

# MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES (BA)

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

NYSED: 08118 HEGIS: 0309.00 CIP: 05.0108

## Program Description

The Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (MEIS) focuses on the past and present of a vast and culturally diverse region of the world that extends from North Africa to Central Asia and from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean. It adopts interdisciplinary and comparative approaches to Middle Eastern societies from antiquity to the present, with particular focus on the period after the emergence of Islam.

A Middle Eastern Studies major offers students the opportunity to master one of the regional languages, including Arabic, Hindi, Persian, Turkish, and Urdu. Students also acquire an interdisciplinary understanding of this pivotal area of the world by studying with the department's specialists in history, anthropology, political science, literature, law, religious studies, and language.

In addition to the courses listed, students are encouraged to select cross-listed courses in other departments and programs that complement the department's offerings, such as Anthropology, Art History, Comparative Literature, Hebrew and Judaic Studies, History, Politics, Religious Studies, and Sociology.

## Honors Program

Any student majoring in the department who has spent at least two full years in residence at the College of Arts and Science, has completed at least 60 credits of graded work in the College, and has both a cumulative and a major GPA of 3.65 may consult with the department's director of undergraduate studies to apply for honors in the Middle Eastern Studies major. The requirements are:

- Complete all major requirements.
- Complete at least two graduate-level courses with a GPA of 3.0 (these courses may be used to satisfy part of the major requirements); students are encouraged to complete the interdepartmental Honors Thesis Seminar when offered.
- Write an honors thesis of 50 to 60 double-spaced, typed pages under the supervision of an MEIS faculty member, for which up to 4 credits of independent study credit may be awarded (MEIS-UA 997 Independent Study, MEIS-UA 998 Independent Study). The subject of the honors thesis and the faculty supervisor are chosen in consultation with the director of undergraduate studies.

## Admissions

New York University's Office of Undergraduate Admissions supports the application process for all undergraduate programs at NYU. For additional information about undergraduate admissions, including application requirements, see How to Apply (<https://www.nyu.edu/admissions/undergraduate-admissions/how-to-apply.html>).

## Program Requirements

The Middle Eastern Studies major requires ten 4-credit courses (40 credits) completed with a grade of C or better. (Courses graded Pass/Fail cannot count toward the requirements of the major.) The major consists

of two components: (1) language study and (2) non-language courses. All majors must complete at least six non-language courses (24 credits); the number of language courses required for the major depends on one's beginning level of proficiency in the language chosen for study, but could be as many as four. Students who take fewer than four language courses must take more than the minimum of six non-language courses to complete a full ten courses in Middle Eastern Studies.

Course	Title	Credits
<b>General Education Requirements</b>		
First-Year Seminar		4
EXPOS-UA 1	Writing as Inquiry	4
Foreign Language		16
Quantitative Reasoning		4
Physical Science		4
Life Science		4
Texts and Ideas		4
Cultures and Contexts		4
Societies and the Social Sciences		4
<b>Major Requirements</b>		
<i>Language courses</i>		
Select four language courses <sup>1</sup>		0
Select six non-language courses <sup>2</sup>		24
<b>ELECTIVES</b>		
Other Elective Credits		56
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>128</b>

<sup>1</sup> This table assumes that students majoring in Middle Eastern Studies will double-count language courses to both their major and their general education requirements. The 16 credits are therefore not repeated under major requirements in this table. The foreign language requirement is satisfied upon successful completion through the Intermediate level of a language. This may be accomplished in fewer than 16 credits, but those credits must then be completed as elective credit.

<sup>2</sup> Must include two departmental core courses and one departmental topics/seminar course, with all six non-language courses meeting distribution requirements as laid out below. The number of language courses required for the major depends on one's beginning level of proficiency in the language chosen for study, but could be as many as four. Students who take fewer than four language courses must take more than the minimum of six non-language courses to complete a full ten courses in Middle Eastern Studies.

## Language Study Required for the Major

To obtain the BA degree with a Middle Eastern Studies major, students must meet the College of Arts and Science (CAS) language requirement in Arabic, Hindi, Persian, Turkish, or Urdu. This means (1) studying one of these languages through at least the intermediate two levels (four semesters) at NYU. (2) Demonstrating the completion of approved and equivalent course work in accredited institute and satisfying the CAS language requirement by taking the CAS placement exam in one of these languages.

Under exceptional circumstances, the director of undergraduate studies may exempt a student from having to fulfill the language requirement, in which case the student will be required to take ten departmental non-language courses to complete the major. In any event, every student must

always complete at least ten department-approved courses to satisfy requirements for the major.

## Non-Language Course Requirements for the Major

In addition to the language requirement, majors must successfully complete at least six departmental content courses distributed across distinct fields. The six departmental courses are to be distributed as follows.

**Two core courses:** To ensure broad knowledge of issues in the discipline, all majors must take two “core courses” among their six non-language courses. It is recommended that students take these courses before they take seminars and topics courses. Core courses are as follows:

MEIS-UA 640 The Making of The Muslim Middle East, 600 - 1400 (History)

MEIS-UA 660 Mediterranean Worlds (History)

MEIS-UA 690 The Emergence of The Modern Middle East (History)

MEIS-UA 697 Palestine, Zionism, & Israel (History)

MEIS-UA 710 Masterpieces of Medieval Arabic Literature in Translation (Literature)

MEIS-UA 711 Literature & Society in the Middle East (Literature)

MEIS-UA 728 Women and Gender in Islam (Religion)

MEIS-UA 750 Politics of The Middle East (Elective)

MEIS-UA 780 Islamic Law & Society (Religion)

The department may choose to designate additional courses as core courses and will announce them accordingly. Core courses must be taken at Washington Square and cannot be taken while studying away at an NYU global academic center.

**One topics/seminar course:** Among the six non-language courses, all majors must also take at least one advanced undergraduate seminar; the department often offers these under the “topics” rubric (e.g., Topics in Middle East History, MEIS-UA 688). With permission, this requirement may be fulfilled with a graduate seminar.

**Distribution fields:** All majors must take their six non-language courses (including the core and topics courses) in a manner that is distributed across departmental fields as follows:

- Two courses from the department’s history list
- One course from the department’s literature list
- One course from the department’s religion list
- Two elective courses from the department’s course list of the student’s choice

## Internships

Middle Eastern Studies majors may, with permission of the director of undergraduate studies, pursue an internship for 2 or 4 credits (MEIS-UA 980, 981). The application form is available in the department’s office.

## Sample Plan of Study

Students must distribute their six non-language courses for the major (including the two core and one topics/seminar courses) as follows:

- two courses from the department’s history list
- one course from the department’s literature list

- one course from the department’s religion list
- two elective courses from the department’s course list

Course	Title	Credits
<b>1st Semester/Term</b>		
Foreign Language <sup>1</sup>		4
Quantitative Reasoning		4
Texts and Ideas		4
First-Year Seminar		4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>2nd Semester/Term</b>		
EXPOS-UA 1	Writing as Inquiry	4
Foreign Language <sup>1</sup>		4
Societies and the Social Sciences		4
Cultures and Contexts		4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>3rd Semester/Term</b>		
Foreign Language <sup>1</sup>		4
Major Core Course 1 of 2 <sup>2</sup>		4
Physical Science		4
Elective		4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>4th Semester/Term</b>		
Major Core Course 2 of 2 <sup>2</sup>		4
Foreign Language <sup>1</sup>		4
Life Science		4
Elective		4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>5th Semester/Term</b>		
Major Elective 1 of 3		4
Elective		4
Elective		4
Elective		4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>6th Semester/Term</b>		
Major Elective 2 of 3		4
Elective		4
Elective		4
Elective		4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>7th Semester/Term</b>		
Major Elective 3 of 3		4
Elective		4
Elective		4
Elective		4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>8th Semester/Term</b>		
Advanced Undergraduate Seminar <sup>3</sup>		4
Elective		4
Elective		4
Elective		4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>128</b>

<sup>1</sup> Chosen from Arabic, Hindi, Persian, Turkish, or Urdu.

<sup>2</sup> Chosen from a list of approved departmental courses. Must be taken at Washington Square.

<sup>3</sup> The department offers these under the “topics” rubric (e.g., MEIS-UA 688 Topics in Modern Middle Eastern History). With permission, this requirement may be fulfilled with a graduate seminar.

## Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of program requirements, students are expected to have acquired:

1. Proficiency at the intermediate level or above in Arabic, Hindi, Persian, Turkish, or Urdu.
2. A critical understanding of the history, literature, culture, politics, and social dynamics within and in relation to the Middle East writ large, from North Africa to Central Asia and from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean.
3. A critical toolkit to apply in the examination of different developments, publications, policies, cultural frameworks, movements, paradigms, and other dynamics in and about the Middle East.
4. An interdisciplinary understanding of the religion(s) of the region, with a particular focus on Islam.
5. A comparative knowledge of the literary and cultural works, as well as the cultural politics, of and in relation to the countries of the region.
6. Skills in understanding and applying the key concepts of analysis used in studying the Middle East and using them in critical writing, presentation, and research in a manner that helps them reconsider the implications of studying the Global South.

## Policies

### Program Policies

#### Policy on Transfer and NYU Study Away (Global) Credits (Major and Minor)

After consultation with the director of undergraduate studies, transfer students may be allowed to apply up to five transfer courses (20 points) toward the major or up to two transfer courses (8 points) toward the minor. At least half of the major and minor courses must always be completed in CAS.

NYU study away/Global courses (e.g., NYU Abu Dhabi) may be considered and treated as transfer credits, even for students matriculated in CAS. Majors and minors in Middle Eastern Studies should discuss their study away plans with the director of undergraduate studies.

For non-NYU study abroad programs, you must contact the DUS for approval before making any plans. Without the prior DUS and/or language program coordinator approval, your non-NYU program study abroad courses will be directly rejected. See NYU global programs [here \(https://www.nyu.edu/academics/studying-abroad.html\)](https://www.nyu.edu/academics/studying-abroad.html).

### NYU Policies

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

### College of Arts and Science Policies

A full list of relevant academic policies can be found on the CAS Academic Policies page (<https://bulletins.nyu.edu/undergraduate/arts-science/academic-policies/>).