FROM STUDY TO SKILLS

All academic programs offered at the UM help students develop valuable transferable skills. Middle Eastern and North African Studies (MENAS) is concerned with the region from the western coast of Morocco and the southern borders of the Sahara to the eastern end of Afghanistan and Islamic Central Asia. The MENAS concentration is an interdisciplinary program designed to give students a broad background including language, history, and culture to help students understand the development and current issues of this strategically important region.

As a MENAS concentrator, you will develop the ability to understand cultural differences and cultural development. Through language training and study, you will also develop excellent analytical and communication skills.

Related fields include Near Eastern Studies, History, Anthropology, Political Science, Philosophy, Judaic Studies, History of Art, Ancient Civilizations and Museum Studies, as well as Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Language Skills
- Reading and understanding ideas
- Recognizing word patterns and structures
- Interpreting complex language
- Reading for tone and attitude
- Translating language/ideas
- Evaluating translations and original texts

Research/Analytical Skills
- Asking questions
- Generating and developing ideas
- Compiling and organizing information
- Examining evidence
- Evaluating theories
- Solving problems
- Making decisions

Interpersonal/Cross-Cultural Skills
- Teaching
- Understanding and accepting other cultures and beliefs
- Developing sensitivity to other viewpoints
- Appreciating continuity and change within a historical perspective
- Clarifying others’ thoughts and ideas

Communication Skills
- Writing clearly
- Editing/proofreading materials
- Persuading people/groups
- Presenting and debating arguments
- Listening critically
- Evaluating ideas

BUILDING YOUR SKILLS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Employers seek out individuals who can demonstrate excellent verbal and written communication skills, teamwork and interpersonal skills, initiative, and a strong work ethic. Student organizations and campus employment offer valuable opportunities to add to the skills you are developing in your classes. Other options include off-campus employment or volunteering in the community. Study abroad experiences are particularly helpful to improve language proficiency and gain intercultural skills. Finally, a summer internship may be the best way of all to test out a career field and develop marketable skills.
FROM SKILLS TO CAREER

MENAS concentrators develop both general and technical skills applicable to a wide range of careers. For example, cross-cultural sensitivity may be equally useful whether working as a foreign-service officer, an international hotel manager, or a journalist.

Many concentrators go on to graduate or professional school. The list below is a sample of careers undertaken by MENAS graduates.

Language Skills
United Nations interpreter
Consular assistant
Translations specialist
Foreign affairs journalist

Research/Analytical Skills
State Department analyst
International finance analyst
Immigration inspector
Congressional staff member
Foundation researcher
Intelligence agent
College professor
Librarian
Archaeological Assistant
Historian

Interpersonal/ Cross-Cultural Skills
Affirmative action officer
Foreign service officer
Consultant, cross-cultural relations
Travel agent
Export import sales manager
International hotel manager

Communication Skills
K-12 teacher
Textbook sales representative
Advertising copywriter
Museum exhibit assistant
Museum curator
Journalist/writer, all media
Editor, all media
Arts reviewer

For more career information, see O*Net at
online.onetcenter.org

CONCENTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Curriculum requirements include 2 years of Arabic, Armenian, Hebrew, Persian, Turkish, or Uzbek and at least 24 additional credits in upper level courses. We also offer fifteen-credit minors in MENAS and Islamic Studies.

For more information, see the LSA bulletin, the MENAS website, or make an appointment with a MENAS academic advisor.

NEXT STEPS/RESOURCES

To begin exploring opportunities for overseas study and work, go to: lsa.umich.edu/cgis or global.umich.edu

To begin connecting to professionals in fields that interest you, create your own LinkedIn account: careercenter.umich.edu/article/getting-started-linkedln

To identify internships or job opportunities, visit Career Center Connector: careercenter.umich.edu/article/c3

On-campus jobs (work-study and non work-study jobs) are listed at: studentemployment.umich.edu/JobX_Home.aspx

Maize Pages list hundreds of organizations for students to get involved in: maizepages.umich.edu

Connect to Community lists volunteer opportunities in local organizations: connect2community.umich.edu

The Career Center
3200 Student Activities Building
734-764-7460
careercenter.umich.edu
facebook.com/careercenter.umich
twitter.com/careercenter
linkedin.com/company/the-career-center-at-the-university-of-michigan