M.A. IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

The Master of Arts Degree in International Studies

The MA in International Studies is a 30-credit degree program that is designed for students who seek practical training in social science perspectives and methods that address emerging problems of globalization, international conflicts and humanitarian crises, global environmental change, and international development. The program emphasizes professional preparation through the acquisition of qualitative and quantitative research skills that will enhance students’ career opportunities and/or prepare them for advanced study in doctoral programs. The program faculty consists of experts in international relations, comparative politics and political economy, geographical sciences, ethnographic inquiry, public health, and social inquiry and change. The program can typically be completed within two years, although students may receive credit toward the degree if they have completed equivalent courses elsewhere. Students seeking the degree on a part-time basis are welcome.

Students must complete three core courses and are free to design their program of study on any topic within the broad sphere of international studies under the guidance of a faculty mentor. Major themes covered in International Studies elective courses range from international conflicts, refugee movements and migration, international trade and investment, climate change mitigation and adaptation, poverty alleviation, humanitarian crises, and emerging public health threats.

1. Core courses:

1.1 Thematic core courses (one required):

INS 601 International Relations (fall) Introduction to the theory of international relations; globalization; social movements beyond the nation-state; security studies; peace and conflict studies; international law and organization; international political economy; foreign policy analysis, global public health, and related fields.

Or

INS 630 Comparative Politics (fall): Introduction to theory and methods of comparative analysis; authoritarian and democratic political regimes; democratic governance and citizenship, comparative political economy; contentious politics and social movements; civil-military relations; and appropriate courses on selected regions, such as the European Union, Latin America, or the Post-Soviet countries.

Or

INS 637 International and Comparative Political Economy (fall): Introduction to the politics and institutions regulating the global trade, investment, and financial regimes; comparative international development; the politics and economics of international environmental regimes; democracy, partisan politics, and global governance, the domestic and international distributive impacts of globalization; and international economic theory.

1.2 Methodological core courses (two required):

POL 695A Introductory Statistical Methods in Political Science (fall) Introduction to the core concepts of descriptive and inferential statistics; probability theory; graphical presentation of data; descriptive measures of central tendency and dispersion; hypothesis testing, contingency tables and linear regression.

POL 695T Advanced Statistical Methods in Political Science (spring) Introduction to general linear models within a likelihood framework, including models for discrete data—binary, multinomial, ordered and count outcomes. In addition, the course provides an introduction to the R programming environment, a powerful and versatile open-source statistics suite.

Or

Students may substitute any graduate-level mixed-methods course such as INS 611 (International Relations Methodology II), any qualitative methods courses (e.g., survey methods, ethnographic methods) such as INS 612 (Qualitative Methods), or information technology course such as GEG 691 (Introduction to Geographic Information Systems for Graduate Students) and APY 611 for POL 695T. In addition, a variety of other statistics courses are available in other social science departments that may be used as substitutes for POL 695T.

2. Foreign Language Requirement: All students must demonstrate competency (reading and basic comprehension) in at least one foreign language. Students are expected to pass a foreign language examination by the end of their first year to determine if they meet this essential requirement or may require additional foreign language training. A variety of options is available for practical language training including courses offered by the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures (insert link) and the Directed Independent Language Study (DILS, insert link).

3. Comprehensive Exam, Thesis and Non-thesis Options: As a final requirement to graduate, students must select one of the following 3 options:

- Pass a written qualifying (comprehensive) examination in one of the three fields of specialization. The MA qualifying examination probes student knowledge of one of the Department’s three fields of study and the ability to think and express ideas clearly. Masters level students are required to answer three questions within four hours.
- Thesis and Non-Thesis options: Both thesis and non-thesis options are available and students are expected to identify a specific topical interest and research focus by the end of their first semester in residence. The non-thesis option consists of two short papers and an oral examination; the thesis option involves production of a MA thesis that will be examined by a committee of three faculty members, one of whom is the faculty mentor. Students opting for an MA Thesis must have a GPA of 3.5 or higher.