

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 apply to pursue 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 points of independent study credit may be awarded (MEIS-UA 997 Independent Study, MEIS-UA 998). 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 major requirements (40 credits) must be completed with a grade of C or better. Courses graded pass/fail cannot count toward the requirements of the major.

Course	Title	Credits
General Education Requirements		
First-Year Seminar		4
EXPOS-UA 1	Writing The Essay:	4
Foreign Language ¹		16
Quantitative Reasoning		4
Physical Science		4
Life Science		4
Texts and Ideas		4
Cultures and Contexts		4
Societies and the Social Sciences		4
Major Requirements		
<i>Language Study Courses</i>		
Select four language courses ¹		16
<i>Non-Language Courses</i>		
Select two core courses		8
Select one topics/seminar course		4
Select three non-language courses		12
Electives		
Other Elective Credits		40
Total Credits		128

¹

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.

²

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, so as to complete a full ten courses in Middle Eastern Studies.

Language Study Required for the Major

To obtain the B.A. 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 level (four semesters) at NYU, (2) demonstrating the completion of approved and equivalent course work elsewhere, or (3) 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 (History)
 MEIS-UA 690 The Emergence of The Modern Middle East (History)
 MEIS-UA 697 Palestine, Zionism, & Israel (History)
 MEIS-UA 711 (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

Sample Plan of Study

Students must distribute their six non-language courses (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
1st Semester/Term		
Foreign Language ¹		4
Quantitative Reasoning		4
Texts and Ideas		4
First-Year Seminar		4
Credits		16
2nd Semester/Term		
EXPOS-UA 1	Writing The Essay:	4
Foreign Language ¹		4
Societies and the Social Sciences		4
Cultures and Contexts		4
Credits		16
3rd Semester/Term		
Foreign Language ¹		4

Major Core Course 1 of 2 ²	4
Physical Science	4
Elective	4
Credits	
16	
4th Semester/Term	
Major Core Course 2 of 2 ²	4
Foreign Language ¹	4
Life Science	4
Elective	4
Credits	
16	
5th Semester/Term	
Major Elective 1 of 3	4
Elective	4
Elective	4
Elective	4
Credits	
16	
6th Semester/Term	
Major Elective 2 of 3	4
Elective	4
Elective	4
Elective	4
Credits	
16	
7th Semester/Term	
Major Elective 3 of 3	4
Elective	4
Elective	4
Elective	4
Credits	
16	
8th Semester/Term	
Advanced Undergraduate Seminar ³	4
Elective	4
Elective	4
Elective	4
Credits	
16	
Total Credits	
128	

1

Chosen from Arabic, Hindi, Persian, Turkish, or Urdu.

2

Chosen from a list of approved departmental courses. Must be taken at Washington Square.

3

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

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/>).