



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.

Related fields include History, Anthropology, Middle Eastern and North African Studies (MENAS), Political Science, Linguistics, Philosophy, Judaic Studies, Classics, History of Art and Architecture, Archaeology, Museum Studies, and Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies (REES).

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/proofreading 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

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 

 = Further Study Required

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.

Interpersonal/ Cross-Cultural Skills

Affirmative 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 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.

Department of Near Eastern Studies

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734-764-0314
lsa.umich.edu/neareast/aboutus

Newnan Advising Center

1255 Angell Hall
734-764-0332
lsa.umich.edu/advising

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-linkedin

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

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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
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