HOW TO PETITION FOR AN INTERDISCIPLINARY CONCENTRATION

Most students declare a single concentration in one department. Some students find, however, that their interests and career ambitions are not satisfied by the structure of a single department, and instead wish to design their own concentrations using the courses of several departments. All interdisciplinary concentrations require special permission from the Committee on Academic Standing.

A proposal for an interdisciplinary concentration includes five elements:

1. **A cover sheet with signatures of appropriate faculty (see p. 2)** – Department Chairs/Program Directors from all departments/programs that will contribute courses to the concentration need to sign off on the proposal. The proposed advisor for the concentration (i.e., the person who will serve as an academic advisor and who will supervise the senior thesis) also needs to sign the cover sheet. The other materials for the proposal should be prepared before you seek signatures so that faculty members can assess your program and decide whether or not to endorse it, provide you with feedback, etc.

2. **An explanation of the concentration** – An interdisciplinary concentration integrates courses from at least two departments into a coherent logical whole. You cannot design a personal concentration within a single department in order to avoid departmental requirements. Your proposal should, therefore, make clear how the pieces of the various disciplines fit together, and should show an orderly progression of increasingly difficult courses. Proposals which paste together numerous introductory courses are unlikely to be approved. The concentration should culminate in a senior project (INTER 500) that integrates previous courses, and your junior year should be planned to prepare for that project. In 1-3 typed pages, you should define the concentration, state your goals, explain why these goals cannot be as efficiently achieved by a regular concentration and minor, and justify your desire for a special, individual course of study. Your goals should be numbered and should focus on the following questions: What do you plan to achieve with your concentration? What particular skills do you intend to gain? What body of knowledge do you hope to master? If you intend to declare a minor or second major, explain. Remember that your statement will be evaluated by faculty members who will notice and be displeased with mistakes in spelling and grammar.

3. **A goals sheet and chronological plan (see p. 3)** – The Committee on Academic Standing expects to see at least two courses in each goals category; each course should appear only once on the list. If you have not yet met a goal, note how and when you intend to meet it. You may supplement lists of courses with explanations of how you have interpreted or satisfied the goals in ways that are uniquely your own. The Committee on Academic Standing is generally more receptive to the student who satisfies the goals using a variety of departments than to the person who uses only a few. You must also demonstrate to the Committee that your plans can be realized within the time available.

4. **A statement of support from the proposed concentration advisor**. Advisors should submit a detailed letter supporting the proposed concentration and senior project and indicating that they a) reviewed the complete schedule of courses for the proposed concentration with the student, b) approved the specific list of courses and chronological plan on the goals sheet (p. 3 of this application), and c) understand that these courses are likely to be available when the student wants to take them. Advisors should also acknowledge that students will be allowed to substitute a maximum of two courses from the list on the goals sheet without needing approval from the Committee on Academic Standing. If students want to change more than two courses then they need to re-submit their proposal to the Committee along with advisor support for those changes.

5. **A report on the progress/plan for completion of other degree requirements** – You need to describe how you will meet the Writing Program and SSIH requirements.
DECLARATION OF INTERDISCIPLINARY CONCENTRATION

Date: __________  Student I.D. # _______________________  Class Year: _________

Name: ________________________________ ____________________________________________

Last                                                 First                                             M.I.

Title of Interdisciplinary Concentration: ____________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Departments/Programs</th>
<th>Print Name</th>
<th>Signature of Chair/Director</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Signature of current advisor: ____________________________________________

*Printed name and signature of faculty member who agrees to serve as advisor for this Interdisciplinary Concentration*:

Printed Name______________________________________________________________

Signature_______________________________________________________________

*A statement of support is required from the advisor endorsing the specific plan of courses, verifying availability of courses, and acknowledging restrictions on changes to courses*:

CAS Action:  Approved ________  Returned __________  Denied __________

Date: _________  Associate Dean (Academic) ________________________________

ALL MATERIALS SHOULD BE CAREFULLY PREPARED AND SUBMITTED TO THE DEAN OF STUDENTS OFFICE. PROPOSALS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED BEFORE THE END OF THE STUDENT'S 4TH SEMESTER AT HAMILTON. THE COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC STANDING WILL NORMALLY NOT ACCEPT PROPOSALS SUBMITTED LATER.
NAME: _____________________________________   CLASS YEAR: ___________

CONCENTRATION: __________________________________________________________

MINOR: _________________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Courses for Concentration*</th>
<th>Corresponding Goals (Show goal number on same line as course)</th>
<th>Courses for Minor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note that you will be allowed to substitute a maximum of two courses from the above list without needing approval from the Committee on Academic Standing. If you want to change more than two courses then you need to re-submit your proposal to the Committee.
A. The Writing Program requires that each student pass at least three writing-intensive courses, each taken in a different semester, with at least one course outside your areas of concentration. Only one of the three required writing-intensive courses may be a course in mathematics or courses in which assignments are written in a language other than English. The requirement must be completed by the end of the junior year.

1) __________________________________________________________

2) __________________________________________________________

3) __________________________________________________________

B. The Social and Structural Institutional Hierarchies requirement is based within concentrations. The Committee on Academic Policy describes this requirement as the following: “…every concentration shall have a requirement that will help students gain an understanding of structural and institutional hierarchies based on one or more of the social categories of race, class, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, sexuality, age, and abilities/disabilities. Departments and programs shall determine how their students will fulfill this requirement in a way that is most consistent with their disciplines. The requirement should encourage students to think critically about accomplishments, experiences, and representations of various social groups in the United States and/or other countries.” Indicate below how you will fulfill this requirement as part of your interdisciplinary concentration.

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________