Near Eastern Studies

FROM STUDY TO SKILLS

All academic programs offered at the UM help students develop valuable transferable skills. So why major in Near Eastern Studies? This region is the birthplace of three major world religions and of our writing system, has a rich ancient and medieval history, and has become increasingly strategically important. NES offers students an interdisciplinary approach drawing on the expertise of faculty in multiple related disciplines. Study abroad for a semester or preferably a full academic year is highly encouraged.

Whether you are interested in mastering ancient or modern languages, becoming familiar with important artistic or religious figures, or studying contemporary international issues, as a NES concentrator you will obtain a broadly based liberal arts education and develop excellent critical thinking and communication skills, which will provide a foundation for careers in government, business, law, nonprofits, education, and the arts.


SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Language Skills
- Mastering a Near Eastern language
- Reading and understanding ideas
- Recognizing word patterns and structures
- Interpreting complex language
- Understanding the historical evolution of languages
- Reading for tone and attitude
- Translating language/ideas
- Evaluating translations and original texts

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

Interpersonal/Cross-Cultural Skills
- 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
- Communicating in Near Eastern cultural context
- Writing clearly
- Editing/prooﬁreading materials
- Persuading people/groups
- Presenting and debating arguments
- Listening critically

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. NES students are involved in numerous religious, ethnic, and cultural organizations and participate in research with NES faculty. Other ways to further develop your skills 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

NES concentrators develop both general and technical skills applicable to a wide range of careers. Employers frequently are looking to hire workers with linguistic and cultural competence; for example, cross-cultural sensitivity may be equally useful whether employed 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 NES graduates.

Language Skills
- Interpreter
- Consular assistant
- Translations specialist
- Language teacher

Research/Analytical Skills
- Foreign policy analyst
- Lawyer
- International finance analyst
- Homeland security analyst
- Congressional staff member
- Foundation researcher
- Intelligence analyst
- College professor
- Librarian
- Archaeologist
- Physician

Interpersonal/Cross-Cultural Skills
- Affordable action officer
- Immigration and customs officer
- Foreign Service officer
- Consultant, cross-cultural relations
- Export/Import sales manager
- International hotel manager

Communication Skills
- K-12 teacher
- Textbook sales representative
- Marketing specialist
- Museum exhibit assistant
- Museum curator
- Foreign affairs journalist/writer, all media
- Editor, all media
- Arts reviewer
- Clergy

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

CONCENTRATION REQUIREMENTS

The Department offers several programs of study covering Near Eastern languages, literatures, civilizations, linguistics, history, ancient studies, Biblical studies, Egyptology, medieval Islamic history, and Islamic studies. Languages taught include Arabic, Turkish, Hebrew, Armenian, Persian, and numerous ancient and medieval languages, including Sumerian, Akkadian, Hittite, Ancient Egyptian, Coptic, and Aramaic. The prerequisite for all NES concentrations is ACABS 100/AAPTIS 100/HJCS 100/HISTORY 132, Peoples of the Middle East.

We also offer two minors in Near Eastern Languages and Culture and Early Christian Studies, along with an Honors option. Many students combine the NES concentration or minor with study in another department. For more information on all concentrations, see the LSA Bulletin, the NES website, or make an appointment with a NES academic advisor.

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NEXT STEPS/RESOURCES

To begin exploring opportunities for overseas study and work, go to: http://lsa.umich.edu/cs/ or http://globalportal.umich.edu/study.php

To begin connecting to professionals in fields that interest you, create your own LinkedIn account: www.careercenter.umich.edu/students/networking/linkedin_intro.html

To identify internships or job opportunities, visit Career Center Connector: www.careercenter.umich.edu/c3student/

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

Maize Pages list hundreds of organizations for students to get involved in: http://studentorgs.umich.edu/maize

Volunteer Connection lists volunteer opportunities in local organizations: http://volunteer-connection.umich.edu/

The Career Center
3200 Student Activities Building
734-764-7460
www.careercenter.umich.edu
www.facebook.com/careercenter.umich
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The Career Guide series was developed by the University of Michigan Career Center, Division of Student Affairs, in cooperation with the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts. ©2011 Regents of the University of Michigan