



## *Middle Eastern Studies*

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## **International and Area Studies**

International & Area Studies (IAS) is a teaching unit which is comprised of six undergraduate majors and three graduate degree programs. IAS provides an interdisciplinary approach to the study of international and global issues, as well as to specific area studies which focus on the historical and contemporary issues which shape different regions of the world.

IAS trains students in the knowledge and skills that are fundamental components of global citizenship and practice. IAS has adopted an interdisciplinary approach to such training, with the belief that no single discipline can prepare students in the depth and breadth necessary for a complex and reflective understanding of world history and contemporary globalization. Accordingly, IAS offers interdisciplinary core courses in fields such as political economy, development studies, and peace & conflict studies, and then incorporates courses offered through many other departments. This offers students a rigorous, but flexible, curriculum that recognizes that learning takes place both inside and outside of the classroom.

## **Middle Eastern Studies Program Description**

Since 1981, the interdisciplinary major in Middle Eastern Studies (MES) has provided Berkeley students with the opportunity to study a region of great historical and cultural importance whose political, economic, and social development is closely linked to our own. The MES major covers the Arab world, Turkey, Iran, and Israel, intertwining history and culture, geography and ecology, politics and economics, with an emphasis on modern and contemporary issues. Its broad and balanced program of study draws on a wide variety of Middle East-related courses offered by faculty from more than 20 different departments and schools within the University. Students in the MES major learn at least one of the major Middle Eastern languages of today: Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, or Turkish. They also write a senior thesis based on original research. MES graduates go on to work in industry and government, both in the United States and abroad. About half of MES alumni pursue graduate studies, many of whom then go on to academic or professional careers. MES alumni have risen to especially high positions in organizations including the US Department of State, The New York Times, Human Rights Watch, and UC Berkeley itself.

The MES major is administered through the International and Area Studies (IAS) academic program office. The IAS office provides information on all administrative aspects of the major, including advice on when and how to declare, fulfilling requirements, planning a course of study to suit individual needs and interests, and timely program completion. The MES Chair is available during office hours to discuss specific course content, thesis topics, research and study abroad, and potential career paths.

Additional resources for MES majors are available through the Center for Middle Eastern Studies. The CMES organizes public lectures, publishes a newsletter, maintains a small library, and promotes knowledge of the Middle East at all levels of scholarship. It also runs several grant and prize competitions for which MES majors are eligible, and in some cases given priority, including the Foreign Language and Area Studies fellowship, the Sultan Program in Arab Studies, the Afaf Kanafani Prize for best paper on the topic of women in the Arab world, and the Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens Memorial Fund for Middle Eastern Studies.

The MES major should not be confused with the major in Near Eastern Studies (NES), which emphasizes language and literature and includes the study of the ancient Near East. Students interested in those fields should contact the Department of Near Eastern Studies.

A minor in Middle Eastern Studies is also available (see below for further details).

## When to Declare

**Note: The Middle Eastern Studies major is being retired and replaced by Global Studies. The deadline to declare Middle Eastern Studies is Friday, December 8, 2017. Please visit the [Global Studies website](#) or the [Global Studies](#) page on the Berkeley Academic Guide for more information.**

Applications are accepted in the IAS Advising office beginning the third week of instruction and through the last day of instruction (not the last day of finals) during the academic year (fall and spring semesters). Applications are accepted during the summer from early June to mid-August. Students must meet with a MES advisor to declare the major; applications are not accepted via email. Applicants should submit the paperwork no later than their junior year. Students may not declare and graduate in the same semester.

## Eligibility to Declare

Students are eligible to declare when they:

1. have completed or are currently enrolled in one Middle East-related course at UC Berkeley, preferably the lower-division requirement.
2. have completed or are currently enrolled in a modern Middle Eastern language course (Arabic, Hebrew, Persian or Turkish).
3. have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher.
4. have attended a Major Declaration Workshop (check the calendar in 101 Stephens for dates).
5. are not in their final semester of undergraduate work.

## Getting Declared

To get declared, students must meet with a MES advisor in person to submit the MES Application materials.

Bring a completed MES Application, including all materials and transcripts listed below, to the IAS Office at 101 Stephens Hall. The MES Application can be found on the [MES website](#). Students will not be officially declared until they have submitted all declaration papers.

**A complete MES application consists of:**

1. Application Form and Program Worksheet.
2. A current CalCentral unofficial transcript with student's name printed on it. Please highlight all courses that apply to the major. For double majors or minors, please indicate which classes will overlap with the other major (maximum 2) or minor (maximum 1).
3. Official and sealed transcripts from other colleges attended if your transcripts are not visible in CalCentral. **Only official transcripts will be accepted.**
4. The "Petition to Declare a Major" signed by the student. If MES is a second major, the Double Major Application must be filled out and submitted when declaring MES.

5. The Personal Statement – a typed, double-spaced, one page essay describing the student’s interest in MES. The purpose of this essay is to give MES advisors a clear picture of the student’s academic interests. In the statement, students should describe their interest in the major, their career aspirations, any plans for a higher degree, future goals, and anything else relevant to studying Middle Eastern Studies.

The Double Major forms must already be signed by the advisor of the first major. The “Petition to Declare a Major” form is available in the IAS Office and found on the [L&S website](#). The Double Major Application is available on the [L&S website](#).

**Note for international students on F or J visas:** International students declaring or changing their major must update their major on their I-20 or DS-2019 visa document. Upon approval of the major, students must contact the Berkeley International Office for their updated visa document. BIO is located at International House at 2299 Piedmont Ave.

## Major Requirements

There is considerable flexibility within the MES major to allow students to construct individual programs to suit their interests. The major is nonetheless structured and minimum course requirements must be met. This structure is designed to ensure that all MES students acquire a shared knowledge base with common intellectual reference points.

### Lower-Division Requirement (1 course)

*Choose 1 of the following:*

**MES 10**, Introduction to Middle Eastern Studies (4 units) An interdisciplinary course that surveys the major political, economic, cultural, and social issues in the Middle East and North Africa today, with special reference to historical trajectories and religious phenomena. It covers the Arab world, Turkey, Iran, and Israel, exploring such topics as (1) political transitions; (2) economics, ecology, and development; (3) gender and ethnicity; and (4) religion

**NES 10**, Introduction to the Near East (4 units) A survey course introducing the fundamental aspects of Middle Eastern civilization presented in a broad historical framework.

**History 12**, The Middle East (4 units) A survey of key historical developments from the rise of Islam to the present, including the significance of Islamic civilizations from a world historical perspective, the construction of the modern state system from the late Ottoman era through the period of British and French colonial rule, and the newly independent states of the Middle East.

Note that MES 20 is **not** applicable to the MES major.

### Foreign Language Requirement

All MES students must be able to demonstrate proficiency equivalent to four college-level courses in a modern Middle Eastern language: Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, or Turkish. One course must be completed or in progress when applying to declare the major. It is highly recommended that students begin their language study as soon as possible as this will better prepare them for thesis research.

## How to Fulfill the Language Requirement

There are a number of ways to fulfill the language requirement depending on individual interests, background, and ability.

**Coursework:** Any combination of college courses, summer programs, or college-level study abroad programs may satisfy the language requirement. The first, second, and third-level courses may be taken on a Pass/No Pass basis. The fourth semester must be taken for a letter grade no less than C-.

Language courses need not be taken at UCB. Courses taken at a community college or any accredited school or university *may* be acceptable. Official transcripts must be submitted and evaluated by a MES major advisor. An upper-division course taken abroad in the target language may satisfy the foreign language requirement, depending on the school and program. Additionally, students should bring available course information to a MES advisor prior to studying abroad for review and discussion.

- 1) **Proficiency exam:** Some language departments at UCB offer proficiency exams. Students with advanced skills in a Middle Eastern language may opt to test out of this requirement through the Department of Near Eastern Studies (NES). Please see a MES advisor if you are interested in this option. The advisor will direct you to the appropriate language director in NES.
- 2) **High school completion in a Middle Eastern language:** Students with native, advanced background or those who were educated in Middle Eastern language through the completion of high school or the equivalent may wish to satisfy this requirement with that experience. This requires a language proficiency exam.

## Upper-Division Requirements

There are nine required upper-division courses in MES, totaling no fewer than 30 units. They consist of:

- A. Core (3 courses)
- B. Concentration (4 courses)
- C. Methods (1 course: MES 102)
- D. Senior Thesis (1 course: MES 190 Senior Thesis *or* MES H195)

Courses that have both an MES number and another department's course number should be registered for through MES.

### Core (3 courses)

The core requirement is intended to provide a broad introduction to the Middle East, encompassing geography and ethnography, history and cultures, and political, economic, and social developments. To satisfy this requirement, students must choose from a list of eligible courses in three different departments (with the exception of MES courses, which can be taken in unlimited numbers as either core or concentration). Eligible courses change from semester to semester. Please see the Appendix for a list of some core courses.

### Concentration (4 courses)

In addition to the core courses, MES students must complete a four-course disciplinary concentration in which they pursue advanced study on a selected topic in Middle Eastern Studies

following a particular disciplinary approach. Topics may focus on a specific region or a thematic problem, and may relate to religious and cultural studies, history, contemporary development and social change, urbanization, nation building, or the impact of imperialism and colonialism on the Middle East, among other topics. The concentration should relate to students' potential thesis topics.

- Two of the four courses taken to fulfill the concentration requirement must be from the same department.
- The remaining two must be thematically related to the selected topic.

Example of a concentration focusing on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict:

Course 1: History 100/MES 130, Jews and Muslims

Course 2: History C175B, Jewish Civilization in the Modern Period

Course 3: UGIS 162B, Arab-Israeli Conflict: Issues in Policy and Diplomacy

Course 4: Sociology 189, Sociology of the Middle East

In addition to the list of Core classes, students should review the Bulletin and the Schedule of Classes to find additional courses relevant to their concentration. Students will review their concentration course selections with the IAS Advising Staff each semester at registration time.

## Methods (1 course)

Scope and Methods of Research in Middle Eastern Studies (MES 102) is offered each fall. It provides an introduction to interdisciplinary research strategies for the collection, interpretation, and analysis of data in the field of Middle Eastern Studies. The semester's reading and assignments are devoted to two parallel activities: identifying and analyzing different scholarly approaches to select topics in MES and preparing a prospectus on individual thesis topics, the writing and completion of which takes place in MES 190 or MES H195 under the supervision of an appropriate faculty thesis advisor. MES students must take this course in the fall semester of their senior year, and take their thesis course in the spring semester immediately following.

## Thesis (1 course)

**Senior Thesis, MES 190** (register for 4 units) **or Honors Thesis, MES H195** (register for 4 units)

### MES 190

The required senior thesis (a research paper of 30-50 pages) gives students the opportunity to integrate their concentration course work and conduct advanced research on a topic in Middle Eastern Studies. To organize and guide their research and writing, students participate in a weekly seminar and conduct individual meetings with a relevant faculty advisor who is identified in MES 102 during the fall semester. The senior thesis must be completed within one semester, must be taken in the spring of the senior year, and must be taken for a letter grade. Students are required to submit a PDF of the thesis to the Center for Middle Eastern Studies upon completion.

### MES H195

Eligible students may choose to replace the Senior Thesis with the Honors Thesis. This class is also offered only in spring semester, must be taken in the senior year, and must be taken for a letter grade. For more information on the Honors Program, see "MES Honors Program," below.

## Major Rules:

1. **No more than 3 upper-division courses taken outside of the College of Letters and Science, including courses taken at other universities, EAP, Study Abroad and other colleges on the UC Berkeley campus, may count towards major requirements.**
2. **No more than 3 upper-division courses may be taken from the same department. The one exception is for MES courses, of which an unlimited number may be taken, including multiple MES 130 courses and 150 courses (topics rotate regularly).**
3. **A course cross-listed with MES should be taken through MES. Students who intend to enroll in a cross-listed course and to apply the course toward an upper-division major requirement should see a MES advisor prior to enrolling.**
4. **Courses cannot be double-counted within the major (for example, students may not use 1 course to fulfill both a core course and a concentration course).**
5. **All courses in the major must be taken for a letter grade. The two exceptions are MES 109 (taught as Pass/No Pass only) and foreign language: only the fourth-semester level class must be taken for a letter grade. The first, second, and third semester language classes may be taken Pass/Not Pass.**
6. **Online courses and ROTC courses are not accepted in the major.**

## The MES Honors Program

Beginning in Academic Year 2015-2016, students who wish to complete the MES Honors program will follow the same path as those in the other IAS majors. They should enroll in IAS H102 during the fall semester, and MES H195 in the spring semester.

In order to enroll in IAS H102, students must have a GPA of 3.6 in courses counting for the major and 3.5 in all work completed at U.C. Berkeley, as well as a propose research topic. Enrollment in MES H195 requires a viable prospectus and the continued maintenance of the GPAs listed above. Students who complete IAS H102 and who do not have a viable honors-quality prospectus, or who fall below the minimum GPAs will write a regular thesis instead, in MES 190.

The honors thesis is a research paper generally based on original research in primary source materials, potentially including those in a Middle Eastern language. Students in MES H195 attend a weekly seminar and have regular meetings with a faculty thesis advisor appropriate to the student's research topic. Upon completion, a PDF of the honors thesis must be submitted to the Center for Middle Eastern Studies.

**Please note:** There is no guarantee that students who complete the honors program will graduate with honors recommendations are made after graduation and are based on a number of factors including (but not limited to) major GPA, grade received for MES H195, and faculty thesis advisor recommendations

## Additional Information

### Advisor Holds/Blocks (Service Indicators)

Advisor holds/blocks (service indicators) are visible on your Cal Central dashboard. If you are declared or intending to declare an IAS major and you have a hold or a block on your account, you will need to consult with an IAS advisor (101 Stephens Hall). A hold or block may be placed on your account for a number of reasons that include remaining undeclared when you have reached senior status (90 units or more), an unapproved concentration, and/or academic underperformance. Holds or blocks placed by the College of Letters & Science require consultation with an IAS advisor and a College advisor (206 Evans Hall).

### Study Abroad

Students may fulfill up to 3 upper-division requirements with courses taken abroad. Any courses included in the 3-course limit. Students considering study abroad should carefully read the IAS “Study Abroad Information and Course Approval Form,” which is available at the IAS Office and on the ‘Student Resource’ page on the IAS website at <http://iastp.berkeley.edu/>. They must also meet with a MES advisor prior to their departure to review prospective courses of study and again upon their return to have their coursework reviewed and approved. Information about overseas study is available at the Berkeley Programs for Study Abroad office in 160 Stephens Hall, 510-642-1356, [eapucb@berkeley.edu](mailto:eapucb@berkeley.edu).

**Please note:** Study abroad courses will not be pre-approved by IAS to count toward the major requirements.

### Repeating Departmental Courses

The following applies to all courses in the **CURRENT** IAS undergraduate programs (Asian Studies, Development Studies, Latin American Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, Peace & Conflict Studies, and Political Economy), as well as the new Global Studies degree programs:

Students who earn a grade of F, D-, D, D+ or NP may repeat the course only once. Regardless of the grade the student receives for their second attempt (including F, D-, D or D+), the student may **not** repeat the course a third time.

### Transfer Courses

No more than 3 upper-division requirements may be fulfilled by courses taken at other four-year colleges or universities, including EAP and Study Abroad. They must be validated by the Office of Admissions and Records, and they must be submitted to a MES advisor for review and approval by the IAS Faculty Committee to be used in the major. Courses taken to fulfill lower-division requirements or the foreign language requirement are not included in the 3-course limit.

### Internships

Students may earn 1-4 units of MES 197 credit for participation in unpaid internships. Only internships at not-for-profit institutions or government offices will be accepted. Internships must have a faculty sponsor and require the submission of a mid-term report and a final paper. Internships are graded on a mandatory pass/not pass basis and cannot be used to fulfill major requirements. Internship forms are available in the IAS Office (101 Stephens Hall).



## Double Majors

All double majors must be approved by the College of Letters and Science. The completed Double Major Application Packet should be reviewed and signed by a MES Advisor. No more than 2 upper-division courses may be used to satisfy requirements in both majors.

## Minors for MES majors

MES students are encouraged to enhance their undergraduate degree by completing minors in other disciplines. No more than 1 upper-division course may be used to satisfy requirements in both a major and minor.

## Probation and Dismissal

Declared students may be put on probation if they do not maintain a minimum 2.0 major GPA. The major GPA includes all upper-division courses taken for the major at UC Berkeley. This includes classes taken through UCDC and the UC Berkeley courses offered during summer abroad programs. This does not include any classes taken to fulfill the foreign language requirement or taken through EAP.

While on probation, students must meet with a MES advisor at least once to discuss options and develop an academic plan that will help them to meet academic performance requirements.

Should a student fail to bring their major GPA above 2.0 the term following being placed on probation, they may be dismissed from the major by the Chair. This will not be reflected as a dismissal on the transcript; it is noted only as a memorandum of change in declared status. Students may request reinstatement to the major from the Chair once their major GPA is 2.0 or higher.

Undeclared students who have a GPA of less than 2.0 in courses taken for the major before declaring may still apply to the major. However, they will be admitted to the major on a probationary status. These students must raise their major GPA to 2.0 or higher by the end of the semester in which they were admitted to the major.

## THE MINOR IN MES

The minor in Middle Eastern Studies is designed to introduce students to the study of the modern Middle East, understood as comprising the Arab world, Turkey, Iran, and Israel, through social science and humanities courses. Students interested in emphasizing language, archaeology and/or ancient civilizations should investigate minors in the Department of Near Eastern Studies.

## MES Minor Course Requirements

One introductory lower-division course from the following: MES 10, MES 20\*, NES 10, History 12, \*MES 20 is applicable to the MES minor only.

Five upper-division Middle East-related courses selected from the list of core courses. Any substitutions must be pre-approved by an MES advisor.

## Minor Rules

- Since the MES minor is interdisciplinary, the five upper-division courses must be taken in

- at least 2 different departments.
- The study of modern Middle Eastern languages is encouraged; however, there is no language requirement for the MES minor nor do language courses count toward the minor with the exception of advanced literature courses (3rd-year level and above).
  - The 6 courses taken to satisfy MES minor must total 22 or more units.
  - With the exception of MES 109, all courses must be taken for a letter grade. MES 97, 98, 99, 197, 198 and 199 are not acceptable to fulfill minor requirements.
  - At least three of the upper-division minor courses must be completed at UC Berkeley (all transfer courses must be approved by the MES Chair).
  - A minimum GPA of 2.0 must be achieved in the courses used to satisfy the minor.
  - Course work for the minor must be completed within the 130-unit maximum for graduation.
  - Only 1 course may be double-counted with a major program. When applying, please indicate if a course is being double-counted with the major.

## Minor application information

1. The MES minor is open to all undergraduates with the exception of MES majors.
2. Completed applications are accepted in fall and spring semesters, beginning the third week of instruction and ending on the last day of instruction (not the last day of finals), as well as from early June to mid-August.
3. Students must declare the minor no later than the term preceding their final term.
4. Students are required to meet with a MES advisor in 101 Stephens Hall to declare the

## A complete MES minor application consists of:

1. A completed MES Minor Application Form and Program Worksheet:  
<http://iastp.berkeley.edu/mesminor>
2. A copy of the Bear Facts transcript
3. For non-UC Berkeley coursework to be used on the minor, official and sealed transcripts reflecting that coursework.
4. A copy of your current class schedule printed from Bear Facts, highlighting any courses being taken for the minor.
5. The "Completion of L&S Minor" form signed by the student. This form is available from the College of Letters and Science, as well as on their website.

## Appendix of Core Courses

**Note that new classes are constantly being added to the curriculum. Please bring any courses that would appear to be applicable to the MES major to the attention of the advisors, who can explain how to petition to have them approved.**

AsianAm 132	Islamophobia and Constructing Otherness
AsianAm 190AC	Islam in America
Anthro 181	Themes in the Anthropology of the M.E.
Arch 175B	Islamic Architecture
GWS 111	Women in the Muslim and Arab World
Hist 100*	Special Topics in History
Hist 103*	Proseminar
Hist 109A	The Rise of Islamic Civilization, 600–1200
Hist 109B	The Middle East, 1000–1750
Hist 109C	The Middle East, 18th Century–Present
MES 109	Model Arab League
MES 130	Cross-listed Topics in MES
MES 150	Advanced Topics in MES
Music 132	Music of the Middle East
NES 140	Topics in Islamic Thought and Institutions
NES 142	Shi'ite Islam
NES 143A/B	Islam in Iran
NES 144*	Sufism
PACS 135*	War and Peace in the Middle East
PACS 119	Intractable Conflicts: Peace Building in Israel-Palestine (MES 130)
Poli Sci 142A	Middle East Politics
Soc 189	Sociology of the Middle East

**\*Please note: Pre-approval from a MES advisor is required for courses indicated with an asterisk (\*), and any other special or varying topics course.** These courses are appropriate for fulfilling MES course requirements only when they focus on Middle East. However, because the topics vary every semester, students should be sure to review the current syllabus of a special topics course to determine if the topic that semester is suitable to the requirement they hope to fulfill. A syllabus for the semester the class is taken must be submitted to a MES advisor for review.

## **MES Major Advisory Committee**

Professor Emily Gottreich  
International and Area Studies and Department of History

Professor Wali Ahmadi  
Department of Near Eastern Studies

Professor Asad Ahmed  
Department of Near Eastern Studies

Professor Nezar AlSayyad  
Departments of Architecture and City and Regional Planning

Professor Keith Feldman Department of  
Ethnic Studies

Professor Minoo Moallem  
Department of Gender and Women's Studies

Professor Benjamin Porter Department of  
Near Eastern Studies

## **International and Area Studies Administration**

**Associate Dean, Social Sciences, Chair, Middle Eastern Studies, IAS Director**  
Max Auffhammer

**Associate Director**  
Alan Karras

**Administrative Director**  
Joan Kask

**Undergraduate Major Advisors**  
Ethan Savage, Lead Academic Advisor  
Nithya Raghunathan

**Student Services Administrator**  
Ana Romay

**Program Office:**

International and Area Studies

101 Stephens Hall #2306

Hours: Monday – Thursday: 10:00-12:00 pm- 1:00-4:00 pm

Friday: 10:00-12:00 pm

During the summer the office is closed on Fridays.

Phone: 510-642-4466

Fax: 510-642-9850

IAS Website: <http://iastp.berkeley.edu/>