

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

Middle Eastern Studies

(Updated July 2013)

University of California, Berkeley

Middle Eastern Studies Student Handbook

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UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

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THE MAJOR IN MES

Since 1981, the interdisciplinary major in Middle Eastern Studies (MES) has provided Berkeley students with the opportunity to study a region of great geo-political significance whose economic and social development is closely linked to our own society. 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 the modern and contemporary Middle East. 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 also learn at least one of the major Middle Eastern languages of today: Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, or Turkish. MES graduates work in academe, 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 university or professional careers.

The MES major receives the academic support of 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 and North Africa at all levels of scholarship. Students are encouraged to utilize the Center's many resources. The MES major is administered through the International and Area Studies (IAS) Office. The IAS office provides information on all administrative aspects of the major, including advice on when and how to declare, fulfilling requirements, and timely program completion. Academic advising, including planning a course of study to suit individual needs and interests, identifying a thesis topic and advisor, and career counseling is offered by the MES Co-Chairs.

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 pg. 13 of this handbook for further details.)

Declaring Middle Eastern Studies

When to Declare MES

Completed applications are accepted by the International & Area Studies (IAS) 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 the beginning of June through mid-August. Students **must** meet with an undergraduate major advisor to declare the major; applications are **not** accepted via email.

How to Declare MES

To declare MES, students must:

- Have completed or be currently enrolled in one Middle East-related course at UC Berkeley.
- Have completed or be currently enrolled in a modern Middle Eastern language course (Arabic, Hebrew, Persian or Turkish); and
- Have a major and cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher; and
- Have attended a Major Declaration Workshop; and
- Not be in their final semester of undergraduate work.

Note: As soon as you have completed the prerequisites, you are encouraged to declare the major— even if you are a freshman or sophomore.

Getting Declared

Declaring the MES major is a two-step process.

1. The student must bring the application materials to the MES Co-Chairs for review and approval.
2. After obtaining a MES Co-Chair's signature, the student is required to meet with an IAS advisor to review the application materials and complete the process.

A complete MES application consists of:

1. Application Form and Program Worksheet.

2. A current BearFacts transcript with your 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 the minor (maximum 1).

3. Copies of transcripts from other colleges attended. If a student intends to count coursework from other colleges toward the major requirements, transcripts from those colleges must be submitted with the MES application. We do not have access to transcripts filed in the Admissions Office, and students are responsible for requesting copies of transcripts from their other schools. Official, unofficial, and photocopied transcripts are accepted. Please highlight all courses to be applied to the major.

4. The “Petition to Declare a Major” form which is available from the College of Letters & Science. If MES is a second major, the student should submit Double Major application materials (also available at L&S) when declaring. The Double Major application must be first signed by the advisor of the first major.

Note for international students on F or J visas: 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 Services for International Students and Scholars (SISS) for their updated visa document. SISS is located at International House at 2299 Piedmont Ave.

Minors: MES majors may not also declare the MES minor (described on p. 13); however, other minor programs taken with the MES major are encouraged. Please note that no more than one upper-division course may be used to satisfy requirements for both a major and a minor, either of which is MES.

Double Majoring: Double majors must be approved by the College of Letters and Science. The ‘Petition to Declare a Double Major’ can be obtained online at <http://ls-advise.berkeley.edu/fp/fp.html>. This petition must be completed before submitting it to IAS for processing. Students must meet with an academic staff advisor in IAS to process this paperwork. Note that no more than two upper-division courses may be used to satisfy requirements in both majors.

Courses Outside L&S: No more than three upper division courses outside the College of Letters and Science may be used to fulfill major requirements. This includes courses within other colleges on the Berkeley campus (other

than Letters & Science) as well as transfer courses from other academic institutions, including those abroad (see below).

Study Abroad: Students may fulfill up to three upper division requirements with courses taken abroad. Any courses taken to fulfill the language requirement may also be counted toward the major and are not included in the three-course limit. Students considering study abroad should carefully read the “IAS Study Abroad Policy” handout available on the web site. Prior to their departure, students should meet with one of the MES Co-Chairs to review prospective courses of study. In addition, they must submit the study abroad pre-approval form to an IAS staff advisor. This form can be obtained from the IAS main office in 101 Stephens Hall or online at <http://iastp.berkeley.edu/StudentForms.php>. Upon their return, students must again meet with a MES Co-Chair. At this point, the student is required to submit syllabi and any coursework to obtain final approval. It is the responsibility of the student to meet with a staff advisor in IAS after meeting with a MES Co-Chair to update their paperwork. Information about overseas study is available at the Berkeley Programs for Study Abroad office in 160 Stephens Hall, 510-642-1356, capucb@berkeley.edu.

Transfer Courses: A maximum of three courses taken at other institutions (including those of the Education Abroad Program of the University of California) may be transferred into the major. Relevant courses taken at community colleges can be counted toward the lower division requirement only. Courses from other institutions may be counted toward upper division requirements (regardless of unit value) and must be validated by the Office of Undergraduate Admission and Relations with Schools and approved by a MES Co-Chair. Courses used to fulfill the foreign language requirement are not included in this restriction.

Internships: Students may obtain 1-4 units for participation in relevant internships. Internships are taken as independent studies (MES 198) and must have a faculty sponsor and typically require the submission of progress reports and final paper. Internships are graded on a mandatory pass/no pass basis and cannot be used to fulfill major requirements. Students should speak with the MES Co-Chairs for approval.

The MES Honors Program

Senior students with a grade point average of at least 3.6 in courses for the major and 3.5 in all coursework completed at UCB are eligible to apply to pursue honors during their final semester. Honors students enroll in MES H195 instead of MES 190. Entry into MES H195 is determined by GPA, the

quality of the thesis prospectus produced in MES 102, and the recommendation of the MES Co-Chairs and instructor of MES 102.

Important note: There is no guarantee that students who complete the honors sequence will graduate with honors. Honors recommendations are made after graduation and are based on a number of factors including (but not limited to) major GPA, overall GPA, grade received in H195, and Faculty Thesis Advisor recommendations.

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 does not include any classes taken to fulfill the foreign language requirement or taken through EAP.

While on probation, students must meet with an IAS major 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.

Advisor Codes: Once you are admitted to MES you must obtain a new Advisor Code each semester in order to enroll in classes through TeleBears. The MES Co-Chairs do not have access to advisor codes; the advisor codes are only distributed by IAS. To obtain your advisor code each semester, see an academic staff advisor in the IAS main office in 101 Stephens Hall. It is the student's responsibility to discuss their course plans with the MES Co-Chairs and an academic staff advisor in advance of their TeleBears Phase 1 appointment time, whether they are on campus or studying abroad. In order to obtain your advisor code you need to complete a pink "Proposed TeleBears Study List" form, available in the lobby of 101 Stephens Hall.

Students studying abroad must email an IAS advisor with a list of their proposed classes and the requirement each one fulfills. All other students must obtain the advisor code in person.

How to complete the major

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.

Reminder: All L&S students must take a minimum of 30 upper division units applicable to their major. All courses used to satisfy major requirements must be taken for letter grades (with the exception of MES 109), and no courses can be double-counted within the major to fulfill multiple requirements. In addition, no more than three courses outside the College of Letters and Science may be used to fulfill upper division major requirements, and no on-line course work is acceptable for any major requirement at this time.

Major Requirements

Lower-Division Requirement (*1 course - must be taken for a letter grade*)

MES 10, Cultures of the Middle East (4 units)

OR

NES 10, Introduction to the Near East (4 units)

OR

History 12, The Middle East (4 units)

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. It is highly recommended that students begin their language study as soon as possible as this will better prepare them for their major thesis research.

How to fulfill the foreign language requirement

There are a variety of ways to fulfill the four-semester language requirement for MES, depending on the individual and his or her background and ability.

1) **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 of 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. Transcripts must be submitted and evaluated by an MES major advisor in the IAS office. A two-semester upper-division course taken abroad in the target language may satisfy the foreign language requirement, depending on the school and program. For more information, see a major advisor concerning language study abroad.

2) **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 an IAS advisor if you are interested in this option. S/he will direct you to the appropriate language director in NES.

3) **High school completion in a non-English language:** Students who were educated in one of the four accepted Middle Eastern languages through the completion of high school or its equivalent may wish to satisfy the foreign language requirement with that experience. Students must provide a transcript or diploma proving that they have been educated in this language at least through the completion of high school or the equivalent.

Upper-Division Requirements (10 courses – must be taken for a letter grade, except MES 109)

- ❖ No more than 3 of the upper-division requirements may be taken from the same department. There is no limit on the number of MES courses that may be taken.
- ❖ No more than 3 of the upper-division requirements may be from outside the College of Letters and Science, including other UCB colleges, other academic institutions, and study abroad programs.

Courses applicable to the MES major have varying levels of relevant Middle East content. These levels are delineated by percentages. Each semester, the CMES and IAS websites list MES-related courses and designate them as having 100%, 50%, or 33% ME-related content. MES students should check this list each semester and become familiar with the designations as they pertain to major requirements. Note that this list is not always exhaustive, and other courses may be applicable to the major. See an advisor for questions.

Core (3 courses, 1 each in 3 different departments; Minimum 50% ME-related Content)

The Core requirement is intended to provide a broad introduction to the Middle East, encompassing geography and ethnography, history and culture, and current political, economic and social developments.

Available courses change from semester to semester, but may include:

AsianAm 190AC Islam in America
Anthro 181 Anthropology of the Middle East.
Arch 175B Islamic Architecture
Hist 109A The Rise of Islamic Civilizations, 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 107 Arabic Historical and Geographic Texts
NES 140 Topics in Islamic Thought and Institutions
NES 142 Shi‘ite Islam
NES 143A/B Islam in Iran
NES 144 Sufism: The Mysticism of Islam
*PACS 135 Special Topics in Regional Conflict
Poli Sci 142A Middle East Politics
*Poli Sci 149 Topics in Area Studies Socio
189 Sociology of the Middle East
GWS 111 Women in the Muslim and Arab World

**Only applicable when course focuses on Middle East. Requires approval by MES Co-Chairs.*

Concentration (4 courses; minimum 50% ME-related content)

The Concentration requirement allows students to pursue advanced study on a select topic in Middle Eastern Studies using a specific disciplinary approach and having a thematic focus. Topics may focus on a particular region, problem, or question. The Concentration must be designed in consultation with the MES Co-Chairs.

In order to ensure disciplinary depth, at least two of the four courses taken to fulfill the Concentration must be from the same department. The remaining two must be thematically related to the selected topic. Note that crosslisted courses (MES 130) must be taken as MES, but may still be counted as part of another discipline for the concentration.

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

Disciplinary Concentration:

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

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

Thematic Concentration:

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

Course 4: Sociology 189, Sociology of the Middle East

Often, a course having less than 50% ME-related content may be appropriate to a student's concentration. This requires advisor approval. Please see an advisor and/or one of the MES Co-Chairs to begin the process of requesting such approval. No more than two such courses can be used to satisfy the concentration requirements. They cannot be used to satisfy core requirements. Such courses may include:

Arch 111/CP 111 Housing: An International Survey

CP 115/GPP 115 Global Poverty

ED 100 The City

PACS 127 Human Rights and Global Politics

PolSci 123 Special Topics in International Relations

Senior Series

MES students must complete a three-course sequence in their senior year. The courses must be taken consecutively in the fall and spring semesters.

Methods Requirement (1 course): MES 102

MES 102: Scope and Methods of Research in Middle Eastern Studies is offered only in the fall semester and should be taken in the student's senior year. It provides an introduction to interdisciplinary research strategies for the collection, interpretation, and analysis of sources and data in the field of Middle Eastern Studies. The semester's reading and assignments are devoted to two parallel activities. Students first identify and analyze the various scholarly approaches in Middle Eastern Studies. They then prepare a prospectus on individual thesis topics. The writing and completion of the thesis paper takes place in the thesis course (see below).

Thesis Requirement (1 course): MES 190 or MES H195

MES 190: Senior Thesis in Middle Eastern Studies is offered only in the spring semester and should be taken in the student's senior year. The senior thesis, a research paper of 30-50 pages, gives students the opportunity to integrate their concentration course work and conduct further advanced research on a topic in Middle Eastern Studies. The senior thesis must be completed within one semester, and is guided by both the course instructor and a Faculty Thesis Advisor (see below). An electronic copy of the thesis must be submitted to the Center for Middle Eastern Studies upon completion.

MES H195: Honors Thesis in Middle Eastern Studies is offered only in the spring and should be taken in the student's senior year. The honors thesis, a research paper of 50-75 pages, should reflect the student's focus within MES and is guided by both the course instructor and a Faculty Thesis Advisor (see below). An electronic copy of the honors thesis must be submitted to the Center for Middle Eastern Studies upon completion. Please see below for further discussion of the Honors Program.

Online Research Requirement (1 course): MES 194

MES 194: Online Research and Digital Production for Middle Eastern Studies is intended for Middle Eastern Studies majors undertaking senior thesis projects. It should be taken in the spring semester, while students are enrolled in MES 190/H195: "Senior Thesis in MES." Students in this workshop will explore online research tools and web-building techniques with an aim to complement their theses with multimedia websites that

disseminate their findings and demonstrate their capacity for research to a wider audience.

Faculty Thesis Advisor

MES students must enlist a faculty thesis advisor, approved by the MES Co-Chairs, with whom they meet on a regular basis to discuss their theses throughout the year. Students are guided toward appropriate thesis advisors in MES 102. Students are strongly encouraged to start early to find a faculty thesis advisor, preferably during the spring semester of their junior year, but no later than October of their senior year. Most faculty will only advise on a thesis topic that is within their subject area and many prefer to work with students they have already taught. The completed thesis is read and evaluated by both the instructor of the thesis course and the Faculty Thesis Advisor.

Major Rules

1. No more than 3 upper division courses may be taken from outside the College of Letters and Science. This includes course work from other colleges on the UCB campus, academic institutions other than UCB, and study abroad programs.
2. No more than 3 upper division courses may be taken from the same department, with the exception of MES courses.
3. A cross-listed course will not always count in the department through which a student is enrolled. It will count in what is known to be the originating department of the course. Students who intend to enroll in a cross-listed course and to apply the course toward an upper-division major requirement should see an advisor prior to enrolling. MES students should register in the MES version of crosslisted courses where possible.
4. Courses cannot be double-counted within the major. All courses taken for the major must be taken for a letter grade, with the exception of:
 - a) Model Arab League (MES 109) – available only as Pass/No Pass
 - b) 1st, 2nd, and 3rd levels of foreign language – option to take Pass/No Pass
5. Online courses are not accepted for 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

*Applicable to the MES minor only.

Five upper-division Middle East-related courses selected from the list of core courses or other courses listed as having 50% or more Middle East-related content. Any substitutions must be pre-approved by a MES Co-Chair.

Completing the MES Minor

1. Since the MES minor is interdisciplinary, the five upper division courses must be taken in at least two different departments.
2. 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, except for advanced (literature) courses
3. The six courses taken to satisfy MES minor must total 22 or more units.
4. 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.
5. At least three of the upper division minor courses must be completed at U.C. Berkeley. (All transfer courses must be approved by a MES Co-Chair.)
6. A minimum GPA of 2.0 must be achieved in the courses used to satisfy the minor.
7. Course work for the minor must be completed within the 130-unit maximum for graduation.

8. Only one course may be double-counted with a major program.

Minor application information

1. Applications to declare both the MES major and minor are found online at iastp.berkeley.edu.

2. Applications are accepted during fall and spring semesters beginning the third week of instruction and through the last week of instruction (not the last day of finals). Applications are accepted during summer session, beginning in June until mid August.

3. Students must declare the minor no later than the term preceding their final term.

4. Students are required to meet with the MES Chair or Vice-Chair in 340 Stephens Hall and then with an academic staff advisor at IAS in 101 Stephens to declare the minor.

A complete minor application packet must contain the following:

1. A completed MES Minor Application Form.
2. A completed MES Minor Program Worksheet.
3. Copies of transcripts from UCB and all other colleges and universities attended (unless course work is not to be counted towards the minor). Transcripts may be unofficial, i.e., Bear Facts printouts and photocopies are acceptable. Please highlight all courses taken for the minor.
4. The Minor Completion form.

The MES minor is open to all undergraduates with the exception of MES majors. For further information, see the MES minor information sheet, pre-approved course list, and application available at 101 Stephens Hall.

Faculty/Staff Directory

TEACHING UNIT

Middle Eastern Studies (MES)

International and Area Studies Academic Program (IASAP)

101 Stephens Hall

Phone: 510-642-4466

Program Email: iastp@berkeley.edu

Advisor Email: ias_advisor@berkeley.edu

Office Hours:

Mon–Thurs, 9:30-12:00 and 1:00-4:00

Fri, 9:30-12:00

MES MAJOR CO-CHAIRS

Prof. Nezar AlSayyad

Office: 340 Stephens Hall

Architecture

Prof. Emily Gottreich

Office: 340 Stephens Hall

IAS/MES & History

MES Faculty Advisory Committee:

Professor Wali Ahmadi

Department of Near Eastern Studies

Professor Asad Ahmed

Department of Near Eastern Studies

Professor Margaret Larkin

Department of Near Eastern Studies

Dr. Larry Michalak

IAS/Middle Eastern Studies (*Emeritus*)

Professor Minoo Moallem

Department of Gender and Women's Studies

Professor Cihan Tugal

Department of Sociology

Other Affiliated Faculty:

Professor Stephan Astourian
Dr. Hatem Bazian
Professor Benjamin E. Brinner
Professor Samera Esmeir
Professor Munis Faruqui
Professor Mia Fuller
Professor Deniz Göktürk
Dr. John Hayes
Professor Charles Hirschkind
Professor Samer Madanat
Professor Saba Mahmood
Professor Maria Mavroudi
Dr. Sanjyot Mehendale
Professor Laura Nader
Professor Stefania Pandolfo
Professor Benjamin Porter
Professor Soraya Tlatli

MIDDLE EASTERN LANGUAGE DIRECTORS

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Near Eastern Studies

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Dr. Jaleh Pirnazar (Persian)

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