Middle Eastern Studies

The major in Middle Eastern Studies is administered by the Asian Studies Committee: Professors Gabriel (economics; on leave Fall 2015), Hachiyanagi (art), Hashmi (international relations), Khory (politics), I. Peterson (Indian literature, cultural history, and Hinduism; on leave Spring 2016), Nemoto (Japanese language and linguistics), Roth (anthropology), Sinha (art history), Wang (Chinese language and literature; on leave 2015-16); Associate Professors Chen (politics), Datla (history), Mrozik (religion; on leave Spring 2016), Steiniefs (religion); Assistant Professor Babul (anthropology; on leave 2015-16); Lecturers Xu (Chinese) and Yan (Chinese); Teaching Associate Kao (Chinese); Five College Assistant Professor Sbaiti (history; on leave 2015-16); Five College Senior Lecturer Brown (Japanese); Five College Lecturers Arafah (Arabic), Massey (Korean), Park (Korean); Visiting Lecturer Lee (history).

The certificate in Middle Eastern Studies is administered by the Five College Committee for Middle Eastern Studies, which includes the program advisors from Mount Holyoke, Professor Hashmi (international relations), Associate Professor Steiniefs (religion), and 5College Lecturer Arafah (Arabic).

Overview

One of four interdisciplinary majors within the Asian Studies program, the major in Middle Eastern studies allows students to specialize in the history, languages, cultures, and politics of the Middle East. The Five-College Certificate in Middle Eastern Studies allows students to complement any disciplinary major with multidisciplinary studies and linguistic attainments. Complementing course work at Mount Holyoke are extracurricular activities and study abroad programs that broaden and deepen students' understanding of this region.

Language study is the core component of the major. Our students are expected to incorporate the humanities and the social sciences fully into their studies with classes at Mount Holyoke and the other colleges in the Five College Consortium.

On campus, our students experience regional culture at many levels, including language tables and clubs, guest lectures, performing and visual arts, film, festivals, and regional cuisine. These activities are often initiated by and benefit greatly from the diverse student population of Mount Holyoke.

Most of our students spend a semester or a summer in study abroad programs. Students may participate in one of the many Mount Holyoke College-approved Middle Eastern study abroad programs.

Middle Eastern studies majors and minors graduate to pursue careers in fields as varied as education, business, NGOs, journalism, the arts, government service, and graduate study.

Contact Info

Kristin McMillan, senior administrative assistant
Sohail Hashmi, chair
Website: http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/asian/

Requirements for the Major

A minimum of 40 credits of course work on the Middle East. Any course that devotes 50 percent or more of its substance to Middle Eastern countries, peoples, or issues may be counted toward the major. One course on Middle Eastern diasporas may count toward the major.

Courses

- Four courses (16 credits), equivalent to two years of college-level study of a Middle Eastern language, such as Arabic, Hebrew, Turkish, Persian, and Armenian. Classes in Arabic and Modern Hebrew are currently taught in the Five Colleges. Additional courses in Arabic and in other languages are offered through the Five College Mentored Language Program. Students may count up to 4 credits toward the major for studying a Middle Eastern language through the Five College Mentored Language Program. A maximum of 16 lower-level language credits and a total of 24 language credits can be counted toward the major.
- Two introductory courses (8 credits) providing an overview of Middle Eastern history. One course (4 credits) must be in the premodern period (pre-1500 CE) and one course (4 credits) must be in the modern period (1500–present).
  - The following courses fulfill the premodern history requirement: Religion 102, Introduction to Islam.
  - The following courses may be used for the modern history requirement: History 111, The Making of the Modern Middle East; International Relations 211, Middle East Politics.
- Four elective courses (16 credits):
  - Two (8 credits) must be from Group One: Humanities (language, literature, the arts, history, philosophy, and religion and interdisciplinary courses in these areas). In order to count toward the major, studio art or performance courses must be supplemented with analytical written work.
  - Two (8 credits) must be from Group Two: Social Science (anthropology, economics, geography, international relations, linguistics, politics, sociology, and interdisciplinary courses in these areas).
  - At least three courses (12 credits) must be 300-level courses. A course that is taught outside of Mount Holyoke must be approved by the chair of the Asian Studies Program to count as a 300-level course. One of the three 300-level courses must be a non-language course.

Requirements for the Certificate

Because of the wide range of courses available through the Five Colleges, students must design a program that will meet their intellectual, academic, and prospective professional needs in conjunction with a Middle Eastern Studies advisor from Mount Holyoke. Students are encouraged to declare intentions and begin work with an advisor during the sophomore year.

Courses

- Knowledge equivalent to at least two years of college-level study of a Middle Eastern language, such as Arabic, Hebrew, Turkish, Persian, and Armenian. Classes in Arabic and Modern Hebrew are currently taught in the Five Colleges. Additional courses in Arabic and in other languages are offered through the Five College Mentored Language Program. This requirement may be fulfilled through course completion or by examination.
- Two introductory courses providing an overview of Middle Eastern history. One course must be in the pre-modern period (600-1500 CE) and one course must be in the modern period (1500-present).
- Five courses from the following categories. Students must take at least one course from each of the groups.
  - Group one: Religion and Philosophy
  - Group two: Literature, Art, and Language study beyond what is required to satisfy the language requirement above.
  - Group three: History and Social Sciences
Other

Students are also encouraged to spend time in the Middle East, learning Arabic and other languages and immersing themselves in the culture of the area. Plans for study abroad should be designed in consultation with the student’s advisor.

Courses offered at the Five Colleges in the upcoming semester that qualify for the Certificate are listed on the certificate’s website, as is the application students must submit when all requirements have been completed: https://www.fivecolleges.edu/middleeast/certificate/. Courses not listed, whether taken at one of the Five Colleges or elsewhere, must be approved by the committee on the recommendation of the campus advisor.

Students must receive a grade of B or better in every course counted toward the certificate.

Related Courses

Most Middle Eastern studies courses at Mount Holyoke are listed below, but students should also consult the catalogue entries or websites of other departments, including art history, history, international relations, politics, and religion. Middle Eastern Studies majors should also plan to use the rich resources of the Five College Consortium in selecting their courses (listings are available through the Five College or individual college websites).

Please consult the chair of the Asian Studies Committee for guidelines regarding Asian languages not taught in the Five Colleges.

Courses Counting toward the Major, 2015–2016

**Art History**
- 271 Arts of Islam: Book, Mosque, and Palace
- 360CG Seminar in Asian Art: ‘Curating Global Contemporary Art’

**Asian Studies**
- 130 First-Year Arabic I
- 232 Second-Year Arabic I
- 271 Arts of Islam: Book, Mosque, and Palace
- 332 Third-Year Arabic I

**History**
- 111 The Making of the Modern Middle East
- 296ME Women in History: ‘Women and Gender in the Middle East’

**International Relations**
- 125 Israel/Palestine: Fact/Fiction
- 211 Middle East Politics
- 222 The United States, Israel, and the Arabs
- 224 The United States and Iran
- 323 Comparative Politics of the Middle East
- 324 Islamic Political Thought
- 333 Just War and Jihad: Comparative Ethics of War and Peace
- 341 Political Islam

**Jewish Studies**
- 150 Introduction to Modern Hebrew

**Religion**
- 102 Introduction to Islam
- 201 Introduction to the Qur’an
- 205CL Issues in Islamic History: ‘Classical Islamic Civilization’
- 207 Women and Gender in Islam

**Russian and Eurasian Studies**
- 312 Silk Roads: Ancient and Modern Highways across the Eurasian Continent

See Also

- Arabic Minor
- Asian Studies