

Social Studies

Dr. Anya Bernstein, Director of Studies

Social Studies is a unique program of study at Harvard College. Originating in 1960 through the efforts of a small and distinguished group of faculty, it reflects the belief that the study of the social world requires an integration of the disciplines of history and political science, sociology and economics, anthropology and philosophy. Concerned with the fragmentation caused by increasing disciplinary specialization, the faculty and students of Social Studies seek an integrated approach to the study of social phenomena that synthesizes the findings as well as the methods of various modes of social inquiry.

Accordingly, the common introduction to the concentration in Social Studies 10 is to read closely and at length some of the thinkers who have durably shaped the way we understand society, addressing the questions of how it holds together, the obligations it imposes, the possibilities for liberty and economic development it both nurtures and constrains. Students in Social Studies 10 study the modern foundations of Adam Smith, Mill, Tocqueville, Marx, Weber, Durkheim, and Freud; they conclude with consideration of the problematic issues posed in contemporary society by theorists of gender, language, and knowledge. Throughout Social Studies 10 the objective is to teach students to read theoretical arguments carefully and critically and to juxtapose them against historical developments and social experience.

The purpose of the junior tutorials in Social Studies is to immerse students in a detailed and focused study of an empirical, theoretical, or historical topic in the social sciences. Junior tutorials also teach social science methodology, providing students with instruction on research techniques and offering them experience in conducting primary research techniques and offering them experience in conducting primary research in preparation for their senior theses.

Starting in 2008-09, Social Studies will offer several large “concept” courses each semester on major topics in the social sciences such as human rights, nationalism, race, and gender. Students will have the option of taking two junior tutorials or of taking one junior tutorial and a concept course.

Students develop plans of study in consultation with their academic advisers. They identify an area of interest (for example, inequality, development, or modern social theory) and pursue it by taking a minimum of four half-courses. These four courses must normally be drawn from at least two social science departments and must include one course on an historical topic. Students may petition to take social science courses taught in non-social science departments, or courses offered at Harvard’s professional schools. A student who is studying inequality might take two courses in government, one course in sociology, one in economics, and one in history. A student who is studying development might take two courses in economics, one in anthropology, and one in history. A student of social theory might take one course in philosophy, one course in history, two courses in the government department (including one on the history of political thought), and one course at the Law School.

In the senior year, all Social Studies concentrators enroll in a one-on-one tutorial in preparation for researching and writing a senior thesis. This is a requirement for all concentrators.

Social Studies is an application-only concentration. All sophomores considering concentrating in Social Studies must take Social Studies 10a, Introduction to Social Studies in the fall term. This course is a prerequisite for applying to Social Studies. The application deadline for sophomores (class of 2010) is November 1.

Transfer students and second-semester sophomores seeking to change concentrations can apply to Social Studies in February for admission in the spring semester, and juniors can apply in September for admission in fall.

REQUIREMENTS

**For students entering the College in Fall 2006 or later.
Other students should refer to the *Handbook for Students*
from the year in which they declared their concentration.**

13 half-courses

1. *Required courses:*
 - a. Social Studies 10a and 10b.
 - b. Social Studies 98, the junior tutorial. Starting with the class of 2010, students may take two junior tutorials or may take one junior tutorial and a concept course.
 - c. Social Studies 99, the senior tutorial (full course).
 - d. One half-course in economics. This requirement can be fulfilled by taking the first semester of Social Analysis 10, by taking Social Analysis 72, or by taking one half-course in economics for which Social Analysis 10 is a prerequisite. The economics requirement must be completed by the end of the junior year.
 - e. One half-course in elementary statistics. The statistics requirement must be completed by the end of the junior year.
 - f. One course in the philosophy and methods of the social sciences. Social Studies will first offer a course on this topic, which will be required of the class of 2011 and beyond, in the spring of 2009. Students in the class of 2010 will have the option of taking this course in the spring of their junior year or substituting an appropriate course in social or political theory or social science methodology by the end of the junior year.
 - g. Four half-courses following a student's plan of study. These courses will be selected in consultation with the student's adviser, and approved by the Social Studies Board of Instruction. The focus area must normally be drawn from two social science departments and must include at least one half-course on an historical topic.
2. *Tutorials:*
 - a. *Sophomore year:* Social Studies 10a and 10b (two terms). Letter-graded. Weekly lectures and discussion sections in groups of eight students.
 - b. *Junior year:* Social Studies 98. One term required. Students may take a second junior tutorial or they may take one junior tutorial and a concept course. Letter graded.
 - c. *Senior year:* Social Studies 99 (full course, indivisible), the writing of a senior thesis. Graded SAT/UNS. Each thesis has two independent readers.
3. *Thesis:* Required.
4. *General Examination:* An oral examination taken at the end of the senior year which includes a defense of the thesis and a comprehensive discussion of the student's focus area in Social Studies.

ADVISING

Each student entering the concentration is assigned an adviser who is responsible for helping the student plan his or her course of study. In the first semester of concentration, the adviser is that student's sophomore tutor. Whenever possible, the same adviser continues to serve in this capacity until the student graduates. When this is not possible, another adviser is assigned who shares similar intellectual interests with the student. Usually a student will meet with his or her adviser at least twice a year to sign study cards and discuss the student's Plan of Study. The Director of Studies heads the Board of Advisers.

For up-to-date information on advising in Social Studies, please see the Advising Programs Office website: www.fas.harvard.edu/~advising/concentrations/SocialStudies.html.

HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

For more information, contact the Assistant Director of Studies for Freshman/Sophomore Advising, Darra Mulderry, or the Undergraduate Program Administrator, Sarah Champlin-Scharff, in Hilles Library on the lower main floor (617-495-2163).

ENROLLMENT STATISTICS**Number of Concentrators as of November**

Concentrators	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Social Studies	293	298	307	305	326
Social Studies + another field	14	11	13	22	13
Another field + Social Studies	0	0	0	0	0