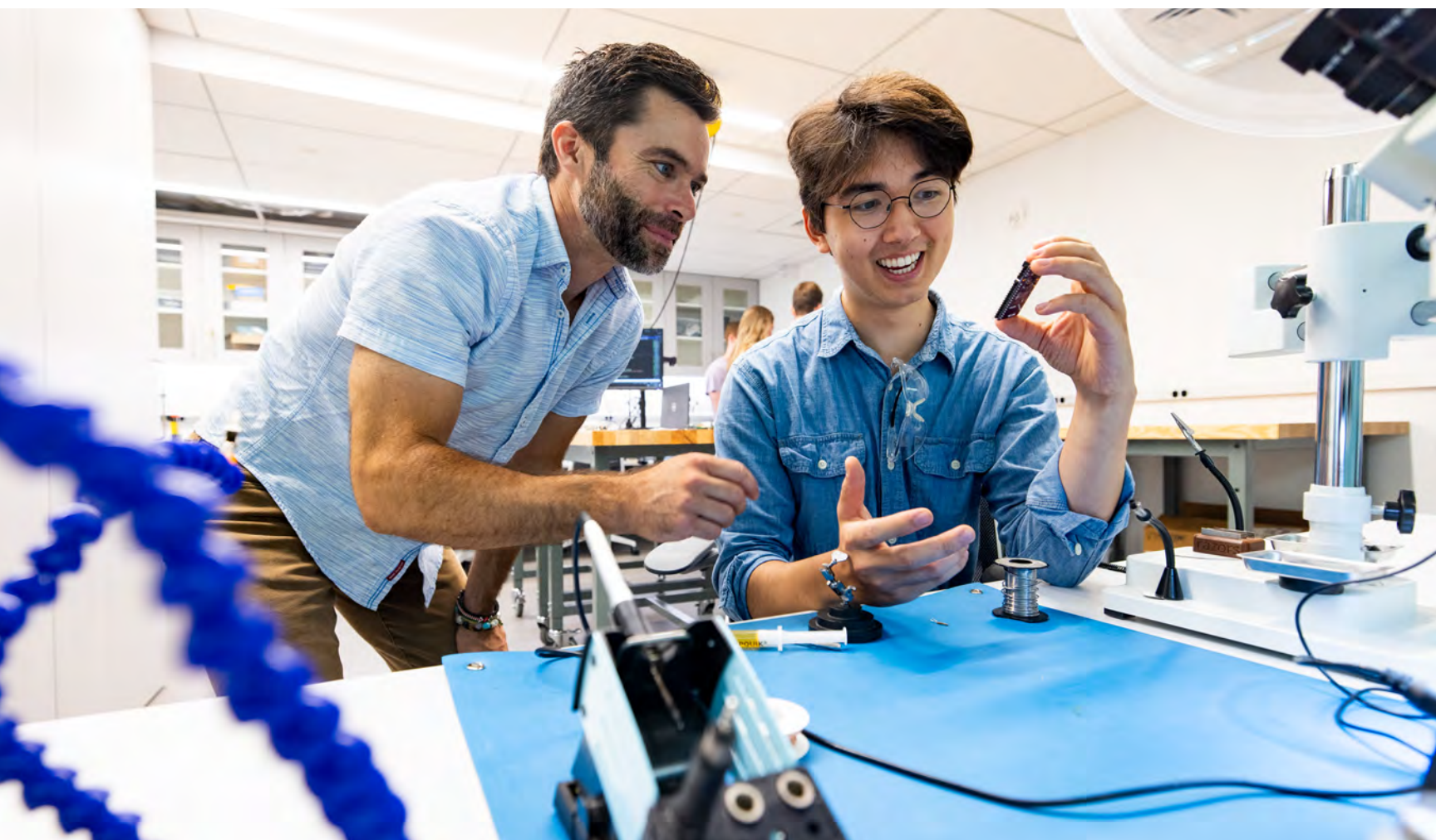
BROWN UNIVERSITY

Incomplete courses can play a significant role in students' academic progress and degree completion. While not seeking an incomplete may result in significant setbacks for a student who might be able to successfully complete the course, having an excessive number of incomplete courses at the start of a new semester may produce similarly concerning outcomes. Generally, you should encourage students to complete incomplete courses as soon they are able, and prior to their next semester if possible. If an advisee has accumulated several incompletes, due to extenuating health and/or personal circumstances, you may wish to suggest a conversation with a Student Support dean (studentsupport@brown.edu) or a [College advising dean](mailto:college@brown.edu) (college@brown.edu) about options and supports available, such as exploring eligibility for an approved course load reduction for their next semester of enrollment. If the student may find additional accountability helpful, they can also request an [academic coach](#).

Dean's Notes, Exam Excuses and Incompletes | brown.edu/go/deans-notes



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FELLOWSHIPS, INTERNSHIPS AND RESEARCH EXPERIENCES

All students should be encouraged to pursue opportunities outside the classroom that enhance their curricular work. Valuable experiences include working in laboratories or conducting research for credit and/or compensation, pursuing internships and applying for and participating in a fellowship program. Students may apply for scholarships, fellowships and awards at Brown as well as at national and international levels, working closely with you and members of your department.

Finding Opportunities

The College offers student funding for internships, research, teaching, course development and other experiential learning projects both on and off campus. These experiences enable students to expand their learning and classroom knowledge, while simultaneously developing deep, lasting relationships with mentors in a variety of sectors.

In recent years, the College has emphasized its commitment to addressing the disproportionately lower rates of first-generation, low-income and historically underrepresented applicants for these types of experiences. Despite focused outreach — and, in some cases, even with dedicated funding — minoritized students have been less likely to apply than their counterparts. This is particularly concerning. After all, mounting research suggests research, internships and other high-impact practices play a critical role in closing equity gaps, as they enhance a student's sense of belonging (among other gains).



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To combat this, SPRINT (Summer/Semester Projects for Research, Internships, Teaching) serves as the umbrella application platform for all College-funded experiential learning opportunities. The College likewise offers Undergraduate Teaching and Research Awards (UTRAs) and LINK (support for unpaid and low-paid internships that are not affiliated with Brown), as well as Signature programs offered by the College, CareerLAB and the Swearer Center. And for added research, students are also encouraged to utilize [BrownConnect+](#), a hub for alumni networking.

Center for Career Exploration | career-center.brown.edu

Faculty are also encouraged to post positions directly to the SPRINT|UTRA platform, through which students may apply for funding with faculty as research partners. This approach will allow UTRA dollars to stretch further, as it fosters new student-faculty collaborations while deepening existing partnerships. As a concentration advisor, our hope is that you will facilitate these connections, welcoming new students alongside your fellow faculty. In doing so, you will encourage advisees to think about themselves not merely as consumers of knowledge but as nascent producers of learning. This can profoundly inspire a student's sense of belonging and purpose. For your convenience, Brown has prepared a detailed [faculty guide of UTRA](#), including information about the application timeline, program expectations and review process.

External Scholarships and Fellowships

Concentrators should also be encouraged to learn about external, nationally competitive scholarships and fellowships, which are available to students beginning in their sophomore year. Scholarships and fellowships such as the Obama Voyager (for sophomores of financial need who will pursue future careers involving public service and travel), the Udall (for sophomores and juniors committed to careers in environment protection, policy and advocacy) and Projects for Peace (for sophomores, juniors and seniors invested in grassroots change) are particularly impactful opportunities for students early in their academic careers. Scholarships and fellowships such as the Goldwater (for juniors committed to careers in research science), the Truman (for juniors committed to careers in public service) and the Beinecke (for juniors in the arts, humanities or social sciences) are transformative forms of funding for concentrators planning to attend graduate school. In addition, concentrators should be made aware of post-graduate fellowships such as the Fulbright, which provides funding for one year of study, independent research or English teaching in one of more than 150 countries around the world, and the many fellowship opportunities for graduate study in the U.K., such as the Rhodes, Marshall, Mitchell, Churchill and Gates-Cambridge scholarships.

We encourage advisors to familiarize themselves with these opportunities and share information about those that are particularly pertinent with their concentrators through department listservs and with their DUGs. We particularly encourage advisors to direct concentrators to attend fellowship open hours, listed on the [Fellowships@Brown](#) website, to explore scholarships and fellowships and to receive application support.



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For more specific information on application processes and deadlines or to brainstorm about how to encourage concentrators to consider these awards, advisors are invited to reach out directly to Joel Simundich, assistant dean of the College for fellowships (joel_simundich@brown.edu). For a complete list of Brown-supported awards and fellowship resources for students, consult the Fellowships@Brown website or email fellowships@brown.edu.

Fellowships at Brown | brown.edu/academics/college/fellowships

CAREER EXPLORATION SUPPORT

Some of your advisees will be actively developing postgraduate plans, which might involve employment in a specific area, a fellowship or service opportunity, further education or something else entirely. Other advisees may still be trying to understand how to connect their concentration studies and personal interests to their next step after Brown. Still others may have no idea how (or why) to engage in the career planning process. As your advisees come to you with questions about their future, we encourage you to engage them in conversations that help them reflect on their individual skills, values, interests and needs. You should emphasize that it is never too late to begin the career planning and exploration process, and that there are many opportunities to engage in career exploration activities through the Center for Career Exploration, regardless of their class year or concentration.

The Center for Career Exploration provides direct counseling and programmatic support for students interested in pursuing any career path. Please also share with your advisees that their concentration doesn't limit their career options. More than a decade of data on Brown student postgraduate outcomes indicate that every year classics concentrators secure jobs on Wall Street, computer science concentrators work in government and nonprofit roles, biology concentrators pursue careers in media and journalism, economics concentrators become teachers and history concentrators join or launch startup enterprises. A Brown education prepares students to pursue virtually any career path, and Center staff are experts in helping students to reflect on what they might want to pursue, to develop valuable networking connections throughout the Brown community, and to explore career possibilities through internship and research experiences.

There are many ways for your advisees (and for you) to connect with the Center throughout the year. These include workshops, Peer Career Advisor open hours, employer programs such as career fairs and coffee chats, alumni networking and mentoring events and one-on-one career counseling with a professional staff career counselor. If you, your faculty colleagues and/or members of your DUG are interested in partnering with Center staff and Peer Career Advisors on a custom career program for students in your concentration, please email peercareeradvisors@brown.edu.



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Meaningful Outcomes

Ideally, a student's last year is a meaningful culmination of their educational experience. One form that such culminating experiences may take is a senior-year capstone, widely recognized as a high-impact educational practice variously instituted by many colleges and universities, including Brown. Well-designed capstones hold significant promise for advancing student learning and assessing the rigor and coherence of curricula at the college and departmental levels. In Spring 2018, the College Curriculum Council reviewed capstone requirements across the College's concentrations, culminating in recommendations for increasing the academic rigor and learning potential of the College's various capstone practices. As a concentration advisor and/or director of undergraduate studies, you should familiarize yourself with the summary literature review, findings, and suggestions published in the report, which are available on the council's website.

College Curriculum Council | brown.edu/go/college_ccc

SENIOR-YEAR PROJECTS

If your concentration requires a senior capstone project, either for all students or for a subset such as Bachelor of Science candidates, then it is your responsibility to ensure students fulfill this expectation. If your concentration does not require it, you may want to persuade seniors to take on this intellectual challenge voluntarily. Better yet, you could plant the seed with your juniors so they begin planning early. Such a capstone experience might take many forms: It could be a focused internship, a teaching apprenticeship, a performance, an exhibition, a large creative work, an advanced seminar paper, a laboratory experiment or a two-semester thesis for Honors candidacy — in short, a substantive contribution to their learning objectives in the concentration. Whatever the form, the capstone should lead undergraduates toward the kind of intellectual engagement that faculty often experience. For this reason, projects should be supervised by faculty members who monitor students' progress and give feedback. By completing such a project, seniors will have, in effect, already answered the question, "What's it all about?" because they will have produced something that reveals the impact of their studies to both themselves and others. This kind of intensive intellectual experience can also lead them toward outcomes they had not previously imagined. Incidentally, the College has a modest amount of funding to help support senior projects. Students should consult with the College's website on research opportunities.

Undergraduate Research | brown.edu/academics/college/undergraduate-research



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HONORS IN THE CONCENTRATION

An honors thesis, completed over the course of two semesters at a minimum, is one type of capstone project — albeit with a few more strings attached. Your department’s honors program will define the terms under which advanced undergraduates may distinguish themselves through in-depth coursework or research in the concentration. Entry into such programs varies (although, per the College Curriculum Council’s guidelines, no concentration may use grade point average or limit the number of courses taken Satisfactory/No Credit as the sole method for determining eligibility). Check the rules for your own program and make sure that they are clear to you, as well as to your faculty and students. Like the capstone guidelines, the College Curriculum Council’s honors guidelines are available on the College website. As with all other concentration requirements, honors requirements should be published on your concentration’s page in the University Bulletin.

Honors in the Concentration | brown.edu/go/honors

As an advisor, it is your responsibility to advertise your concentration’s honors program to juniors, to review their applications (sometimes in conjunction with an honors committee) and to remind faculty members who are supervising honors projects — and students who are doing them — of the relevant deadlines. You can recognize your honors students by arranging appropriate celebratory events at the end of the semester. You might consider recognizing all seniors who have completed capstone projects.

LATIN HONORS

A more conventional sign of honorable achievement in a university education is the classical designation cum laude, Latin for “with honors.” Less concrete than completing a thesis and demonstrated performance in the concentration, Latin Honors is determined not by the concentration but by the College at the very end of a student’s career. Brown grants only one honor at Commencement: magna cum laude. The determination for magna is based on the percentage of “A” grades and marks of “S with distinction” that a student receives in all courses taken at Brown. By faculty rule, this honor goes to no more than 20% of the graduating class each year. The “S with distinction” mark is not released outside the University and is not noted on internal or official transcripts.

PRIZES

Another formal recognition for excellence comes in the form of end-of-year prizes. Some departments have their own endowed monetary prizes or prizes endowed within the College, which they award at Commencement to outstanding seniors. You should speak to your department manager about how many prizes your department has, how they are awarded, and in what amounts. For departments with no endowed prizes, the College has additional funds to support the awarding of prizes. Each spring the College sends an announcement inviting departments to apply for these awards.



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Please review the Prizes and Premiums section of the University Bulletin for the most up-to-date prize policies. For more information, contact Lindsay Garcia, associate dean for junior/senior studies (lindsay_garcia@brown.edu).

CLEARING SENIORS FOR GRADUATION

Perhaps the most official role you will play in the life of your students will be to determine whether they have completed the requirements for the concentration. This is one of the necessary steps toward what we call “clearing” seniors for graduation. Four times every year (August, October, January and March), your department manager will receive a clearance form for each of your eighth-semester seniors. The Registrar’s Office will share with you a list of courses in which concentrators are currently enrolled; you will be able to access their internal record in ASK. The registrar will ask you to check the records and indicate whether the student has completed or is expected to complete the concentration (including the writing requirement) that semester and, if not, what requirements remain. This is a very good reason for you to meet with your seniors again — not just to go over their records but also to review their overall Brown experience.

Before you meet, be sure to check any anomalies or substitutions against the student’s official ASK declaration: Was permission granted to satisfy the requirements by other means? Is there other documentation in the student’s ASK declaration noting the substitution? If not, the student will not be able to graduate and you will have to inform the registrar. The registrar will record the names of students who have not completed the concentration and then notify students accordingly. You may want to discuss this situation with the students yourself when you meet with them. It may also be useful to strategize how they can complete the concentration, either at Brown or elsewhere through transfer credits. Keep in mind that all of these students — even if they have requirements pending — can still walk in the graduation ceremony, although their names will not appear in the official graduation program. It is quite common for departments to allow students who have not completed degree requirements to participate in their graduation ceremonies.

Aside from this official clearance process, you can view these final meetings as a time for seniors to reflect on their experience at Brown more generally. What was the most useful thing they learned in your concentration? What work are they most proud of? What work was most challenging? Is there anything they would do differently if given a second chance? Asking such questions, even in an informal way, can send a very good message that you are concerned not only about their individual experience but also about the experience of future concentrators. If you were to ask your seniors, moreover, to take a moment to put these thoughts in writing, both you and they might end up with a different picture of the real outcomes of your concentration.

Extra Semester Permission

You may refer any student who cannot complete degree requirements within eight semesters of enrollment to an academic advising dean in the College. The student will still be able to participate in Commencement exercises. The student may be



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able to transfer in remaining requirements from another approved institution with a status known as “enrollment satisfied, requirements pending.” Different policies govern whether students may stay at Brown for an additional term to complete their degree depending on whether they must enroll to satisfy remaining requirements or simply would like to do so. Whether a student needs additional time at Brown or simply chooses an additional semester of enrollment, the student should discuss the appropriate petition process with a degree completion dean by emailing graduationplans@brown.edu. In ASK, there are several kinds of extra semester petitions: 1) necessary ninth semester, 2) optional ninth semester and 3) necessary 10th/11th semester. For each petition, a concentration advisor’s statement of support for the academic plan in the petition, describing the concentration requirements a student must still complete, and when and where these can be feasibly completed, is requested.

When Enrollment Beyond Eight Semesters Is Necessary to Complete Degree Requirements

Students who have experienced an academic setback involving lost course credit(s) or less than three course credits earned in one or more semesters due to a significant extenuating circumstance (such as being suspended or withdrawing during the term or dropping courses due to a health and personal circumstance), who cannot complete specific degree requirements by transferring those courses and credits from another institution, may request extra semester permission as necessary for degree completion after consulting with a degree completion dean by submitting a necessary ninth or necessary 10th/11th semester petition in ASK. Permission for a necessary additional semester may be granted if the student needs to complete concentration requirements at Brown; needs a Brown course to complete the second half of the writing requirement; when the student has not already earned a total of at least 26 course credits; or when, as a transfer student, they have not yet earned 15 Brown course credits. With an approved necessary extra semester of enrollment, students with demonstrated financial need may be eligible for institutional financial aid during the additional term. (With an optional ninth semester, students are not eligible for institutional financial aid). As indicated above, a concentration advisor’s statement in support of the student’s petition, explaining what concentration requirements remain is requested and should be submitted in ASK.



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COMMENCEMENT FESTIVITIES

Your department's Commencement ceremony is where students who have completed degree requirements are celebrated in the company of family and friends. Please note that diplomas are now sent in the mail to the address that students provide in their application to graduate. Those who have not yet completed all requirements will receive their diplomas the May following completion of requirements. You can help make this event more meaningful for everyone who attends — and especially for your students — by taking the time to acknowledge the accomplishments and good work of your graduates, reporting their honors in the department program, narrating one or two of their successes during the formal remarks, and announcing their future plans. If the chair of your department presides over these ceremonies, you can help them by providing information about the concentrators you know best. As an advisor, it will mean more to your concentrators than you can imagine if you take the time to be present during this ceremony.

TRACKING YOUR GRADUATES

When asked about the outcomes of graduates, most departments have difficulty coming up with more than anecdotal evidence. Where did your concentrators end up? Knowing the answer to this question can be a great benefit when giving concrete evidence of the success of your program. It is not always possible to keep up with Brown graduates, but making an effort to connect with them before they leave campus helps enormously. The advent of lifelong alumni email accounts (often, but not always `first_lastname@alumni.brown.edu`) makes this much easier. While students might ignore a generic communication from the University, they are likely to read an email query from someone in your department that asks them how (and what) they are doing. A member of your staff could create a simple database or poll colleagues about former students, and keep updated records with this information. Indeed, keeping in touch with your alumni and learning about how their lives develop will give you all the more reason to invite them back for a visit. They may even share their life experience with current students. Comparative literature, English and geological sciences are examples of departments that distribute alumni newsletters, blogs and forums — all of which are also linked in Focal Point. A LinkedIn alumni group is another method of building a cohort of alumni and staying in contact with them. DUGs often host events with the concentration's alumni about career pathways and graduate school. Both the Center for Career Exploration and the Office of Institutional Research collect alumni outcome data, which can then be used by your department in advising conversations and on their concentration website.



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Concentration Advising Calendar 2024-25

The Registrar's Office publishes an academic calendar with critical dates for Concentration Advisors to know. The [digital calendar](#) may be updated throughout the year, and a handful of special supplemental dates are also included below for your convenience.

FALL SEMESTER

Wednesday, September 4, 2024

Classes of the first semester begin

Tuesday, September 17, 2024, by 5 p.m.

Last day to add a course without a fee

Tuesday, October 1, 2024, by 5 p.m.

Last day to add a course, change from audit to credit, or change a grade option

Monday, October 14, 2024

Indigenous Peoples' Day — no University exercises

Friday, October 18, 2024, by 5 p.m.

Last day to change from credit to audit in a course

Tuesday, October 22, 2024, by 5 p.m.

Concentration declaration deadline for fourth-semester sophomores and incoming junior transfers

Tuesday, October 22, 2024, 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

New Concentration Advisor Orientation (Faculty Club)

Monday, October 28 through Tuesday, November 19, 2024

Advising period for spring preregistration (*Schedule extra office hours for concentrators*)

Wednesday, November 6, 2024, 8:45 - 9:45 a.m.

Approaches to pre-concentration advising (virtual)

Tuesday, November 14, 2024

Students on Serious Warning who wish to drop a course after this date must meet with an academic dean to obtain a drop code.

Wednesday, November 27 through Sunday, December 1, 2024

Thanksgiving recess (*begins Wednesday at noon*)

Tuesday, December 3, 2024, 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Ask about ASK (Faculty Club)

Saturday, December 7, 2024, 4 p.m.

Midyear Completion Celebration (Salomon De Ciccio Family Auditorium)



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Sunday December 8, 2024

Beginning of Reading Period (*optional and at the discretion of the instructor*)

Thursday, December 12, 2024, by 5 p.m.

Classes end for courses not observing the Reading Period

Thursday, December 12, 2024, by 5 p.m.

Last day to drop a course or request an incomplete (*INC*) from an instructor

Thursday, December 12, 2024, by 5 p.m.

Last day for students in their antepenultimate (*typically sixth*) semester to declare an undergraduate certificate in ASK

Friday, December 13, 2024, by 5 p.m.

Last day for advisors to approve second or third concentrations in ASK for students in their penultimate semester (*typically the seventh semester*) who are declaring a second/third concentration

Friday, December 13, 2024

Last day for approved seventh- (*or penultimate*) semester undergraduates in eligible concentrations to submit writing completed in the concentration in ASK to complete part II of the writing requirement. Concentration advisors must approve submitted writing in ASK by the last day of the semester

SPRING SEMESTER

Monday, January 20, 2025

Martin Luther King Jr. holiday — no University exercises

Wednesday, January 22, 2025

Classes of second semester begin

Wednesday, January 22 through Tuesday, February 2, 2025

Meetings with seventh- and eighth-semester concentrators to approve course schedules

Tuesday, February 4, 2025, by 5 p.m.

Last day to add a course without a fee

Saturday, February 15 through Tuesday, February 18, 2025

Long weekend — no University exercises

Wednesday, February 19, 2025 by 5 p.m.

Classes resume; last day to add a course, change from audit to credit, or change a grade option



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Tuesday, May 6, 2025, by 5 p.m.

Classes end for courses not observing the reading period; last day to drop a course or to file for an incomplete

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Last day for students in their ante-penultimate (*typically sixth*) semester to declare an undergraduate certificate in ASK

Tuesday, May 6, 2025, by 5 p.m.

Last day for students to declare second or third concentrations in ASK for students in their penultimate semester (*typically the seventh semester*) who are declaring a second/third concentration

Wednesday, May 7, 2025

Last day for approved seventh (*or penultimate*) semester undergraduates in eligible concentrations to submit writing completed in the concentration in ASK to complete part II of the writing requirement. Concentration advisors must approve submitted writing in ASK by the last day of the semester

Wednesday, May 7 through Friday, May 16, 2025

Final examination period

Sunday, May 25, 2025

Commencement



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Special Curricular Opportunities and Degree Options

STUDYING ABROAD

Brown offers undergraduate students the opportunity to study abroad through a wide variety of academic programs, some offered directly by the University and others sponsored by institutions that Brown approves for academic credit. On average, 400 Brown students study outside of the U.S. each year and are transformed by their experiences in the most positive and profound ways.

As a concentration advisor, you should encourage your students to consider studying abroad early on. It is never too early for a student to attend a Study Abroad 101 session or [meet with a study abroad advisor](#) to begin exploring their options. In addition, many academic departments have a designated faculty member who serves as the departmental study abroad advisor and can be an additional resource for students. As a starting point, students can begin reviewing the various program options on the Brown study abroad website or [meet with a study abroad peer advisor](#). Study Abroad Advising has launched a newsletter to help faculty and staff stay up-to-date on the latest developments related to study abroad at Brown, which you can sign up for through [this link](#). Keep an eye out for invitations to Study Abroad 101 sessions for faculty and staff, which are designed to help you learn more about the study abroad process and how you can most effectively collaborate with Study Abroad Advising to support students in their pursuit of study abroad.



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Once a student selects a program and begins the application process, they will meet with their concentration advisor to discuss their academic plans. Information on the University's transfer credit approval process for study abroad can be found on the Brown study abroad website. Students can request concentration credit in the student's concentration declaration in ASK using the "manual entry" feature (see the ASK user guide for approving non-Brown work).

To further facilitate concentration progress during study abroad, Brown students are able to engage in remote coursework, including remote accessible standard courses and [independent studies](#). Similar to completing independent studies on-campus, independent studies completed abroad, allows Brown students studying abroad on a semester- or year-long program to develop a credit-bearing course under the guidance of a Brown faculty sponsor. An independent study completed abroad allows students to capitalize on resources through their study abroad program or in the host country that are not available in Providence and to create a course on a topic that is generally not offered in the Brown curriculum. Because such projects are tied to students' academic interests, they can help a semester abroad become a more integral part of the concentration. The hope is that projects begun during a semester away might even become the basis for a senior thesis once the student returns to campus. Additionally, students may enroll in a remote course at Brown with professor approval, if permitted by their study abroad program. Students interested in remote coursework should work with their study abroad advisor to facilitate the necessary approvals on campus here and abroad to properly register for the course.

Study Abroad | brown.edu/studyabroad

UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATES

Brown undergraduates may elect to pursue an integrated combination of courses, co-curricular and experiential learning — in addition to their concentration — in the form of an undergraduate certificate. Undergraduate certificate programs are pathways developed by one or more academic units and approved by the College Curriculum Council. Together, these experiences contribute to a student's academic and personal development, deepening their understanding of an area of interest and helping them to acquire skills for life after Brown. Certificates may complement a student's existing concentration or may represent an entirely distinct area of interest.

Incorporating feedback from many faculty discussions on the topic, the College Curriculum Council thought carefully about the contours of this program. It weighs the opportunity for this structured work while maintaining enough flexibility for students to craft their own liberal education (with the support of an advising team). According to the [certificate guidelines](#), a student's concentration and certificate may not have substantial overlap. Each certificate has a list of excluded concentrations, and students may count no more than one course toward the certificate and their concentration, nor can certificate programs be developed in areas in which a concentration already exists.



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Students declare an undergraduate certificate in their fifth or sixth semester — after they have declared their concentration — yet early enough to enable planning of the required experiential learning opportunity. The deadline for students to declare is by the last day of classes in their sixth (or antepenultimate) semester. To ensure that students are making intentional decisions, they must have completed or be enrolled in at least two courses toward the certificate at the time they declare the certificate in ASK. Students may only declare one certificate and may not declare a certificate if they are double concentrating.

Undergraduate Certificates | brown.edu/go/undergraduatecertificates

OPTIONAL NINTH SEMESTER

Permission for an optional (i.e., student is not seeking to complete degree requirement(s) which must be taken at Brown and/or student does not have a prior, semester-long medical leave) extra semester requires a petition to the Committee on Academic Standing. Students may seek an additional optional semester of enrollment (either full- or part-time) to supplement required features of their degree programs, such as completing an honors thesis course, a second concentration, a study abroad experience for a junior transfer student, additional courses not required for the concentration (including courses that satisfy or strengthen prehealth application requirements), etc. Students approved by the committee for an optional ninth semester will not be eligible for Brown institutional financial aid, although they may be eligible for other kinds of financial aid. Students planning to submit an optional ninth semester petition should consult an academic advising dean in the College for additional information and review the petition instructions in ASK. Related questions may be directed to a degree completion dean by emailing graduationplans@brown.edu.

Petitions and Forms | brown.edu/academics/college/degree/petitions



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COMBINED AND CONCURRENT DEGREE OPTIONS

Combined Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science Degrees

While approximately 25% of Brown students choose to complete a single baccalaureate degree with more than one concentration (either an A.B. or Sc.B., as above), an even smaller percentage choose to graduate with a single, combined A.B.-Sc.B. degree, which requires a minimum of 38 credits and nine or 10 semesters of enrollment. Students who follow this path organize a five-year program of study that must include one concentration in math or the life or physical sciences, and one concentration in the humanities or social sciences. The combined degree option allows students to complete both courses of study concurrently while also exploring a greater range of courses outside these two disciplines, via the Open Curriculum. This student's transcript would list, for example, "Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science: Sc.B.- Computational Biology, A.B.-Archaeology and the Ancient World." The benefit of this combined option over the choice to double concentrate is that students have greater flexibility to take additional courses beyond their concentration requirements.

Students interested in pursuing this five-year option must declare their intentions before the end of their fifth semester. In rare cases, students who miss the fifth-semester deadline due to qualifying extenuating circumstances may seek approval from the Committee on Academic Standing to join the program late. All cases where exceptions are sought must be resolved before the end of the petitioning student's sixth semester. Petitions from seniors will not be considered by the committee.

Preliminary approvals are granted to students who are very close (within two to three courses) to finishing at least one of their concentrations before the end of their fifth semester. These students must then seek final approval in their seventh semester. Upon successful review of the academic record, these students will receive a final approval to be combined-degree candidates. Exceptional students may be allowed to complete the combined degrees in nine semesters, rather than 10, but they must meet all requirements and have the approval of the Committee on Academic Standing. For more information, please contact Oludurotimi Adetunji, associate dean of the College for undergraduate research and inclusive science at oludurotimi_adetunji@brown.edu.

Concurrent Baccalaureate and Master's Degree

The concurrent baccalaureate and master's degree program allows exceptionally capable students to combine their last year or two of undergraduate study with graduate study in select departments. This means students simultaneously earn both a baccalaureate degree and a master's degree. Eligible students will have achieved a record of academic excellence that demonstrates depth as well as breadth. Interested students are advised to acquaint themselves with [program guidelines](#) early in their college career and to contact Gilda Mossadegh, deputy dean of the College for academic advising (gilda@brown.edu), for more information.

Combined and Concurrent Degree Options | go.brown.edu/degreeoptions



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Fifth-Year Master's Programs

Brown's fifth-year master's degree program allows undergraduates to pursue a master's degree in select departments in the year immediately following completion of their undergraduate degree. Eligible students must apply for admission to this program before they complete the baccalaureate degree.

A list of participating academic departments and other information is available on the Graduate School's website.

Fifth-Year Master's Degree | brown.edu/academics/gradschool/fifth-year

BROWN-RISD CROSS REGISTRATION

As a result of a cooperative arrangement, all Brown students have the option of taking certain courses at the renowned Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), adjacent to Brown on College Hill. Up to four RISD credits may count toward a student's graduation requirement at Brown. During the fall and spring semesters and during RISD's winter session, Brown students enroll at RISD under a cross-registration agreement that is part of their Brown tuition. Students may take courses at RISD during the summer session but will pay RISD directly upon registration. Once approved, each 3-credit RISD course is regarded as the full equivalent of 1 Brown credit while each 6-credit RISD course is regarded as the full equivalent of 2 Brown credits. Upon satisfactory completion with a grade of C or better, the course is recorded on the student's Brown transcript.

RISD also offers 1.0 credit workshop courses. One workshop does not equate to a full or half credit at Brown. Brown students who wish to cross-register need to take, and successfully complete, a total of three, 1.0 credit workshops for them to count as 1.0 Brown credit. The three workshops can be taken separately or all in the same semester and RISD cross-registration approval is necessary so that RISD and Brown can keep record of the workshops. Once three, 1.0 credit workshops are successfully completed, the student will have a workshop placeholder course added to their Brown transcript that will be equivalent to 1.0 Brown credit. The Brown student must have room on their registration for that semester when the three 1.0 credit workshops are successfully completed.

Registration for RISD courses is on a space-available basis and is subject to permission of the RISD instructor and the RISD Registrar. Please be aware that RISD students receive priority enrollment in RISD Wintersession courses. Completion of VISA 100 is recommended and may be required for some courses. Students who wish to register for a RISD course should visit the College's page on cross-registration for instructions.

RISD Cross-Registration |

college.brown.edu/learn-beyond-classroom/us-study/risd-cross-registration



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Cross-registration is distinct from the Brown|RISD Dual Degree (BRDD) program, where students earn a degree from each school in five years. It is not possible for students already enrolled at Brown to join the BRDD program. For more information on BRDD, visit the program's website.

Brown|RISD Dual Degree Program | risd.brown.edu

PREREQUISITES, PLACEMENT AND PRE-BROWN EXAMS

Many academic departments have sequential courses and offer one or more foundational courses that every student must either take and earn credit for at Brown or place out of before taking higher-level courses. Some departments offer placement exams and/or accept the results of Advanced Placement (AP) tests or International Baccalaureate (IB), A-Level or other pre-Brown exams or even other non-Brown college-level study for course placement and/or course prerequisites. Test-based credits are also recognized by some concentrations as substitutes for concentration requirements. In ASK, students can pull test-based credits on their internal record into their concentration declaration course plan, where you can approve them as a substitute for a concentration's requirement.

As a concentration advisor, you are responsible for offering advice around course selection/placement and for vetting student requests for substitutions to concentration requirements, so it is essential for you to be familiar with the rules of your department and concentration(s). Please see the additional information below on approving non-Brown work for concentration substitutions.

TRANSFER CREDITS, STUDY ABROAD CREDITS AND EXCHANGE CREDITS

With the appropriate permissions, Brown students may apply course credit earned at another institution toward their Brown degree requirements. U.S. citizens and permanent residents of the U.S. may petition the College to study full time or part time at an institutionally accredited two- or four-year college or university in the U.S.; students studying on F-1 visas may petition to study full time at a two- or four-year institution in their home countries.

Students who wish to receive transfer credit for non-Brown courses taken after matriculating to Brown to apply toward the 30 courses required for their degree must submit a request in the [transfer credit section](#) of ASK. Requests are routed in ASK to an academic dean, who vets the institution and coursework transferability as unassigned credits. Students seeking equivalency to Brown courses can have their request reviewed by a departmental faculty representative known as the transfer credit ("subject") liaison. Academic deans are available to guide students through the transfer credit guidelines and procedures.



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Please note that most students are not eligible for transfer credit unless they have a credit recovery need (i.e. behind the expected target term to reach 30 course credits). See full eligibility guidelines below. Students can still achieve their academic goals in other ways. Concentration advisors have the discretion to clear students of concentration requirements without the need for transfer credit through the process outlined below. Alternatively, students can request a placement notation for outside coursework for select foundational courses. Placement notations are reviewed and approved by the respective departmental faculty. These notations do not advance a student's course credit count as they do not carry any course credit.

Transfer Credit Guidelines | go.brown.edu/transferecredit

Process for Approving Non-Brown Work for Concentration Substitutions

The concentration declaration in ASK allows students to manually add non-Brown work (including courses taken elsewhere, a practicum or internship experience, evidence of language competence, etc.) to their course plan for your approval — even if such work does not appear on their Brown transcript. As a concentration advisor, you have authority over which non-Brown courses may count toward the concentration based on the criteria set by your concentration. You can approve this non-Brown work as a substitute for a concentration requirement in the student's concentration declaration (see instructions in the [ASK user guide](#)). This means you can approve a non-Brown course for concentration credit even if that work is neither eligible for University transfer credit nor for assignment to course equivalency, and therefore cannot be recorded on the student's Brown transcript. A course worth three semester credit hours (i.e., less than one Brown credit) taken elsewhere that did not result in transfer credit is just one example. If a student initially created a manual entry for a non-Brown course that later results in transfer or study abroad course credit on their transcript, they should update their concentration declaration and select that course from their internal record into their course plan to replace the manual entry. Note: A concentration advisor is distinct from the role of a transfer credit liaison, who approves course equivalencies. *Note: A concentration advisor is distinct from the role of a transfer credit liaison, who approves course equivalencies.*

We recommend that you advise students planning to apply credits from other institutions toward their concentration requirements to obtain your approval in advance. It is wise for them to perhaps also consult with the staff responsible for approving study away (academic deans of the College), study abroad (study abroad advising staff) and/or transfer credits (transferecredit@brown.edu).

Approvals of substitutions should be recorded in the student's concentration declaration in ASK. This provides a useful record for you, the student and any other viewers and is especially useful when the approved substitute does not appear on the transcript. We suggest preapproval or a conditional preapproval whenever possible. While retroactive approval has the advantage of providing you with full information about the course and the student's performance, it poses the disadvantage that the



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student may complete coursework that may not be recognized and/or transcribed by your concentration, another academic department, or the College.

We encourage concentration advisors to avoid treating prerequisites as concentration requirements whenever possible. Likewise, it is best not to expect students to seek or obtain transfer credits for prerequisite or introductory courses, especially for work completed prior to matriculation to Brown. This is also true when students have already completed a higher-level course.

Concentration advisors may approve the substitution of concentration requirements in the concentration declaration as outlined above. After academic advising deans in the College determine whether the individual student and the course work is eligible for transfer credit, faculty subject liaisons in each department can determine specific course equivalency for transfer credits or for course placement notations.

UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT OPPORTUNITIES

Many Brown students teach in some capacity during their time at Brown, primarily as undergraduate teaching assistants (UTAs). Teaching requires the ability to listen and discern student understanding, communicate complex ideas, make decisions in the moment and model expert-like thinking. Typically UTA positions are suited for sophomore to senior students, but some instructors welcome first-year student UTAs. If your advisee finds a particular course or instructor exciting, suggest they investigate whether or not they could apply to become a UTA for that course. If an adviser is hesitant to apply due to inexperience, the Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning offers teaching support for UTAs, such as the [UTA Orientation](#). The UTA is a paid position and may be an alternative work experience for students interested in honing their communication and problem-solving skills. Advisees who are interested in becoming a UTA are encouraged to read through the [Guidelines for UTAs](#).



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Advising/Campus Resources

COLLEGE AND OTHER UNIVERSITY CONTACTS

The College | college@brown.edu | 401-863-9800

College deans and staff members are here to answer questions and offer academic guidance. You can email college@brown.edu or curriculum@brown.edu anytime or call 401-863-9800 during business hours and your inquiry will be directed to the appropriate colleagues. To find a program-specific contact, visit the College's website to view our [staff directory](#) and contact information. A short list of colleagues available for consultation with concentration advisors include:

Name	Role	Email
Dawn King	Deputy Dean of the College for Curriculum and Co-Curriculum	curriculum@brown.edu
Mauricio Cobian	Associate Dean for Curricular Integration	mauricio_cobian@brown.edu
Lindsey Silvia	Curricular and Co-Curricular Program Coordinator	curriculum@brown.edu
Peggy Chang	Associate Dean for Curricular Engagement; Director, Curricular Resource Center	peggy_chang@brown.edu

Academic Coaching, Engagement and Support (AcCESs)

AcCESs (Academic Coaching, Engagement & Support) is a collaborative academic support program for undergraduates. Professional and peer academic coaches work with students to help them set and achieve their goals. Academic coaches in various settings foster the holistic development of academic skills that support students' educational journeys and personal well-being.

1. The Division of Athletics offers peer academic coaching for varsity athletic teams. Athletics Academic Coaches are assigned to specific teams and work with the Student-Athlete Development Office and the coaching staff to assist them in the overall academic success of their student-athletes.
2. Peer Academic Coaches at the Curricular Resource Center are trained and dedicated upper-level students (juniors, seniors, and graduate students). Assigned, one-on-



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one coaching is available on a first-come, first-served basis to students from various cohorts, and our weekly drop-in/open hours (167 Angell Street) and “Power Hour” workshops are open to all undergraduates.

3. The College’s International Advising Team offers one-on-one coaching appointments with professional staff at 313 Page-Robinson Hall and virtually. All self-identified undergraduate international students are welcome to sign up for coaching appointments.

4. The coaches from Athletics, the CRC, and the International Advising Team also offer study skills workshops (“Power Hours”) throughout the year. Visit this website for more information: crc.brown.edu/coaching-mentoring/access

Our one-on-one coaching sessions and “Power Hour” workshops enable students to:

- Develop individualized study strategies, test-taking skills, and plans for assignments.
- Enhance broader academic skills, including managing and prioritizing their time, understanding their preferred learning styles, and more.
- Discuss and explore self-care and wellness strategies to help them stay healthy while studying at Brown.
- Discuss academic choices such as grade options, course and concentration selection, and developing relationships with a team of advisors and mentors.
- Reflect upon their academic goals, personal aspirations, and values relating to their academic experience at Brown.



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- Find the appropriate resources at Brown to enhance their academics and well-being.
- Stay motivated and focused on their academic and personal goals.

Curricular Resource Center | crc.brown.edu/coaching-mentoring/access

TEACHING AND LEARNING SERVICES (SHERIDAN CENTER)

The Sheridan Center offers a wide array of teaching and learning services, from digital instruction to curriculum support, English language learning guidance, appointments at the Writing Center, to tutoring for specific language or STEM courses. For more information about these services, visit the Sheridan Center website.

**Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning | sheridan.brown.edu/services
401-863-1219 | Sheridan_Center@brown.edu**

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

If you have concerns about a student's health or well-being, please contact Student Support Services, located in Page-Robinson Hall on the fifth floor, or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), located at 450 Brook Street, with its peer departments in the health and wellness center.

**Student Support Services | brown.edu/student-support
401-863-3145 | studentsupport@brown.edu**

**Counseling and Psychological Services | brown.edu/caps
401-863-3476 | counseling@health.brown.edu**



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STUDENT SAFETY OR CONDUCT CONCERNS

Nature of Concern	Contact Office	Phone
Potential or immediate danger	Department of Public Safety	863-4111
General concerns about a Brown community member	Student Support Services	863-3145
Mental health support needs	Counseling and Psychological Services	863-3476
Non-emergency medical care	Student Health Services	863-3953
Sexual assault, harassment or relationship abuse	On-Call Counselor	863-6000
	Sexual Harassment and Assault Resources Education (SHARE) Advocate	863-2794

CAMPUS EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

The University has a campus [emergency action plan available online](#). All faculty are encouraged to review the plan, particularly the instructions regarding shelter-in-place situations. Brown’s Core Crisis Team continuously reviews the University’s emergency plans and preparedness to meet crises.

AFTER-HOURS CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact Office	Phone
Department of Public Safety	863-4111
Emergency	863-4111
Non-emergency	863-3322
Administrator On Call (nights, weekends, holidays)	863-3322
Counseling and Psychological Services	863-3476



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Additional Campus Life Resources

Office of the Chaplains and Religious Life	brown.edu/ocrl	863-2344
Brown Center for Students of Color	brown.edu/bcsc	863-2120
Global Brown Center for International Students	brown.edu/globalbrowncenter	863-1300
LGBTQ Center	brown.edu/lgbtq	863-3062
Office of Military-Affiliated Students	brown.edu/go/rotc	863-7682
Sarah Doyle Center for Women and Gender	brown.edu/sdwc	863-2189
Undocumented, First-Generation College and Low-Income Student Center	brown.edu/uflc	
Student Health Services	brown.edu/health	863-3953
BWell Health Promotion	brown.edu/bwell	863-2794
Counseling and Psychological Services	brown.edu/caps	863-3476
Donovan Program for Recovery/Substance-Free Student Initiatives	brown.edu/go/donovan	863-2536
Administrator on Call	brown.edu/offices/student-support/administrator-call	863-3322



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