

What is the Secondary Field in Educational Studies?

Students in Harvard College have the option of including a secondary field in their plan of study. This is in addition to their primary concentration. The Secondary Field in Educational Studies offers students an opportunity to examine education from multiple disciplinary perspectives. Students pursuing the secondary field may explore a broad overview including course work related to individual learning, schools as organizations, the role of education in society and educational policy. Alternatively, students may choose to focus in depth on a particular aspect of education such as social stratification, literacy, childhood and adolescence, or policy. There are many possibilities and students are encouraged to get in touch with the Director of the secondary field for help with developing a plan of study.

Does the Secondary Field in Educational Studies lead to professional licensure?

No. The Secondary Field in Educational Studies is not intended as a form of professional training. It provides a formal way for Harvard College students to study education through the perspectives of various academic disciplines. However, students who pursue a Secondary Field in Educational Studies may also be interested in the Teaching and Teacher Leadership (TTL) Program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE).

When do students declare their interest in a secondary field?

Students are encouraged to declare their interest in the Secondary Field in Educational Studies during their Junior year and may not declare after October 1 of their Senior year.

How many courses are required for the Secondary Field in Educational Studies?

Students must take a total of 20 credits, or the equivalent of five 4-credit courses. The courses must include:

1. One foundational course from an approved list of courses.
2. Four additional courses related to education from an approved list of courses (or approved through petition).

Three of the five courses must be offered by distinct academic units (departments or schools).

Where can I find a list of approved courses?

A continuously updated list of approved courses in education is available at Educational Studies secondary field website. Students will need to check the my.Harvard course catalog for confirmation on whether a course is offered in a given academic year.

How can I petition to have a course approved?

Students may petition for a course to be approved for the Secondary Field in Educational Studies by sending an email with a brief rationale for inclusion along with the course number, title, and description to the Director of the secondary field.

Can I take courses at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) and apply them to the secondary field?

Yes, consistent with FAS regulations on cross-registration, students have no limit on the number of cross registration courses they can take and can count courses towards the Secondary Field in Educational Studies from a Harvard professional school such as HGSE.

Is there a required capstone or final project?

Yes, students pursuing the Secondary Field in Educational Studies are required to complete a capstone project related to education. This can include:

1. Writing a senior thesis on a topic related to education.
2. Taking a course that requires a significant research project.
3. Completing an independent study focused on education.
4. Working in a laboratory or as a research assistant on a study related to education.
5. An extracurricular project that involves significant learning and reflection.

The Director of the Secondary Field in Educational Studies must approve the Capstone Project proposal before it is commenced. It can be undertaken in one of the five courses satisfying requirements for the secondary field or in another course not counting toward the secondary field. The Director of the secondary field can help identify and arrange opportunities for the capstone project.

Can a course count for both a concentration and a secondary field?

Yes. However, due to FAS regulations, only one course may double count for a secondary field and concentration.