Webster University

Department of History, Politics, and International Relations

Graduate Advising Handbook (updated August 19, 2019)

“Throughout their academic careers at Webster, students work with their academic advisors to plan their choice of University courses. The advisor helps the student choose coursework to meet individual educational and career goals, informs students about academic policies and procedures, and helps solve a variety of academic problems. Ultimately, however, it is the responsibility of each student to keep apprised of current graduation requirements for his or her particular degree program.”

-- Webster University Undergraduate Studies Catalog (equally applicable to graduate students)

This Advising Handbook supplements the Graduate Studies Catalog (http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/graduate-catalog/) and the website of the Department of History, Politics, and International Relations at Webster University (http://www.webster.edu/arts-and-sciences/academics/history-politics-internationalrelations/).

Overview of Programs

The Department of History, Politics, and International Relations at Webster University offers a diverse curriculum that combines tradition and innovation. Our faculty members are committed to the concept of a liberal arts education. Our aim is to help students become fearless and perceptive readers, vivid and effective writers, and well-informed citizens of the world. At the same time, we know that students learn in different ways and have different goals and aspirations. Our programs allow students the flexibility they need to excel in their studies and pursue their personal career aims. Most of our students study abroad -- including many who never dreamed of leaving the United States when they came to Webster. Others have taken advantage of our rich opportunities for internships right here in the Midwest.

Certificate in Security Studies

The Certificate in Security Studies examines core topics in international security. Students will be introduced to scholarly work on the sources of conflict and violence in the international arena, as well as literature on the resolution and mitigation of such conflicts. Students will apply theories and concepts of both interstate and intrastate conflict to important contemporary cases, and analyze the effectiveness of potential policy responses. This certificate program will prepare students for further graduate
study in the fields of international relations and international security, as well as related careers in the public and private sector. Where available, this certificate may be earned while completing the MA in International Relations, Global MA in International Relations, or as a stand-alone graduate certificate.

**MA in International Relations**

The MA in International Relations is unique for a number of reasons. Students are able to take advantage of Webster’s global footprint by studying abroad at Webster campuses throughout the world and are taught by faculty who are noted scholars and practitioners in the field. The program offers considerable flexibility and can be taken on a full-time or part-time basis. Webster is also nationally recognized as military-friendly.

International Relations students at Webster have gone on to work for Meds for Kids, Boeing, ABB, Enterprise, the Associate Ministry of Coordination and Competiveness in Ecuador, and the United States Army and as a preparatoria teacher in Honduras. Other graduates have gone on to practice law and work in academia (for example, at Washington University in St. Louis).

**Advising**

When students begin the MA in International Relations in St. Louis, they must visit Academic Advising (http://www.webster.edu/advising/) for an initial consultation. Students are thereafter welcome to contact the Department of History, Politics, and International Relations’ Interim Head of International Relations, Dr. Kristen Anderson at 314-246-7065 or kanderson80@webster.edu for advising throughout the duration of their program. Students are advised which courses to take by Academic Advising and Dr. Barnidge and are able to sign up for most of their courses online.

**Course Selection**

**Certificate in Security Studies**

Prerequisite: INTL 5000 or at least two upper-level undergraduate courses in International Relations.

The 12 credit hours required for the graduate certificate in security studies must include the following required courses (3 credit hours), and three elective courses (9 credit hours):

INTL 5590 International Security (3 credit hours) Electives

(9 credit hours):

INTL 5550 War and Diplomacy (3 credit hours)
INTL 5890 Terrorism in World Politics (3 credit hours)
INTL 5560 US Foreign Policy (3 credit hours) or INTL 5570 Comparative Foreign Policy (3 credit hours)
INTL 5535 International Disaster Response Law (3 credit hours)
INTL 5595 Energy Security (3 credit hours)

MA in International Relations

The MA in International Relations affords students considerable flexibility in designing their program of study subject to meeting all program requirements. Students are able to choose their courses several months prior to the beginning of term.

Students are strongly encouraged to take INTL 5000 Introduction to International Relations (3 credit hours) and INTL 5100 Research Methods and Perspectives (3 credit hours) as soon as possible in their program. They are also strongly encouraged to take INTL 5400 International Political Economy (3 credit hours), INTL 5530 International Law (3 credit hours), INTL 5540 International Organizations (3 credit hours), and INTL 5550 War and Diplomacy (3 credit hours). Students interested in pursuing a PhD or a career path involving significant research may request to pursue INTL 6250 Thesis (6 credit hours). No student is guaranteed the right to complete a thesis; each request is assessed on its merits.

The 36 credit hours required for the MA in International Relations must include the following courses:

-INTL 5000 Introduction to International Relations (3 credit hours)
-INTL 5100 Research Methods and Perspectives (3 credit hours)
-INTL 6000 Capstone in International Relations (3 credit hours) or INTL 6250 Thesis (6 credit hours) and INTL 6900 University Thesis Requirement (0 credit hours)
-Two courses from the Comparative Politics Cluster (6 credit hours)
-Four courses from the International Politics Cluster (12 credit hours)
-Three elective courses (9 credit hours)

Students should enroll in the prescribed 36 credit hours and ensure that their course selections avoid timetable clashes. They must meet relevant prerequisites for courses; students will not be permitted to enroll in courses for which they do not meet relevant prerequisites.

Students are advised to consult the Graduate Studies Catalog.
Internships and Field Work

The Internship Program is designed to enhance the international relations curriculum. Students play an instrumental role in creating an experience that blends coursework knowledge with practical knowledge by working with a host organization under the supervision of a qualified professional. Interested students should contact Dr. Kristen Anderson at kanderson80@webster.edu and refer to information and forms available online at: http://www.webster.edu/arts-and-sciences/academics/history-politics-internationalrelations/resources.html.

INTL 5300 Field Work provides an opportunity for students to actively involve themselves in field research, which may be of a qualitative or quantitative nature. Interested students should contact Dr. Kristen Anderson at kanderson80@webster.edu and refer to further information and forms available online at: http://www.webster.edu/arts-and-sciences/academics/history-politics-internationalrelations/resources.html.

Frequently Asked Questions

1.) What makes the Department so distinctive?

Department faculty members include top scholars in their fields.

Five faculty members have won Webster’s top teaching prize.

Three faculty members have written textbooks that are used by colleges nationwide.

Webster’s campuses in Austria, England, Ghana, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Thailand provide amazing study abroad opportunities with recognized scholars in their fields.

Small class size translates into personalized attention from faculty members.

2.) Where can I find out what courses are offered, and when?

Students are advised to visit the Course Schedule page (http://www.webster.edu/academics/course-schedules.html).

3.) Is there a foreign language requirement?

There is not a foreign language requirement for the MA in International Relations.
4.) Does the Department support study abroad for its students?

Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of Webster’s nationally-recognized study-abroad opportunities while pursuing their graduate education. The Webster World Traveler Program (http://www.webster.edu/studyabroad/resources/resources_for_students/scholarships_wwtp/wwtp.html), for example, offers a free round-trip flight for eligible students who study at one of our international campuses or international partner institutions; applications are collected three times a year.

For more information regarding available study abroad programs and global locations, as well as links to blogs and testimonials from students currently studying overseas, visit the Office of Study Abroad (http://www.webster.edu/study-abroad/).

5.) Are there resources at Webster that will help me discern career options?

The Career Planning and Development Center (CPDC) assists individuals with exploring and defining their personal career goals while developing the skills and confidence necessary to succeed. For further information, visit the CPDC’s webpage (http://www.webster.edu/career-services/).

Of course, students are also welcome to meet with Department faculty members to discuss their career thoughts.

6.) Can I do a thesis while a graduate student in the Department?

Matriculating through the MA in International Relations program usually involves completing the program-specific (INTL 6000) capstone course (unless the local campus requires a thesis). Students interested in pursuing a PhD or a career path involving significant research may request to pursue a thesis (INTL 6250). No student is guaranteed the right to complete a thesis; each request is assessed on its merits. Successful completion of a thesis is a major academic accomplishment and represents an important publication for the student. See the University’s Graduate Thesis Requirements (http://www.webster.edu/graduate/graduate-thesis-dissertation-guidelines.html).

Interested students should contact Dr. Kristen Anderson at kanderson80@webster.edu and refer to further information and forms available online at: http://www.webster.edu/artsand-sciences/academics/history-politics-international-relations/resources.html.

7.) Can I take classes online?
Many of the courses on the MA in International Relations program are available online. Webster offers support for students taking online courses through the Online Learning Center, [http://www.webster.edu/olc/](http://www.webster.edu/olc/).

8.) Can I take classes outside of the Department? If so, which ones are recommended?

Students on the MA in International Relations program can take a limited number of preapproved elective courses (non-INTL) related to international relations as part of their degree program. See [http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/graduatecatalog/degrees/international-relations.html](http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/graduatecatalog/degrees/international-relations.html).

9.) How can I find out who teaches in the Department and areas of expertise that faculty offer?

The Departmental webpage contains information about who teaches in the Department and their areas of expertise. See [http://www.webster.edu/arts-andsciences/academics/history-politics-international-relations/contact.html](http://www.webster.edu/arts-andsciences/academics/history-politics-international-relations/contact.html).

10.) How can I learn more about the student clubs and organizations at Webster?

For a list of student clubs and organizations, see [https://involved.webster.edu/organizations/](https://involved.webster.edu/organizations/). Get the most out of your Webster experience by getting involved!

11.) I need to learn more about financial aid and tuition. Where can I go to for assistance?

Webster’s Office of Financial Aid is here to help. See [http://www.webster.edu/financialaid/](http://www.webster.edu/financialaid/).