

MIDDLE EASTERN AND ISLAMIC STUDIES (PHD)

Department Website (<http://as.nyu.edu/meis/>)

NYSED: 08110 **HEGIS:** 0309.00 **CIP:** 05.0108

Program Description

The study of the Middle East and Islam at New York University has a long and distinguished history which may well have begun with the university's founding in 1831. It is known that by 1837 the faculty included both a professor of Arabic, Syriac, Persian and Ethiopic, and a professor of Hebrew and Oriental languages; courses were offered in Arabic, Persian, biblical and rabbinic Hebrew, Chaldaic and Syriac. The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Literatures (NELL) was established in 1966; the late Professor R. Bayly Winder served as the department's first chair.

In 1973 the department moved into its present quarters at the corner of Washington Square South and Sullivan Street, in the newly-completed building (designed by Philip Johnson) which also houses the Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies. NELL originally included faculty specializing in Hebrew and Judaic studies, but in 1986 the Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies was established as a separate department. For some years NYU's Program in Religious Studies also operated under the aegis of NELL. To better reflect its changing composition and orientation, the department changed its name to Middle Eastern Studies during the 1995-96 academic year. In 2004, in recognition of the developing scholarly range of its faculty, its name was changed once again, to Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies – abbreviated as MEIS.

People at NYU and elsewhere often confuse the Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies with the Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies. In fact, though they share the same building and collaborate closely, the two are distinct entities.

The Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies is an academic department with its own faculty and offers an undergraduate major (and minor) as well as a graduate program leading to the Ph.D. In contrast, the Kevorkian Center is an area studies center, funded in part by the federal government through the Title VI program, whose mission is to encourage and coordinate teaching and research on the Middle East at NYU and to sponsor educational, informational and outreach programs for teachers, the general public and other people interested in the region. The Kevorkian Center also administers the Program in Near Eastern Studies (NES) leading to the M.A., as well as master's degrees with business, journalism and museum studies. The Kevorkian Center is not a department and has no tenured or tenure-track faculty of its own.

Dual Degree

The Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies Department offers a dual degree with the NYU School of Law: (<https://www.law.nyu.edu/jdadmissions/dualdegreeprograms/jdma/>) Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies PhD/ Law JD.

See Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/admissions/arc/programs/middle-eastern-and-islamic-studies.html>) for admission requirements and instructions specific to this program.

Admissions

All applicants to the Graduate School of Arts and Science (GSAS) are required to submit the general application requirements (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc.html>), which include:

- Academic Transcripts (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc/academic-transcripts.html>)
- Test Scores (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc/test-scores.html>) (if required)
- Applicant Statements (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc/statements.html>)
- Résumé or Curriculum Vitae
- Letters of Recommendation (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc/letters-of-recommendation.html>), and
- A non-refundable application fee (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/admissions/arc.html#fee>).

See Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/admissions/arc/programs/middle-eastern-and-islamic-studies.html>) for admission requirements and instructions specific to this program.

Program Requirements

Students must complete 72 credits of graduate course work, including at least three graduate seminars and Problems and Methods in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, MEIS-GA 1687 Prob & Meth in Mideast Studies.

As early as possible in their graduate studies, students should choose two major fields and begin focusing their studies on them. Subject to the availability of faculty, major fields may include Islamic studies; classical Arabic language and literature; modern Arabic language and literature; Persian language and literature; and Turkish language and literature.

Course	Title	Credits
Required Course		
MEIS-GA 1687	Prob & Meth in Mideast Studies	4
Electives		
Other Elective Credits		68
Total Credits		72

Additional Program Requirements

Written Comprehensive Exams I and II

By the end of their third year of graduate study, students should have taken and passed a written comprehensive examination in each of their two major fields. Students prepare for these examinations by course work and by working through a reading list for each field under the supervision of the faculty member who will examine them; each examination will have a second reader as well. Each written comprehensive examination will be followed by an oral examination, administered by the two readers. Students who do not pass a major field examination may petition the department for permission to take it one more time.

Language Requirements

Students must also demonstrate proficiency in one of Arabic, Persian, or Turkish as well as a reading knowledge sufficient for research purposes of at least one European language. A student may be required by his or her dissertation adviser to learn additional languages, in keeping with the student's specific research needs.

Dissertation

After completing the major field requirements, the student should formulate a dissertation proposal, in consultation with his or her primary dissertation adviser as well as the faculty members on the student's dissertation committee. On completion of all course work and the fulfillment of all language requirements, the student must successfully defend the dissertation proposal, with the student's adviser and two other faculty members serving as examiners. The completed dissertation must conform to departmental and Graduate School of Arts and Science standards, be read and approved by the student's supervisor and two other faculty members, and be defended in a public oral defense in which those three readers and two additional examiners participate.

Sample Plan of Study

Course	Title	Credits
1st Semester/Term		
MEIS-GA 1687	Prob & Meth in Mideast Studies	4
MEIS-GA ---	MEIS PhD Elective course	4
MEIS-GA ---	MEIS PhD Elective course	4
Credits		12
2nd Semester/Term		
MEIS-GA ---	MEIS PhD Elective course	4
MEIS-GA ---	MEIS PhD Elective course	4
MEIS-GA ---	MEIS PhD Elective course	4
Credits		12
3rd Semester/Term		
MEIS-GA ---	MEIS PhD Elective course	4
MEIS-GA ---	MEIS PhD Elective course	4
MEIS-GA ---	MEIS PhD Elective course	4
Credits		12
4th Semester/Term		
MEIS-GA ---	MEIS PhD Elective course	4
MEIS-GA ---	MEIS PhD Elective course	4
MEIS-GA ---	MEIS PhD Elective course	4
Credits		12
5th Semester/Term		
MEIS-GA ---	MEIS PhD Elective course	4
MEIS-GA ---	MEIS PhD Elective course	4
MEIS-GA ---	MEIS PhD Elective course	4
Credits		12
6th Semester/Term		
MEIS-GA ---	MEIS PhD Elective course	4
MEIS-GA ---	MEIS PhD Elective course	4
MEIS-GA ---	MEIS PhD Elective course	4
Credits		12
Total Credits		72

Following completion of the required coursework for the PhD, students are expected to maintain active status at New York University by enrolling in a research/writing course or a Maintain Matriculation (MAINT-GA 4747) course. All non-course requirements must be fulfilled prior to degree conferral, although the specific timing of completion may vary from student-to-student.

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Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the program, graduates will have acquired:

1. The ability to make a significant and original contribution to the field.
2. Proficiency in one or more of the disciplinary perspectives offered in the department, and in the theories and methods of inquiry associated with that discipline.
3. Proficiency in the language(s) relevant to the student's specific area of inquiry.
4. Ability to produce written work of publishable quality based on the standards of the discipline.
5. Proficiency in basic pedagogical approaches and classroom techniques appropriate to the field.

Policies

NYU Policies

University-wide policies can be found on the New York University Policy pages (<https://bulletins.nyu.edu/nyu/policies/>).

Graduate School of Arts and Science Policies

Academic Policies for the Graduate School of Arts and Science can be found on the Academic Policies page (<https://bulletins.nyu.edu/graduate/arts-science/academic-policies/>).