The Study Guide is designed to inform students in the Committee on International Relations (CIR) about the Master of Arts (MA) degree requirements, procedures, and rules that govern the study of international relations at the University of Chicago. The Study Guide is updated once each year, during the Summer Quarter, and as necessary during the academic year. **It is the responsibility of the student to keep informed of any changes in the requirements, procedures, and rules governing the appropriate program of study.**

**ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

The Committee on International Relations adheres to high academic standards when evaluating the scholarly performance of its students. Students enrolled in the program are expected to complete their work according to the ethical standards dictated by the University of Chicago. These include the proper attribution of the work of others. Failure to properly acknowledge the works of others is cheating and will lead to severe sanctions including academic probation and expulsion from the program. For further guidance on the ethical conduct of research, consult Charles Lipson’s Doing Honest Work in College (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2008). For comprehensive information on the University of Chicago’s official policies and procedures regarding proper academic conduct, consult <https://studentmanual.uchicago.edu/university-policies/>.

**DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

Students are responsible for satisfactory completion of all degree requirements contained within this Study Guide. Students should therefore familiarize themselves with CIR policies. Any departures from the requirements contained in this Study Guide (to the extent such departures do not violate University-imposed rules and restrictions) are permitted at the sole discretion of the Chair of CIR, upon submission of a formal written petition. To earn the MA degree, CIR students must:

A. Complete nine (9) graduate level courses (graduate-level courses are listed by the registrar as 30000 or higher)
   - At least eight courses with quality (letter) grades are required for graduation.
   - In lieu of a quality grade, students can take one *pass* in INRE 49700 (Independent Research), *or* ENGL 33000 (Academic and Professional Writing; also known as “The Little Red Schoolhouse”), but not both. Since ENGL 33000 can only be taken *pass/fail*, INRE 49700 must be taken for a quality grade when a student opts for both as part of their program of study. In exceptional
circumstances, a student may submit a formal written petition (including a copy of the syllabus of the course in question) to both the Chair of CIR and the course instructor for permission to take any class besides INRE 49700 or ENGL 33000 for a pass (though consent must be secured from both beforehand, and if granted would constitute the single non-quality-grade course the student is allowed as part of their program of study).

- Classes in foreign language study cannot be included among the nine for-credit graduate courses required for completion.
- The student must maintain a 3.00 GPA across all graded courses. If the overall GPA falls below 3.00 at the end of any quarter, the Dean of Students of the Division of the Social Sciences may place the student on probation. If the student does not raise the GPA to at least 3.00 by the end of the quarter of probation, the Dean has the discretion to dismiss the student from the University.

B. The nine graduate level courses in a student’s program of study must meet the CIR course distributional requirements:

- Seven of the nine courses must appear on the approved CIR course list. In exceptional circumstances, a student may submit a formal written petition (including a copy of the syllabus of the course in question) to the Chair of CIR to request the inclusion of an appropriate course not currently on this list.
- Six of the courses must be taken within in the Division of the Social Sciences (with course call numbers, for example, in the Booth School of Business, the Law School, and Harris School of Public Policy considered to be outside the Division). Courses offered by other schools or divisions with cross-listed call numbers by a department in the Division of the Social Sciences are counted as social science courses for the sake of this requirement.
- Students must take three courses listed under each of two of the five fields of study offered by CIR (see below). Note that a course that is cross-listed under multiple fields of study must be assigned to one of a student’s chosen pair of fields for the purpose of this distribution requirement, and cannot be double-counted towards both. In exceptional circumstances, a student may submit a formal written petition (including a copy of the syllabus of the course in question) to the Chair of CIR to request the inclusion of a course not currently categorized under a given field. The student must maintain a 3.00 GPA across the six courses taken to fulfill each of their two field distribution requirements.
• All students are required to enroll in two CIR core seminars: INRE 43000 International Security and INRE 43800 International Political Economy.
C. Receive a grade of pass in INRE 30000 (Perspectives on International Relations), a required non-credit Autumn Quarter course.
D. Receive a grade of pass in two sections of INRE 46500 (MA Thesis Workshop), the required non-credit MA paper workshop courses that meet in Winter and Spring Quarter, respectively.
E. Complete an MA thesis paper with the approval of both a faculty reader and their assigned preceptor reader.
F. File an Application for a Degree electronically on my.uchicago.edu (located on the homepage of the UChicago website) no later than the first week of the quarter in which the student intends to graduate.

COURSES
International Relations courses are organized into five fields.
• International Security, Conflict Studies and Contentious Politics
• International Political Economy and Development
• Comparative Studies in Political Institutions and Identity
• Human Rights, Environment, and International Law
• Research Methods in the Social Sciences

Approved course listings are available in the CIR office at the beginning of each quarter. CIR preceptors will meet with students to advise them on registration and review their progress toward fulfillment of program requirements.

INRE 49700—READING AND RESEARCH IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.
This is an optional course, supervised by a CIR faculty member, that allows students to engage in focused reading and writing on a subject not covered by the standard course offerings. The student and the selected faculty member arrange the content of the course, frequency of meetings, and grading requirements. Students take INRE 49700 if they wish to pursue advanced topics not available within routine course offerings. Students may alternatively take INRE 49700 for the guidance necessary to complete the MA paper free from the demands of normal courses. In this case, students do not receive a grade until the
MA paper is completed. Only the thesis faculty reader can provide the grade for this course, and themselves determine the basis for it. Students are responsible for inquiring with their faculty readers about the basis for any INRE 49700 grades issued under their guidance, and making sure that this reader ultimately notifies the CIR office of the determined grade (either quality or pass). Students may register for INRE 49700 only once.

GRADES

CIR students must take at least eight graduate courses for quality (letter) grades.

1) Students may not formally register for any course to audit, even with the permission of the instructor. Therefore, CIR students may not receive a grade of “R.”

2) The University bills students for all registered credit courses as such, including those taken for pass as well as for quality grades. No tuition is charged for the non-credit INRE 30000 (Perspectives on International Relations) or INRE 46500 (MA Thesis Workshop) courses each student is nevertheless required to complete.

3) Courses taken for a “pass” have no influence on a student’s GPA.

4) A course for which the student receives the grade of incomplete (“I”) will not count toward the distribution requirement or degree until the student completes the course and the Registrar and the CIR Student Affairs Administrator records a final grade for their records. However, the “I” will remain on the transcript along with the final letter grade.

5) Students may not take graduate courses at another academic institution and have them count toward the degree.

MA PAPER

The program requires each student to write an MA paper, supervised both by their assigned preceptor and a non-assigned faculty reader.

1) The MA paper should be approximately 35-45 pages in length. Theses over 14,000 words, including footnotes, excluding bibliography, will not be accepted.

2) Once approved, the student must submit a final digital copy of the MA paper to the online CIR Thesis Archive before graduation.

3) Before beginning work on an MA paper, the student must secure formal approval of the topic from a faculty reader and their preceptor by submitting a written 3-5 pages proposal and preliminary bibliography to them. All faculty members listed as active members of the Committee are eligible to serve as thesis readers. Students interested
in selecting a non-Committee faculty readers must: 1) verify the reader holds an awarded doctoral degree; 2) verify the reader holds a formal full-time faculty position at the University of Chicago; and 3) receive the approval of the Chair of CIR via a formal written petition.

4) Faculty and preceptor readers indicate their respective approvals by signing the MA Paper Topic Approval Form. The student then submits that signed approval form along with the written proposal to the CIR Student Affairs Administrator, who places it in the student’s official department file. Students must have the approved topic on record with the department before the beginning of the quarter in which they plan to graduate.

5) The Committee strongly recommends Kate Turabian’s A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations and The Chicago Manual of Style as guides to the proper format for research papers.

MA PAPER WORKSHOP

The CIR preceptors conduct two non-credit MA Paper Workshops aiding students in developing appropriate paper topics, paper drafts, research techniques, and writing. The workshops are conducted as a research seminar, including formal presentations and peer review. Each student is required to participate in the workshop. Students register for the workshop as a non-credit (no fee) course. Students take the workshop across their second and third quarters (Winter/Spring) in residence. Students who do not have an MA proposal approved by the end of winter quarter will have a grade of incomplete (‘I’) on the Winter Quarter MA Workshop. Subsequent approval of the proposal will not remove this grade from their transcript. This applies to all students, even those who do not intend to graduate in the Spring.

CONVOCATION

Students must file an Application for a Degree with the CIR office no later than the first week of the quarter in which they expect to graduate. Check the CIR Convocation Deadlines for the administrative requirements and deadlines concerning your degree. If the student does not correct any deficiencies by the required deadlines, i.e. missing course grades, his or her name will be deleted from the convocation list for that quarter. The student will be assessed a removal fee by the Office of the Bursar (currently $50). If a student applies for a degree three times, but still fails to satisfy all requirements, a fourth application will not be accepted
until after the student meets all requirements and pays all outstanding fees. This rule and the convocation deadlines are firm. They are set by the Dean of Students and the Registrar and cannot be modified by CIR.

**COMMITTEE HONORS**

To recognize students with outstanding performance, the Committee awards the Master of Arts degree with honors.

1) To be eligible for honors, the student must:
   a. Have a GPA of 3.70 or higher;
   b. Receive a rating of honors on the thesis by both MA paper readers;
   c. Receive approval for honors by the CIR chair after consideration of all aspects of a student’s record.

2) Because the Committee decisions to award honors are made the quarter after the student graduates, the honors distinction will not appear on the diploma. Once a decision to award honors is made, the CIR office notifies the Registrar, and sends a congratulatory letter to the student. Within thirty days after the student receives the letter, the honors distinction will be recorded on the transcript by the Office of the Registrar.

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND RESUMPTION OF STUDIES TIME LIMITS**

Students who wish to take a leave of absence must discuss their plans with a CIR preceptor and request a formal leave of absence from the University through the department's Student Affairs Administrator.

1) A leave of absence may be granted for up to one academic year at a time. To request an extension of a leave of absence, a student must contact the CIR Student Affairs Administrator before the first week of the quarter in which the student is scheduled to resume active status.

2) International students are expected to maintain full time student status by registering for three classes each quarter to maintain their visa status. They must therefore consult with the Office of International Affairs before deciding to take a leave of absence.

3) Students who wish to resume studies to complete their degree, and are more than 12 months from their last quarter of matriculation, must confirm their plans with a preceptor no later than the last day of the preceding quarter.
4) A Resumption of Studies request form, which may be secured from the CIR Student Affairs Administrator, must be approved by the Chair of CIR and the Social Sciences Dean of Students for students who have not completed their degree within two-years of matriculation. Requests to resume studies are considered on a case-by-case basis, however applications to resume studies will only be considered for those students who have been away for up to ten years from the start of their first academic year in CIR. Students are expected to complete all program requirements in the time specified on the Resumption of Studies request form. Failure to complete all aspects of the program in the time specified will result in forfeiture of any future opportunity to complete the degree.

JOINT AND DUAL DEGREES

The Committee on International Relations offers two joint degree programs: BA/MA and the MBA/MA. Students may also pursue two dual degrees: the JD/MA and the MA in CIR and MA in Public Policy. Joint and dual degree students must fully satisfy all CIR degree requirements, in addition to the requirements independently stipulated by each degree’s respective partner program.

1) Joint BA/MA – The joint BA/MA is only open to currently enrolled University of Chicago undergraduate students.

a. Students apply on February 1st during the Winter Quarter of their third year of undergraduate study. Joint BA/MA applicants, however, are not required to submit GRE scores like applicants to the stand-alone CIR degree. BA/MA students can only enter CIR during the Autumn Quarter of their fourth year. BA/MA students must satisfy all normal CIR program requirements, including MA Workshop, Perspectives in International Relations, course distribution, and completion of a thesis.

b. If the student’s undergraduate major requires a BA thesis, then the student must write two separate theses, one for the BA and one for the MA. The same paper cannot be used for both, and the student is responsible for securing the agreement of their respective BA and MA preceptors and faculty readers that the two thesis projects ultimately submitted represent sufficiently distinct inquiries.

c. Before applying for the BA/MA, prospective students must consult with:
   i. The undergraduate program’s primary faculty contact;
   ii. One of the CIR program’s current preceptors;
iii. The Social Sciences Dean of Students Office;
iv. The student’s adviser in The College, to discuss the mechanics of the joint-degree, and to answer any questions regarding the student’s eligibility for the program. Current contact information for these individuals can be located in the College’s course catalog.

d. Applicants to the BA/MA program must also submit a Proposed Curriculum document in addition to the regular requested materials, identifying any cross-listed undergraduate-graduate courses they may have taken (up to a maximum of three) they wish to count towards the field distributional requirements of their MA degree, along with a full set of nine proposed graduate-level courses they intend to take during their year in the program, based on the available course list for the academic year of their application. Preceptors should be asked for guidance. Any subsequent changes to the Proposed Curriculum of BA/MA students is subject to approval by the Chair of CIR.

e. BA/MA students are subject to an additional time constraint. Students must complete all degree requirements, including the MA thesis, before the end of the summer quarter following their entry into CIR. If the student does not finish the thesis by this deadline, then the student will be eligible for convocation for a BA degree only, thereby forfeiting the MA. In addition, BA/MA students may only have their degrees awarded simultaneously in a single common graduation quarter, and thus cannot defer completion of the MA portion of their degree to summer quarter, unless completion of their BA degree can be similarly deferred.

2) Joint MBA/MA – Students applying to the MBA/MA must first submit an application for admission to the Booth School of Business, clearly indicating that they are interested in the MBA/MA with CIR, and providing the additional materials requested for joint-degree consideration.

a. Students take a reduced course load of 14 courses in the Booth School of Business, and the full nine graduate courses required by CIR (in addition to the non-credit course commitments and required thesis project). Individual courses cannot be double-counted towards the requirements for both degree programs.

b. To facilitate the writing of the MA Paper, students must complete all non-credit CIR courses - INRE 30000 Perspectives on International Relations and INRE 46500 MA Paper Workshop (x2) - in an uninterrupted sequence
beginning in Autumn over the course of one academic year of their choosing, so long as they will have also completed both required CIR Core classes (INRE 43000 & INRE 43800) by the end of that same academic year. The MA Paper must also be submitted and approved no later than the end of Summer Quarter of said chosen academic year. Students who plan to complete the degree on an eight-quarter schedule typically opt to complete this sequence during their second year in residence. Students who are on a three-year schedule to completion have the option of deferring enrollment in this sequence until their final year in residence.

c. Students in the MBA/MA joint degree program may choose to have their MA paper approved by two faculty readers — one CIR faculty reader and one reader from the Booth School of Business - in addition to their assigned preceptor.

3) **Dual JD/MA** – Students must apply to both the Law School and CIR separately. As CIR does not accept applications for deferred admission in a future academic year, JD/MA aspirants most commonly gain admission to the Law School first, before then applying to CIR during their first year in residence at Law. While Law School admission requires the LSAT, GRE scores must nevertheless be submitted as part of the CIR application.

   a. In order to complete the CIR program requirements as outlined above, students take nine graduate courses in a common academic year of their choosing: three in the Law School and six in the Division of Social Sciences, which must otherwise satisfy all other CIR distribitional requirements. To facilitate the writing of the MA paper, students also complete all non-credit CIR courses - INRE 30000 Perspectives on International Relations and INRE 46500 MA Paper Workshop - in sequence during this same academic year. The MA paper must be submitted and approved no later than Summer Quarter of said chosen academic year.

   b. Students in the JD/MA joint degree program may choose to have their MA paper approved by two faculty readers — one CIR faculty reader and one reader from the Law School - in addition to their assigned preceptor.

4) **Dual MA/MA in CIR and Public Policy Studies** – Students interested in a second (one-year) Master’s degree offered by the Harris School of Public Policy at the University of Chicago must apply separately to the Harris School, either before the start of the CIR program, or more commonly during the first quarter of their CIR year.
a. Students in this dual program always start their studies with CIR, and must fully complete the degree requirements for their CIR MA by the end of the Summer Quarter of the first of their two years in residence.

**THE MA WITH SPECIALIZATION-SECOND YEAR**

The Second-Year MA with Specialization Program has very limited admission, with slots typically available for only three or four students in any given academic year, and thus restrictive requirements. Before applying for the Second-Year with Specialization, students must first discuss their plans with their preceptor, and secure the consent of a faculty member to serve as a sponsor. Once admitted to the second year, students must fulfill an additional set of second-year specialization requirements to complete their MA degree, in addition to the standard set of CIR one-year course requirements. Second-Year Specializers *may not* revert to the one-year MA, and its requirements, once courses have begun for their second year. There are three kinds of Second-Year Specialization available with CIR:

1) **The Sub-Disciplinary Specialization** is for students who want to conduct advanced research in one of the Committee's non-regional sub-fields.

2) **The Regional Specialization** is for students who want to conduct advanced research in a particular region: African studies, Latin American studies, East Asian studies, Middle and Central Europe and Eurasian studies, South Asian studies, Middle Eastern studies, and Western European studies.

3) **The Computational Social Sciences Certificate** is for students who want to acquire advanced computational and quantitative skills to use in their MA thesis. This specialization requires students to take the three Computational Social Sciences Perspectives classes (one per quarter), one programming course, and to occasionally participate in the Computation Workshop. In addition, students will take two more courses in the Social Sciences. This specialization is certified by the Computational Social Sciences program and governed by their requirements.

The student who wishes to pursue a Second-Year MA in International Relations with Specialization must submit an application to the Committee during the preceding Spring Quarter. A complete Specialization application must include:

1) a cover letter with name, address, phone number, e-mail address, a statement of the nature of the specialization, and the name of their faculty sponsor;
2) an MA proposal (no longer than eight pages double-spaced in length) related to the objectives of the specialization, including a tentative bibliography and a statement of research methods;

3) a Proposed Curriculum list of six courses, two per quarter, to be taken in the second year as the basis of specialization (prepared on the basis of the CIR course list available during the academic year of application);

4) a letter of sponsorship for the MA with Specialization Sponsorship signed by a faculty member of the Committee, preferably the MA thesis faculty advisor, submitted separately no later than the end of the third week of the Spring Quarter of application;

5) for the Committee to consider students for the full-tuition waiver granted to all Specializers for their second year of studies, all six grades for their fall and winter quarters must be on record with the University Registrar no later than the end of the third week of the Spring Quarter of application. For unavoidable missing grades (i.e., for uncompleted multi-quarter courses), students must submit a written evaluation by the instructor including an assessment of the student's performance in the course to that point.

Admission to the MA with Specialization requires a minimum GPA of 3.50 for the six courses taken in the first two quarters of residence. The Committee meets in Spring Quarter to determine which students will be recommended to specialize. By mid-quarter, the Social Science Dean of Students makes a set of final formal admission offers based on the Committee’s recommendations.

Students admitted to the Second Year Specialization must submit a significant draft of the thesis to their readers by the beginning of Orientation Week preceding the onset their second academic year of study. Failure to meet this requirement will result in academic probation, and the possible revocation of the Specializer’s full-aid tuition waiver. Students in the MA with Specialization program may have two faculty readers – as long as one reader is a Committee member – in addition to their assigned preceptor reader (which is commonly a different preceptor than the one assigned to a student during their first year of studies).

The student pursuing an MA with Specialization is required to take a minimum of six graduate courses during the second year, at a rate of two per quarter, in addition to three sections of INRE 49800 (Second Year Readings and Research), at a rate of one per quarter,
for a total commitment of nine for-credit courses. Second year specializers must take all of their six topical second-year courses for quality grades, with the sole exception of Specializers wishing to take the ENGL 33000 course that only allows for a pass/fail option. The first two quarterly sections of INRE 49800 are always taken for a pass/fail option, with the third Spring section of INRE 49800 taken for a quality grade. No other courses may be taken for pass/fail during the second year. A Specializer must complete their thesis project no later than the end of the Spring Quarter of their second academic year in residence. Otherwise, a Resumption of Studies request form, which may be secured from the CIR Student Affairs Administrator, must be approved by the Chair of CIR and the Social Sciences Dean of Students to allow the completion of an MA with Specialization at any point beyond that Spring Quarter.

INRE 49800 — SECOND YEAR READINGS AND RESEARCH

This course, open only to Second-Year Specializers during the three quarters of their second year, allows these students to engage in work devoted to their thesis preparation in the form of independent study under the coordination of the student's faculty thesis supervisor, while meeting the benchmarks of satisfactory progress as overseen by the Committee. Failure to meet these progressive benchmarks will result in academic probation, and the possible revocation of the Specializer’s full-aid tuition waiver. During the first two quarters, the progressive work is graded on a pass/fail basis. The final Spring quarter section of the course must be taken for a quality grade, on a basis determined solely by the Specializer’s faculty thesis reader.