South Asian Studies

South Asian Studies is an interdisciplinary concentration in which students work across the humanities and social sciences, geographical locations, and time periods. The concentration emphasizes both the diversity of South Asia as a region, as well as the long-term historical connections among people and places in Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. The concentration takes a comparative approach, bringing attention to history, politics, and culture within the region, as well as in the equally vital global South Asian diaspora.

Course Requirements

All South Asian Studies concentrators must take and pass 10 courses as approved by their concentration advisor. Students who wish to earn honors must take 12 courses total (see Senior-Year Project below).

SAST 0700 or HIST 1620
Introduction to Modern South Asia
Resisting Empire: Gandhi and the Making of Modern South Asia

Two courses in the Humanities with a majority focus in South Asia, such as:
- CLAS 0995: India's Classical Performing Arts
- CLAS 1140: Classical Philosophy of India
- COST 0034: Dharma: A History of Classical Indian Civilization
- RELS 1510: Islam in South Asia
- RELS 0036: Love and War in India
- RELS 0037: Sensing the Sacred: Sensory Culture in South Asian Religions
- RELS 0526: This Whole World is OM: Mantras in Indian Religions
- COST 0145: Karma, Rebirth and Liberation: Life and Death in South Asian Religions
- COST 0525: The History and Practice of Yoga in India and Beyond

Two courses in the Social Sciences with a majority focus in South Asia, such as:
- ANTH 0110: Anthropology and Global Social Problems: Environment, Development, and Governance
- HIST 1979D: Ruined History: Visual and Material Culture in South Asia
- POLS 1280: Politics, Economy and Society in India
- SAST 0525: The History and Practice of Yoga in India and Beyond
- SAST 0140: Food, Religion and Politics in South Asia
- SAST 0037: Sensing the Sacred: Sensory Culture in South Asian Religions
- SAST 0034: Dharma: A History of Classical Indian Civilization

At least five additional elective courses. Students can take additional courses in the humanities or social sciences with a focus on South Asia, such as:
- ANTH 0100: Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
- ANTH 2320: Ideology of Development
- COST 0100: Introduction to Contemplative Studies
- ECON 0510: Development and the International Economy
- ECON 2510: Economic Development I
- HIAR 0081: Architecture of the House Through Space and Time
- HIST 1440: The Ottomans: Faith, Law, Empire
- HNDI 0200: Beginning Hindi or Urdu
- HNDI 0400: Intermediate Hindi-Urdu
- HNDI 1080: Advanced Hindi-Urdu
- MCM 1505O: Does Utopia Still Exist? Media, politics and the hope of something else
- POLS 0200: Introduction to Comparative Politics
- POLS 1380: Ethnic Politics and Conflict
- RELS 0100: Buddhist Thought, Practice, and Society
- SAST 1970: Independent Study
- SANS 0200: Elementary Sanskrit II
- SANS 0400: Classical Sanskrit Story Literature
- SANS 1100: Vedic Sanskrit

Total Credits: 10

Language Requirements

Proficiency in a South Asian language is required for the concentration. Demonstrating proficiency can entail passing a written and oral examination, 4 semesters of formal language study at Brown or another institution, or a high school transcript indicating that the language of instruction for all courses was a South Asian language. Native Hindi/Urdu speakers are encouraged to fulfill the language requirement by taking another South Asian language for four semester, such as Sanskrit at Brown or a relevant language at another institution. Up to two language courses can count toward fulfilling the student's elective requirements.

Senior-Year Project

Students must complete either a senior capstone project OR an honors thesis.

Capstone projects or honors theses are opportunities for students to creatively synthesize the thinking on South Asia that they have developed during the concentration. The project should exhibit an empirically and theoretically driven research question or argument about some aspect of South Asian Studies. The senior-year project should involve some research in at least one South Asian language.

All students are encouraged to start thinking about their capstones in their junior year.

Capstones can take two primary forms:

1. A research paper of approximately 30 pages on a topic related to South Asia for an existing concentration-eligible course, undertaken with the permission of the instructor.
2. An independent study-based project. The produce and/or process that constitutes this can be artistic, primary or secondary research-based, internship-related, or something else. The project must be supervised by at least one CCSA faculty member for at least one semester under SAST 1970. This course can count towards the five elective requirement.

At the end of the junior year, each student should meet with the Director of Undergraduate Study (DUS) to review their plan for completing their capstone. If pursuing a capstone project, students will be required to submit, by the end of the shopping period of the fall of their senior year, a short proposal (300 words) that describes how they are going to complete this requirement.

An Honors Thesis is a two-semester independent study supervised by a thesis advisor (SAST 1970). These two courses constitute the additional courses needed for honors in the concentration.
An honors thesis can be textual, or it can take other forms (multi-media, visual, artistic, or musical, for example). The form and substance of a non-textual honors thesis must conform to the rigorous regulations set out by the relevant department(s) and the Dean of the College.

**Additional Honors Requirements**

To be eligible for Honors, students will have earned an 'A' in the majority of courses for the concentration.

Students may graduate with Honors in South Asian Studies by completing an undergraduate Honors thesis under the supervision of at least one reader drawn from the CCSA faculty* and one additional reader from the Brown (or RISD, in the case of Brown-RISD students) faculty community.

In order to pursue Honors, students must submit the following materials to the CCSA DUS by April 25:

1. A prospectus (3-5 pages, describing the major research questions and methods to be used, complete with bibliography) that has been read and vetted by the student's intended primary reader.
2. An email from the faculty member who will serve as primary reader to the CCSA DUS noting their willingness to advise on the thesis.

In addition, students must:

1. Enroll in a two-semester sequence of Independent Study, SAST 1970 or under a relevant department course code.
2. Designate a second reader by September 30 of the senior year. Second readers should also confirm their willingness to serve as a reader by sending an email to the CCSA DUS.
3. Be in regular contact with the thesis advisor about the progress of the project.
4. Present their research to the CCSA community during their final semester.

For mid-year graduating students, the topic and primary reader must be identified and confirmed by mid-November of the junior year, and a second reader must be arranged and confirmed by January 30 of the senior year.

A complete penultimate draft of the thesis is due to both readers on April 1. A final draft that incorporates readers' comments is due back to the readers on April 15 of the student's senior year.

* This includes all people listed under the Faculty, Postdoctoral Associate, and Visiting Scholars (limited to those in residence at Brown) tabs on the CCSA website.