

Notes on Completing the Middle Eastern & South Asian Studies Declaration of Major Advising Form

Name of Advisor: This is determined in consultation with MESALC's Director of Undergraduate Programs (DUP) at the time the major is declared. It is, however, solely the student's responsibility that all prerequisites and requirements for the major are fulfilled.

Prerequisite Courses: Usually the student will complete two years of a regionally appropriate language, but if the student has taken non-U.Va. language courses or has developed the requisite proficiency in some other manner, the student has the option of taking a proficiency examination and, upon passing, being exempted from the language prerequisite. Please be aware, however, that no actual course credit can be given for such language exemption.

Required Courses: Students majoring in either Middle Eastern Studies or South Asian Studies must complete 10 courses (minimum 30 credit hours) such that the following criteria are met:

Language study at or beyond 3000-level: Students must complete two semesters of a regionally appropriate language at the advanced level, typically a 3010/3020 sequence. With sufficient language proficiency, though, more advanced language classes may be substituted, but in any event the student must take two high-level semesters of a regionally appropriate language.

Major Seminar: Each student pursuing the Studies Major must take either MEST 4991 or SAST 4991 (the "Capstone Seminar"), as appropriate, during the student's last year of the major. These courses are offered only during the spring semester.

History: Students must complete at least one regionally appropriate course from the History Department. Typically this will be an HIME course for Middle Eastern Studies Majors, or an HISA course for South Asian Studies majors. Exceptions can be made for History Department courses with other subject areas, so long as such courses are still regionally appropriate (e.g. some HIEU courses dealing with the European Jewish diaspora can be counted for the MEST major).

Literature: Although students are strongly encouraged to take literature courses in their regionally appropriate target language, we certainly also accept literature-in-translation courses. Relevant subject areas for MEST majors include ARTR, PETR, and HETR; relevant subject areas for SAST majors include SATR, BETR, and PETR.

Distribution: This requirement assures a degree of disciplinary breadth of study in the Studies Major. As an interdisciplinary major, students are encouraged to take regionally appropriate content courses from any department on Grounds that might offer such courses, as long as such courses devote more than 50% of their syllabus to the region in question. We will gladly approve Middle East- or South Asia-related

courses from, e.g., History, Anthropology, Studies in Women and Gender, Sociology, Media Studies, Politics, Religious Studies, etc., but will not allow more than three such courses from any single department.

Concentration: This requirement assures a degree of disciplinary focus in the Studies Major. Students must complete 3 regionally appropriate courses from any single department on Grounds.

If the student declaring the major has not already actually taken 10 courses that meet the above criteria, it may seem a bit daunting to put together a proposed course of study that hasn't actually occurred yet. As was mentioned above, students are strongly encouraged to look for regionally appropriate content courses from any relevant department on Grounds, and finding such courses is greatly aided by consulting MESALC's website (<http://www.virginia.edu/mesa/Courses/courses.html>). The "Browse Catalog" feature in SIS is also very useful in selecting courses.

And please recall, the Studies Major Declaration Form is not a binding contract which obliges the student to take *only* those courses he or she may have originally specified. Rather, it is a best-guess roadmap, given the information at hand at the time the major is declared. With the large number of courses both within MESALC and across Grounds each semester which may conceivably be used to fulfill the Studies Major requirements, it is all but impossible to predict with complete accuracy which particular courses will be offered during which particular semesters. From semester to semester students are free to make substitutions to their proposed course list (in consultation with their major advisor), provided the requirement criteria described above are still met. The "Academic Requirements" report in SIS is indispensable in keeping track of the requirements for the major.