

International Studies

Interdisciplinary

Requirements

The International Studies Program enables students to analyze an increasingly global society using the foundations of the liberal arts. International studies majors concentrate in one of four thematic tracks—development, transnationalism, global environment, or cultural studies—taking a focused set of courses from several disciplines to develop their understanding of that topic. Majors apply that knowledge to the sustained study of a particular region of the world, where they spend at least a semester abroad studying, living in, and experiencing a foreign culture.

International studies majors must have an adventurous spirit and a high level of personal motivation. They must learn foreign languages, study in distant countries, and think rigorously across disciplinary boundaries. The program especially encourages students to study the problems and challenges of the less-developed world.

Getting Started

International studies majors select an area of geographic concentration and follow a series of courses in one of the four thematic tracks described in the curriculum section. We strongly recommend that first-year students take language courses in a language appropriate for the geographic area in which they plan to concentrate (Spanish for Latin America, Chinese for China, and so forth). This suggestion is by far the most important one we can make, for success in off-campus study in the area concentration depends heavily on language skills. Second, you should look carefully at the courses listed as introductory courses in the core track courses under each of the four thematic tracks. Consider taking one or more of the courses listed there that can serve in more than one thematic track—e.g., ANTH 113 (Introduction to Cultural Anthropology), ECON 101 (Principles of Microeconomics), PSCI 260 (International Relations), SOCY 105 (Society in Comparative Perspective), or HIST 100 (The Making of the Contemporary World). Students should consult the director of the program during the year for additional advice.

The Curriculum

All international studies majors concentrate in one of the four tracks described below. In each track, students complete courses in five categories: (1) INST 201, the required sophomore course; (2) core track courses; (3) area concentration; (4) language; and (5) INST 401, the required senior seminar. All majors must also study abroad in an approved off-campus studies program in their geographic area of concentration.

Majors choose to concentrate in one of the following four tracks:

Development track: This track appeals to those drawn to the study of Asia, Africa, and Latin America because of an interest in the prospects for socioeconomic development in those regions, the transition from an agricultural to an industrial and postindustrial economy, how to maintain an agricultural way of life in the face of global competition, how to address economic inequality and poverty, and how socioeconomic change impacts cultures. Many students are especially interested in the responsibilities of wealthier countries toward those that are poorer. Development is studied as an inherently interdisciplinary topic, building on the perspectives of economics and the other social sciences. Students focus on one geographic region in Asia, Africa, or Latin America, with development as their major topic, but with ample study of the culture and society of at least one country, the one in which they undertake off-campus study. OCS programs that give special emphasis to development themes are especially encouraged.

Transnationalism track: This track appeals to students who are interested in how countries interact in world affairs and in the new ways in which individuals and societies interact in the age of globalization. Transnationalism studies the increasing volume of non-state relationships we witness today, ranging from increased international economic transactions through the vast growth of cross-national communication and travel to the new wave of international migration. In this track students explore ways that the social sciences—especially economics, political science, and sociology—have explained international interactions, including themes such as globalization, border studies, migration, and the emergence of communities in which people hold more than one nationality. Because transnationalism is inherently cross-regional, students in this track will usually have a primary region but focus their study on its connections with other regions.

Global Environment track: The study of issues related to the environment, ecosystems, and natural resources requires an interdisciplinary and international approach. Many environmental issues are global in scope, such as climate change, while others have a more regional focus, such as the impact of life along rivers that flow across international boundaries. Secondly, other issues central to international studies—e.g., economic development, agricultural growth, indigenous land rights, and natural resource extraction—have fundamental implications for the environment. Finally, there are environmental questions that are best studied comparatively, such as how similar ecosystems work on different continents. Students in this track combine scientific training with international studies in order to examine complex environmental issues. They are expected to take advantage of a growing number of off-campus studies programs (particularly in Africa and Latin America) that deal primarily with environmental questions within the social, historical, and cultural context of a particular region. Students majoring in this track will also fulfill the requirements for the Concentration in Environmental Studies and must register for that concentration.

Cultural Studies track: This track explores how people from various cultures and societies understand their place in the universe. To practice cultural interpretation, students must master a language, study abroad, and build an interdisciplinary expertise focused on that region. Students selecting this track will

choose one of three areas of disciplinary focus: Religious and Cultural Studies explores how religious beliefs or practices shape cultural expression; Literature and Cultural Studies explores how culture becomes defined and expressed through literature, the arts, and language; History and Cultural Studies explores how cultures and societies use the past to interpret and give meaning to the present. In each case, students will blend area specialization with cross-disciplinary training that includes the humanities and other fields of inquiry. The area-studies component can follow the pattern of conventional area studies—i.e., East Asia, South Asia, Middle East, Africa, eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Latin America—or it can address new regions and issues that have become important in recent decades. These include immigration in Europe, the Atlantic world, African and other diasporas, the Islamic world, or indigenous cultures in contemporary or historical contexts.

The following requirements apply to all four tracks:

Sophomore course: This course, INST 201 (The Expansion of International Society), explores the historical origins, causes, and implications of today's globalized world.

Language: Majors must complete at least one year of foreign language study beyond the introductory level, for any language offered at Kenyon. If you are studying abroad in a place where the local language is one not offered at Kenyon, then you must complete the Kenyon language requirement and, for the major, take the equivalent of two semesters of additional language study while abroad or through summer programs. All students are required to study a local language during their study-abroad experience.

Off-campus study: All international studies majors must study abroad for at least a semester and are encouraged to do so for an entire year. Students are expected to study abroad in a program relevant to their thematic track, area concentration, and foreign language training, almost always in an area where the majority of the people speak a language different from the student's own primary language. Keep in mind that off-campus study at Kenyon is competitive, and writing a strong application is critical. In order to study abroad, a student must receive approval from the College and have achieved a GPA of at least 2.75.

Senior seminar: The senior seminar, INST 401 (Contemporary Global Issues), is a comparative course that brings all international studies majors together to look at significant global problems from the various perspectives they bring based on their specializations.

Senior Exercise: The Senior Exercise provides an opportunity for majors to undertake a substantial, independent research project that combines and reflects their thematic training and regional knowledge. It usually builds on their experience and research abroad and then examines it from a broadly intellectual and comparative perspective. Seniors are encouraged to consult with any faculty members in the International Studies Program. Projects usually take the form of a research paper of about twenty to thirty pages in length. They are due in mid-February.

Honors: Students wishing to pursue a degree with honors in international studies should consult with the director during the spring semester of their junior year. It is often the case that some of the research for honors will have been completed during the junior-year experience abroad.

Required core courses and area concentration requirements vary by track, as follows:

Development Track

Core track courses:

Introductory (3 courses): ECON 101; ECON 102; and ANTH 113, SOCY 101, SOCY 103, or SOCY 105.

Upper-level (3 courses): ECON 331, ECON 332, or ECON 339; at least one upper-level development-related course from another social science discipline, such as ANTH 358, PSCI 342, PSCI 347, PSCI 366, PSCI 470, or SOCY 233; and at least one course that situates the challenges of modern development in broader social, political, or historical context, such as HIST 100, HIST 226, HIST 473, PSCI 361, RLST 380, SOCY 223, SOCY 249, or SOCY 251.

Research methods (1 social science methods course): ANTH 464, ECON 205, HIST 387, PSCI 280, PSCI 397, SOCY 271, or SOCY 374.

Area concentration:

Students must take at least four courses on one of the following geographic or cultural regions of the “developing” world: sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, East Asia, South Asia, eastern Europe, Central Asia, or the Islamic world. At least two of the area courses must be historical in scope, including a course in the modern history of the region. At least two of the area courses must be taken at Kenyon.

Transnationalism track:

Core track courses:

Introductory (3 courses): ECON 101; PSCI 240 or PSCI 260; and SOCY 101, SOCY 103, or SOCY 105.

Upper-level (3 of the following from two departments): ANTH 310D, ECON 335, ECON 338, ECON 339, HIST 322, PSCI 355, PSCI 361, PSCI 460, PSCI 465, SOCY 221, SOCY 233, SOCY 235, SOCY 237, SOCY 251, SOCY 425, SOCY 466, WGS 242.

Research methods (1 social science methods course): ANTH 464, ECON 205, HIST 387, PSCI 280, PSCI 397, SOCY 271, or SOCY 374.

Area concentration:

Students must take at least four courses on a geographic region—such as sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and North Africa, Latin America, Latin America and the Caribbean, East Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, eastern Europe, or western Europe — or else on a more culturally defined region such as the Islamic world, the Atlantic world, or a diaspora community. Although one region usually serves as the primary focus, courses on that area should include study of connections with other regions and transnational phenomena such as migration, trade, diplomacy, and cultural diffusion. At least one course must be on the modern history of the area, at least one course must situate the area in a transnational context, and no

more than two of the courses can be from off-campus study. Examples of transnational area courses include: ASIA 201, ENGL 282, HIST 226, HIST 242, HIST 261, HIST 322, HIST 323, HIST 345, HIST 373, HIST 454, PSCI 345, PSCI 346, PSCI 347, PSCI 446, RLST 235, RLST 447, SOCY 249, SPAN 365, and SPAN 380.

Global Environment track:

Core track courses:

Introductory (5 courses): ENVS 112; BIOL 106 or BIOL 115; CHEM 108 or CHEM 110; ECON 101; and one introductory course on the global social context of the environment, such as ANTH 113, PSCI 260, SOCY 101, SOCY 103, or SOCY 105.

Upper-level (4 courses): ENVS 461; and three courses on the challenges of managing the environment, such as ANTH 320, ECON 336, ECON 342, ECON 347, ENVS 253, PSCI 361, PSCI 363, PSCI 480, RLST 481, SOCY 233, and SOCY 242.

Research methods (1 course, plus lab for science courses): ANTH 464, BIOL 228 and 229, BIOL 352 and 353, CHEM 231 and 233, ECON 205, ENVS 261, PSCI 280, or PSCI 397.

Area concentration:

Students must take four courses in one of the following geographic or cultural regions: sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and North Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, East Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, eastern Europe, western Europe, or the Islamic world. At least two of the area courses must be historical in scope, including a course in the modern history of the region. At least two of the courses must be taken at Kenyon. Students in the Global Environment track must also register for the Environmental Studies concentration.

Cultural Studies track:

Core track courses:

Students on the cultural studies track must choose a disciplinary focus in one of the following: Religious and Cultural Studies, Literature and Cultural Studies, or History and Cultural Studies.

1. Religious and Cultural Studies

Introductory (2 courses): RLST 101, 102, or 103; and one course on global cultural diversity, such as ANTH 113, HIST 100, INDS 333, CWL 220, or MUSC 206.

Upper-level (6 courses): four courses in RLST above the 100 level; and two religion-centered courses in other departments, such as HIST 328, HIST 439, HIST 444, INDS 231, PHIL 240, or SOCY 221.

Research methods: RLST 390.

2. Literature and Cultural Studies

Introductory (2 courses): an introductory world literature course, such as ENGL 265, CWL 220, or an MLL course between 323 and 326; and a course on non-literary cultural diversity, such as ANTH 113, HIST 100, MUSC 206, or RLST 101, 102, or 103.

Upper-level (6 courses): Four courses in MLL beyond the introductory requirement (possibly including a few courses between 323 and 326, such as FREN 324); and two relevant literature, film, or art history courses from other departments.

Research methods: An upper-level course on postcolonial literature in ENGL or an upper-level course on postcolonial literature or culture in MLL. (Courses taken to satisfy this requirement cannot be used to satisfy the upper-level course requirement.)

3. History and Cultural Studies

Introductory (2 courses): HIST 100 or a director-approved substitute; and a non-historical course on cultural diversity, such as ANTH 113, CWL 220, an MLL course between 323 and 326, MUSC 206, or RLST 101, 102, or 103.

Upper-level (6 courses): Four courses in HIST above the 100 level; and two historically based courses from another department, such as ASIA 201, INDS 231, RLST 240, or RLST 270.

Research methods: HIST 387.

Area concentration:

Students must take four courses in one of the following geographic or cultural regions: sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and North Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, East Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, eastern Europe, western Europe, or the Islamic world. To fulfill this requirement, students may double-count up to two area courses taken to fulfill the student's disciplinary focus, but at least two of the four area courses must fall outside the student's disciplinary focus. (For example, literature students must take at least two courses dealing with some other aspect of the region, such as its history or religions.) At least two of the area courses must be taken at Kenyon.

Courses

INST 201 THE EXPANSION OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

Credit: 0.5

This course explores the evolution of modern international society from its historical roots in long-distance trade systems and empires up through recent globalization. We will examine the roles of industrialization, capitalism, nationalism, individualism, and other elements of modernity in propelling and directing the flow of wealth, people, and ideas between different regions of the world. In addition to studying general political and economic changes, we will consider various local and personal perspectives, giving life to otherwise abstract forces and complicating attempts to construct a single overarching narrative of "modernization," "Westernization," or "development." Among the issues to be examined are

the causes and effects of international economic disparities, migration, cultural tensions, and stresses on the environment. In surveying major viewpoints and illustrative cases within these themes, the course is meant to serve as an introduction to the international studies major, utilizing a variety of academic disciplines and providing a foundation for further study of relations between different nations and peoples of the world. As part of the course, students will complete a research paper related to the geographic area where they plan to go for their off-campus experience. Prerequisite: sophomore standing or permission of instructor. Offered every year.

INST 401 SENIOR SEMINAR: CONTEMPORARY GLOBAL ISSUES

Credit: 0.5

This seminar will examine some of the problems inherent in cross-cultural comparison and will explore the ways in which a variety of disciplines grapple with these difficulties by investigating contemporary themes in international affairs. These themes will include some or all of the following: (1) ethnic conflict; (2) comparative perspectives on development; (3) religion and socioeconomic development; (4) contemporary environmental problems; (5) the ethics of armed intervention; (6) the emergence of a world popular culture and its consequences for national cultures; (7) the challenges of democratization; and (8) perceptions of the United States, Americans, and U.S. foreign policy abroad. Open only to international studies majors with senior standing. Offered every year.

INST 493 INDIVIDUAL STUDY

Credit: 0.25-0.5

Individual study is available to students who want to pursue a course of reading or complete a focused research project on a topic not regularly offered in the curriculum. This option is available only in exceptional circumstances and must involve international studies, rather than subjects more suitable for a particular department. To qualify, a student must prepare a proposal in consultation with a member of the international studies faculty who has suitable expertise and is willing to work with the student over the course of a semester. The two- to three-page proposal should include: a statement of the questions to be explored, a preliminary bibliography, a schedule of assignments, a schedule of meetings with the supervising faculty member, and a description grading criteria. The student should also briefly describe prior coursework that particularly qualifies him or her to pursue the project independently. The program director must approve the proposal. The student should meet regularly with the instructor for at least the equivalent of one hour per week. The amount of graded work should approximate that required in 300- or 400-level social science or humanities courses. Students should plan to read two hundred pages or more a week and to write at least thirty pages over the course of the semester. Students are urged to begin discussing their proposals with the supervising faculty member and the program director the semester before they hope to undertake the project. The program director must receive proposals by the third day of classes.

INST 497Y SENIOR HONORS

Credit: 0.5

The Honors Program is designed to recognize and encourage exceptional scholarship and to allow able students to do more independent work than is otherwise feasible. The senior honors candidate works with members of the international studies faculty to prepare an extended essay (thesis) on a topic of mutual interest, which is defended before an outside examiner in May. Note: students standing for honors also take the senior seminar. Prerequisite: permission of international studies steering committee.

INST 498Y SENIOR HONORS

Credit: 0.5

See description for INST 497Y.