



International Studies

FROM STUDY TO SKILLS

All academic programs offered at the UM help students develop valuable transferable skills. Housed in the Program in International and Comparative Studies (PICS), the International Studies (IS) major is intended for students planning to pursue advanced degrees or careers in international law, international business, public policy, global health, and government or nongovernmental organizations with an international focus. The major is ideal for students interested in learning a foreign language and exploring international topics from a comparative perspective.

As an IS concentrator, you will develop the ability to understand differences in economic, political, and cultural development. Through language training and study, you will also develop excellent analytical and communication skills. IS concentrators are strongly encouraged, but not required, to study abroad.

Related fields include Political Science, History, Economics, Public Policy, Public Health, Program in the Environment, Anthropology, Psychology, Sociology, Languages and Literatures, Comparative Literature, Law, Business, and Communications.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Language Skills

- Reading and understanding sophisticated ideas
- Recognizing complex word patterns and structures
- Understanding cultural differences as reflected in language
- Interpreting complex language
- Reading for tone and attitude
- Translating languages/ideas
- Evaluating translations and original texts

Research/Analytical Skills

- Asking analytical questions
- Generating and developing complex, novel ideas
- Compiling and organizing information
- Analyzing data
- Examining and evaluating evidence
- Evaluating theories about societies and cultures
- Understanding problems about society and cultures
- Making decisions about social processes and policies

Interpersonal/

Cross-Cultural Skills

- Understanding other cultures and beliefs
- Developing sensitivity to multiple viewpoints
- Appreciating historical continuity and change
- Clarifying others' thoughts and ideas

Communication Skills

- Writing clearly
- Persuading people/groups
- Presenting and debating ideas
- 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. IS students are encouraged to participate on the International Studies Student Council, Culture of Medicine Club, International Studies Honors Core Society, and publish articles in the Michigan Journal of Foreign Affairs. They can attend the International Institute's wide variety of lectures on international topics.

Student organizations, research with IS faculty, and campus employment offer additional opportunities to add to the skills developed in class. 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

International Studies majors develop both general and technical skills applicable to a wide range of careers. For example, cross-cultural proficiency may be equally useful whether working as a foreign-service officer, a manager of an international branch of an American

Language Skills

United Nations interpreter 
Consular assistant
Translation specialist 
Foreign affairs journalist

Research/Analytical Skills

Foreign policy analyst 
International finance analyst 
Immigration inspector
Congressional staff member
Foundation researcher
Intelligence agent
College professor 
Librarian 
Historian 
International affairs lawyer

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

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

IS concentrators choose one of four tracks:

- International Security, Norms, and Cooperation
- Political Economy and Development
- Comparative Culture and Identity
- Global Environment and Health

For each track there is a prescribed menu of courses available on the PICS website. Many IS majors choose to double-major with another major.

Major requirements include a minimum of 33 credits, three years of a modern language, and three courses, Intro to International Studies (INTLSTD 101), Topics of International Studies (INTLSTD 301), and a senior year capstone seminar (INTLSTD 401).

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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organization or corporation, or a journalist. Many concentrators go on to graduate or professional school. The list below is a sample of careers undertaken by IS graduates.

Interpersonal/

Cross-Cultural Skills

Affirmative action officer
Foreign service officer
Consultant, cross-cultural relations
Travel agent
Export/import sales manager
Hospitality manager
International hotel manager
Leader or manager of international NGO
Administrator within international organization

Communication Skills

K-12 teacher
Advertising copywriter
Museum exhibit assistant
Museum curator 
Journalist/writer, all media
Editor, all media
Arts reviewer

 = Further Study Required

Moreover, students must take a research methods course and at least one course focusing on the region/country of their chosen language. The minor requires three years of language study, along with a minimum of 18 credits.

For more information, see the LSA Bulletin, the PICS website below, or make an appointment with a PICS academic advisor.

Program in International and Comparative Studies

International Institute, Suite 2660
1080 S. University Avenue
734-764-2268

<http://www.ii.umich.edu/pics/academics>

Newnan Advising Center

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

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