

Foreign Service, MS and Global, International and Comparative History, MA (Joint Program)

Modality

On Campus

Program URL

<https://msfs.georgetown.edu/> (<https://msfs.georgetown.edu/%20https://history.georgetown.edu/programs/ma/>)

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Foreign Service

The Master of Science in Foreign Service (MSFS) seeks to educate and equip the next generation of international affairs leaders in the public, private, and non-profit sectors. To that end, MSFS offers a multidisciplinary curriculum, emphasizing both theory and practice, drawn from international relations, economics, and history. MSFS encourages the Jesuit values of service, ethics, leadership, creativity, and inclusivity to make a more just, peaceful, prosperous, and free world.

Global, International and Comparative History

The Master of Arts program in Global, International, and Comparative History offers students the opportunity to develop a historical perspective on our interconnected world and provides multiple avenues for students to engage with the issues and insights that arise from an international historical perspective.

Students both delve deeply into the history of a particular world region and situate that same region within a broader context through the study of transnational, comparative, and thematic trends. The program offers students rigorous training in historical methods, foreign languages, and analytical and writing skills. Graduates have gone on to careers in fields such as government service, NGO work, and global business, as well as top-ranked doctoral programs in History and related disciplines.

Academic Policies

Students in Foreign Service and Global, International & Comparative History joint program are expected to comply with the policies outlined in the University Bulletin.

Requirements

Program Requirements

Foreign Service

MSFS students must complete 48 credits, a language proficiency examination, a leadership requirement, and an oral comprehensive examination in order to graduate. Students select one of the following four concentrations to focus their studies: Global Politics and Security, International Development, Global Business, Finance & Security, Science, Technology, and International Affairs, or Self-Designed Concentration.

Required Credits

- Core Courses taken during first year (18 credits)
- Concentration courses (18 credits)
- Elective Courses (12 credits)

Leadership Requirement

The leadership requirement includes a list of curricular and extracurricular leadership training opportunities that enable students to explore and practice their leadership skills before they graduate from the program. This requirement provides students an opportunity to both learn and reflect on the nature of leadership.

The overall Leadership Requirement is composed of two segments – written self-reflection on leadership and practical demonstrations of leadership.

Global, International and Comparative History

History students, in consultation with the MA Programs Director and faculty mentors will have the opportunity to craft their own course of study, placing the history of a nation or a world region in international context. Participants may choose to emphasize any time period.

The MAGIC program has three principal requirements, each which must be successfully completed within the course of two years of full-time study:

1. 30 hours of relevant graduate- level coursework,
2. at least one foreign language proficiency examination,
3. a capstone paper.

Coursework

The MAGIC program consists of ten courses (30 credits), distributed as follows:

- Core Sequence (3 classes):
 - 1st year, 1st semester: HIST 5004 MAGIC Core Colloq
 - 1st year, 2nd semester: HIST 5005 Global & Intrnl History
 - This sequence will culminate in substantial progress towards the capstone (see below). This will generally take the form of a good draft of an article-length piece of writing, which can also serve as a writing sample for PhD applications.
- For students matriculating Fall 2026 and beyond: 2nd year, 2nd semester: HIST 5006: Capstone Seminar (see below).

For students intending to graduate early, this may be replaced by a tutorial with express permission from the Director.

- 6 classes in the discipline of History, of which at least 3 are in Field I, Global and Comparative History (broad, trans-regional) and at least 3 are in Field II, Regional or National History (more focused geographically). Beginning with the incoming class in 2025, the courses in Field 1 must be substantially outside the student's chosen regional or national focus in Field 2.
- Field I emphasizes trans-regional and comparative studies. Field II focuses on a world region or nation within the context developed in Field I. Students are encouraged to take at least one course from Field I and one course from Field II their first semester. The specific determination of fields is flexible, and should be crafted in consultation with the Director of MA Programs. Some classes may count for either Field I or II.
- Optional other classes: up to 2 classes may be from relevant fields outside of History (for example, Security Studies, Art History, Government) when available and appropriate to the student's program, with approval of MA program director.

Required Examinations

Foreign Service

Language Proficiency Examination

Proficiency in English and at least one other language is essential for a successful career in international affairs and thus a requirement for graduation from the MSFS program. The MSFS program assesses language proficiency in the following ways:

- **Language Placement Exam**
Prior to the start of classes, MSFS students take language placement exams. This exam serves a dual purpose. First, it is used to determine which level of language study they should pursue at Georgetown, if at all. Second, it determines eligibility to sit for the language proficiency exam that takes place later in the academic calendar. Students whose native language is not English may declare English as their proficiency language, or may select a different non-native language for their proficiency requirement.
- **Language Courses**
Students who are advised to take English or other foreign language course(s) before proceeding to the Language Proficiency Exam should enroll for an additional (fifth) course during their first semester. Language courses offered include: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Modern Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Turkish, and Ukrainian. Additional language study in South and Southeast Asian languages are available to MSFS students through a consortium agreement with Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. Note: Language courses do not count for course credit toward the MSFS degree; grades received in language courses do not count in determining the student's GPA.

Either after completing the Language Placement Exam or after taking language courses, each student must pass an Oral Language Proficiency Exam in their second language with a grade of "good" or better. MSFS strongly encourages all students to take and pass the

Oral Language Proficiency Exam as soon as possible after enrolling in the program.

In the spring of the second year, each MSFS student takes a final Oral Examination, given by a panel of three faculty and/or professionals in the field of international affairs. Students are judged on their ability to present material in a well-organized and articulate manner and to apply what they have learned to practical problems in the field of international affairs.

All students must demonstrate proficiency in at least one language other than English by passing the History department-administered language examination before beginning their third full semester in the program. They may also, with permission from the Director, substitute four semesters of language instruction for the language exam, provided they maintain good standing (a minimum grade of B or above) during all four semesters.

Thesis Requirements

For students matriculating in Fall 2026 and beyond: HIST 5004, HIST 5005 and the capstone seminar will provide students an opportunity to plan, research and write an original essay based on primary sources of 8,000-10,000 words. This research paper is a foundational aspect of MAGIC. It will begin as a historiographical or preliminary-research paper completed in the course of the first year seminars. Students will continue to research and write this essay during the summer after the first year in the program, for which some funding is available from the History Department and from Graduate Studies to support research. Capstones will be graded in the final seminar.

Related Programs

- Arab Studies, MA and History, PHD (Joint program) (<http://coursecatalog.georgetown.edu/programs/arab-studies-history-joint-program/>)
- European Studies, MA and History, PHD (Joint Program) (<http://coursecatalog.georgetown.edu/programs/european-studies-history-joint-program/>)
- Global, International & Comparative History, MA (<http://coursecatalog.georgetown.edu/programs/global-international-comparative-history-ma/>)
- History Minor (<http://coursecatalog.georgetown.edu/programs/history-minor/>)
- History, AB (<http://coursecatalog.georgetown.edu/programs/history-ab/>)
- History, MA (<http://coursecatalog.georgetown.edu/programs/history-ma/>)
- History, PHD (<http://coursecatalog.georgetown.edu/programs/history-phd/>)