



CIR Study Guide

Requirements, Procedures, & Rules

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. Additional copies of the *Study Guide* are available online at the CIR website and in the CIR office.

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General Information and Requirements

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 including the proper attribution of the works of others. Failure to properly acknowledge the works of others is cheating or plagiarism. Such action will lead to severe sanctions including academic probation and expulsion from the program.

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 departure from the requirements contained in the *Study Guide* must be approved by the Committee's Chair through petition. To earn the MA degree, CIR students must:

(A) Complete nine *graduate*-level courses (30000-level or higher).

- With the following exception, all courses must be taken for a *quality* (letter) grade. In lieu of one *quality* grade, students may take a *pass* grade in either INRE 49700 (Independent Research), or English 33000 (Academic and Professional Writing).
- Eight *quality* grades are required for graduation.
- 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.
- Seven of the nine courses must be approved by CIR, i.e., appear on the CIR course list.
- Three of the courses must be in the Division of the Social Sciences (Business, Law, and Public Policy are outside the Division). Courses offered by other schools or divisions and cross-listed by a department in the Division of the Social Sciences count as social science courses.



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(B) Fulfill the CIR course distribution requirements.

- The student must take three courses (each) in at least two of the four Fields of Study (see below).
- The student must maintain a 3.00 GPA across the six courses taken to fulfill the distribution requirement.
- All students are required to enroll in two CIR core seminars: INRE 43000 International Security and INRE 43800 International Political Economy. Students who already have a strong background in one of these areas should, in consultation with their preceptor and the seminar instructor, petition the Chair to substitute the more advanced sequel course in that area.

(C) Receive a grade of *pass* in Perspectives on International Relations, a required non-credit Autumn Quarter course.

(D) Receive a grade of *pass* in the required non-credit MA paper workshop that meets in the Winter and Spring Quarters.

(E) Complete an MA thesis paper with the approval of a faculty reader and a preceptor reader.

(F) File an *Application for a Degree* electronically on my.uchicago.edu (located on the homepage of the U of C website) no later than the *first week of the quarter* in which the student intends to graduate.

Courses

International Relations courses are organized into four fields.

- *International Relations Theory, Security, and History*
- *International Political Economy and Development*
- *Regional Studies and Nationalism*
- *Human Rights, Environment, & International Law*

Approved course listings are available in the CIR office at the beginning of each quarter. 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. *Students are responsible for making sure that their faculty reader notifies the CIR office of the assigned grade (either quality grade or pass).* Students may register for INRE 49700 only *once*.



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Grades

CIR students *must take at least eight courses for quality grades*. Students may take INRE 49700 for a *pass* grade. Students may take English 33000 Academic and Professional Writing (“The Little Red Schoolhouse”) for a *pass* option.

Students may not register formally for any course to audit, even with the permission of the instructor. Therefore, CIR students may not receive a grade of “R.” The University bills students for all registered credit courses, including those taken for *pass* as well as for quality grades. Courses taken for *pass* do not count toward computing the GPA. (Please note that there is no extra tuition charged for *Perspectives in International Relations* or the *MA Workshop*.)

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. The “I” remains on the transcript along with the final letter grade.

Students may not take graduate courses at another academic institution and have them count toward the degree. However, up to two courses previously taken at the University of Chicago Graham School of General Studies may be counted toward the degree. Students must submit a petition for approval to the Dean of Students immediately upon beginning the CIR program. Courses should be identified on the CIR Approved Course List.

MA Paper

The program requires each student to write an MA paper. Before beginning work on an MA paper, the student must secure formal approval of the topic from faculty reader(s) and the student’s preceptor by submitting a written 3-5 page proposal and preliminary bibliography to them. Faculty and preceptors indicate their approval 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.

Non-CIR faculty readers are permitted only if the student successfully petitions the Chair for approval.

The MA paper should use theoretically informed analysis or interpretation to explore a significant problem, event, issue, process, relationship, or institution in international relations. It should be approximately 35-45 pages in length. Theses over 14,000 words, including footnotes, excluding bibliography, will not be accepted. 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.

The student must submit a final digital copy of the MA paper to the online CIR Thesis Archive before graduation.

MA Paper Workshop

The CIR preceptors conduct a non-credit *MA Paper Workshop* aiding students to develop appropriate paper topics, paper drafts, research techniques, and writing. The workshop is 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.

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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*. To be eligible for honors, the student must have a *GPA of 3.70 or higher, receive a rating of honors on the thesis by two MA paper readers, and be approved for honors by the CIR chair who considers all aspects of the student's record.*

Because the Committee's decision to award honors is usually made the quarter after the student graduates, the honors distinction does not appear on the diploma. Once the decision 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. The CIR chair and the Social Science Dean of Students must approve the leave. Requests are considered on a case-by-case basis. The leave of absence may be approved for up to one academic year. To request an extension of a leave of absence beyond one academic year, a student must contact the CIR Student Affairs Administrator before the first week of the quarter in which the student is scheduled to resume studies.

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

Students who wish to resume studies to complete their degree, and are more than 12 months from their last quarter of matriculation, must discuss their plans with a preceptor.

A *Resumption of Studies Form*, which may be secured from the CIR Student Affairs Administrator, must be approved by the CIR chair and the Social Science 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 the CIR cohort year. Students are expected to complete all program requirements in the time specified in the *Resumption of Studies Approval*. Failure to complete all aspects of the program in the time specified will result in forfeiture of any future opportunity to complete the degree.



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Joint and Dual Degrees

The Committee on International Relations offers two *joint* degree programs: BA/MA and the MBA/MA. Students may also pursue *dual* degrees: the JD/MA and the MA in CIR and MA in Public Policy. Joint and dual degree students must satisfy all CIR degree requirements.

1) Joint BA/MA – Joint BA/MA is only open to currently enrolled University of Chicago undergraduate students. Students apply during the Autumn Quarter of their third year of undergraduate study and are considered alongside the complete pool of regular CIR applicants. Joint BA/MA applicants are not required to submit GRE scores. Students enter CIR in 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, etc. 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.

Applicants to the BA/MA program must also submit a *Proposed Curriculum* document, identifying the courses (maximum of three) they wish to double count towards their MA degree plus, based on the available course list, the other MA-level courses they intend to take during their year in the program. Preceptors may be asked for guidance. Any subsequent changes to the *Proposed Curriculum* of students admitted to the program must be approved by the Chair. Students in the one-year program or the BA/MA program need the approval of one CIR faculty reader and a preceptor reader.

BA/MA students are also 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

2) Joint MBA/MA – Students applying to the joint MBA/MA submit their materials to the Booth School of Business clearly indicating that they are interested in a joint MBA/MA with CIR.

Students take a reduced course load of 14 courses in the Booth School of Business and the full nine courses in CIR. Courses may not be double counted. Students must otherwise meet all normal CIR program requirements as outlined above. 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, i.e. within one academic year. The MA Paper must be submitted and approved no later than Summer Quarter of said academic year. Students who plan to complete the degree within eight quarters will typically 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 the sequence until their final year in residence.

3) Dual JD/MA – Students must apply to both the Law School and CIR separately. They can do so simultaneously or sequentially by gaining admission to the Law School first and then applying to CIR during their first quarter in Law School residence. While Law School admission required the LSAT, GRE scores must be submitted as part of the CIR application. In order to complete the CIR program requirements as outlined above, students take nine courses in their fourth year: three in the Law School and six in the Division of Social Sciences. 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 (x2) - in their fourth year. The MA paper must be submitted and approved no later than Summer Quarter of said academic year.

Students in the MBA/MA and JD/MA joint degree programs *may* have their MA papers approved by two faculty readers — one CIR faculty reader and one reader from the student's professional school.



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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 during the first quarter of the CIR year. Students in this dual program always start in CIR and complete the degree requirements for CIR in the first year.

The MA with Specialization-Second Year

The Specialization-Second Year Program has very limited admission and restrictive requirements. Before applying for the Specialization-Second Year, students should discuss their plans with their preceptor. Once admitted to the second year, students are expected to fulfill all second year specialization requirements for the MA degree. Second year specializers may not revert to the one-year MA and its requirements once they have begun coursework in the second year.

There are two kinds of MA with Specialization:

- 1) The Sub-Disciplinary Specialization is for students who want to conduct advanced research in one of the Committee's non-regional sub-fields (i.e., international relations theory, security, and history, development, international political economy, nationalism, international law, human rights, or the environment).
- 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.

The student who wishes to pursue an MA in International Relations with specialization must submit a proposal to the Committee by the end of the Winter Quarter. The specialization proposal, should be four to six pages, and must include the following: (1) a cover letter with name, address, phone number, e-mail address and a statement of the nature of the specialization (i.e., specific sub-disciplinary field or regional focus); (2) an MA proposal related to the objectives of the specialization including a tentative bibliography and a statement of research methods; (3) a list of the six courses to be taken in the second year as the basis of specialization (Note: students should make an effort to determine what courses will be offered and plan accordingly); and (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.

In addition, for the Committee to consider students for financial assistance for the second-year, *all six grades for fall and winter quarters must be on record* with the University Registrar. For unavoidable missing grades (i.e., for uncompleted multi-quarter courses), students must submit a written evaluation by the instructor that assesses the student's performance. 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 CIR Faculty Committee meets early in the Spring Quarter to determine which students will be recommended to specialize. By mid-quarter, the Social Science Dean of Students makes a final admissions offer based on the Committee's recommendations indicating any funding and the amount for the second year.

Students admitted to the Second Year Specialization must submit a *significant draft of the thesis to their readers by the beginning of Winter Quarter* of the second year of study. Failure to meet this requirement will result in academic probation.

The principal reader of the MA paper must be a member of the Committee. Non-CIR faculty readers are permitted only if the student successfully petitions the CIR Chair for approval. Students in the MA with Specialization program *may* have two faculty readers. At least one reader must be a CIR faculty member. The second reader may be a preceptor, another CIR faculty member, or by petition, a non-Committee faculty member.



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The student pursuing a Sub-Disciplinary Specialization or a Regional Specialization is required to take a minimum of six regular courses during the second year. Second year specializers must take at least six of their second-year courses for quality grades. Second-year students may take English 33000 for a pass option. The first two quarters of INRE 49800 are always taken for a pass option. No other courses may be taken for pass/fail during the second year.

INRE 49800 — Second-year Readings and Research (**only open to second year specializers.**) This course, taken each of the three quarters the second year, allows *second-year students* to engage in work devoted to thesis preparation in the form of independent study under the coordination of the student's faculty thesis supervisor. During the first two quarters, through this course, the progressive work on the thesis is graded on a pass basis. The final quarter the course must be taken *for a quality grade based on the final thesis document.*