

# Concentrations: FAQs for students

## Frequently Asked Questions for Students in the Class of 2011 and beyond on General Education Concentrations

### 1. What is a General Education Concentration?

A concentration consists of four courses/units chosen from a faculty-designed menu that is structured on the basis of a clearly articulated organizing principle. It may focus on a particular issue or topic or area of inquiry and involve courses cutting across disciplines or it may comprise courses solely within a particular department or program. In the case of some concentrations, preapproved, noncourse-based “co-curricular” components may be substituted for one or more of the four courses. Though they count toward the completion of a concentration, such co-curricular components do not count toward the total credits needed to graduate.

### 2. What is the purpose of a General Education concentration?

If the purpose of a major is to provide “depth” within a given field, the purpose of a concentration is to foster breadth and integrative learning outside of your major field.

### 3. Where can I find a list of the concentrations, of their requirements, and of the courses/units/co-curricular components that may be used to fulfill them?

Brief descriptions of available concentrations are published annually in the College Catalog (both print and online editions). The particulars for each concentration—including the concentration requirements, and the courses, units, and co-curricular activities that meet those requirements—can be found in the 2007-2008 online catalog (published mid-August 2007). The online catalog and registration system will also allow you to see which concentrations (if any) a particular course or unit is part of.

### 4. How many General Education concentrations must I complete in order to graduate?

Two. It is possible, however, to complete a minor or a second major in lieu of a concentration. The following table shows the possibilities:

Major 1	Concentration 1	Concentration 2
Major 1	Minor 1	Concentration 1
Major 1	Minor 1	Minor 2
Major 1	Major 2	Concentration 1
Major 1	Major 2	Minor 1
Major 1	Major 2	Major 3

Please note that partially completed minors (e.g., five out of six or seven required courses/units), and/or partially completed second majors (e.g. everything but the thesis) may not be counted in lieu of concentrations, unless the courses/units taken overlap with those of an existing concentration or minor.

## **5. Can I complete more than two General Education concentrations?**

Yes. You may complete as many as you wish, but only one course/unit may count toward more than one of your concentrations (see the “double-dipping” rules below).

## **6. When and how do I declare my General Education concentrations?**

You must declare your concentrations, as well as your major and any minor(s) by March 1 of your sophomore year. You may declare your concentrations and your major at any time prior to that if you so wish. In either case, you should use the appropriate online declaration forms in the Student Menu or the Garnet Gateway. You may subsequently change your concentration declarations, with the approval of your advisor.

**IMPORTANT!** Students failing to declare their major and concentrations by March 1 of their sophomore year will be blocked from registering for courses for the following Short Term and Fall semester.

## **7. How should my General Education concentrations be related to my major?**

Your concentrations should not and cannot be in the same field as your (first) major. Remember that the purpose of the concentrations is to encourage breadth. One or both of your concentrations may complement your major (e.g., you may choose to be a history major focusing on Europe and opt for a concentration in the German language). Or one or both of them may be in something completely different from your major (e.g., you may choose to be a history major focusing on Europe and opt for concentrations in Chinese and public health).

In any case, you may use only one course/ unit to fulfill both a concentration and a major requirement. In other words, only one of the eight courses you choose to complete your two concentrations may also be counted toward your major (see below).

## **8. What are the “double-dipping” rules with regard to General Education concentrations?**

At Bates when a single course or unit is used to fulfill two or more requirements, it is known as "double-dipping." The following double-dipping rules apply:

a) When appropriate, courses/units taken to fulfill a concentration may also fulfill other General Education requirements (in writing [W1, W2, W3] in scientific reasoning [S], in laboratory experience [L], and in quantitative reasoning [Q]).

b) Only one of the eight courses/units you choose to fulfill your two concentrations may also be used to fulfill a requirement in your (first) major. Exception: If you take more than the required number of courses in your major field, you may use any “extra” courses (those that you don’t need to count toward your major) as part of a concentration.

c) Alternatively, only one course, unit, or approved co-curricular component may count toward both of your concentrations. If you choose this option, you cannot choose also to double-dip between your concentrations and your major as described in b) above. The two concentrations together must thus have a minimum of seven distinct courses, units, or co-curricular components.

### **9. Can I count AP, IB, or A-level exam credits toward a General Education concentration?**

You may, but only if the credit awarded is accepted as a direct equivalent to a specific Bates course that is part of the concentration.

### **10. Can I count credit transferred to Bates from courses taken at other institutions (in the United States or abroad) towards a General Education concentration?**

You may, but only if the course for which the credit is awarded is accepted as a direct equivalent to a specific Bates course that is part of the concentration.

### **11. Can I count an appropriate summer internship or other co-curricular experience towards a General Education concentration?**

You may, but only if it is accepted as part of the concentration. You are advised to check about this with the concentration coordinator before undertaking the activity.