

Carnegie Mellon University

Institute for Politics and Strategy

Master of Science in International Relations and Politics

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Rationale

The Institute for Politics and Strategy (IPS) seeks to train the next generation of political scientists who can examine and understand domestic and international government institutions and processes in the twenty-first century's continuously changing global political structure. War has been a constant in our students' lives, and that unfortunately does not look like it will change soon. But what is changing is the political landscape of war – from wars between nations to non-state actors like ISIS and al-Qaeda. Coupled with an increasingly global society, international relations and politics are extremely important for preparing students to analyze and manage uncertainty and transformation in many pursuits and places.

The Master of Science in International Relations and Politics (MS IRP) serves four academic goals. The first is to allow students to specialize in one of four conventional areas of political science: international security, international relations, American politics, and comparative politics. To complete the MS IRP, students are required to complete a total of six concentration courses, one in each of four major areas of study and two additional courses in their chosen concentration.

IPS also offers a unique subset of courses focused on international security. Through the support of the Hewlett Foundation, IPS has robust course offerings in cybersecurity and international conflict. Students who select the international security concentration will analyze the role of cyber warfare and cybersecurity in international politics – past, present, and future. Cyber-attacks by nation-states and their proxies have the potential to reshape how wars are fought in the twenty-first century. As such, the complexity and policy challenge of cyber-engagements is immense and without precedent. The concentration addresses the role of deterrence, dissuasion, and attribution in cyber conflict, while also studying the nuances of key components of modern warfare—from security dilemmas to escalation management. The coursework tackles the social-scientific dimensions of cybersecurity with a focus on the implications of the cyber age for modern statecraft, warfare, elections, and politics, more generally.

A second goal is to equip students with strong methodological skills. Students pursuing the MS IRP will master the diverse skills needed to conduct advanced quantitative and qualitative research. This will be a significant advantage for our graduates in both the policy world and when applying for PhD or JD programs. Students are required to take Regression Analysis for Political Science I and II. Regression Analysis for Political Science (RAPS) I will teach students to conduct bivariate and multivariate linear regression models. Students will learn about analysis of variance, parameter estimation, hypothesis testing, interpretation of estimates, model fit, models with dummy variables, model predictions, model diagnostics, and basic data visualizations. RAPS I will also train our students in using the Stata statistical

software, making them competent in this key research tool in the field of political science. Materials for this course will include instructions and examples using Stata, and there will be a strong emphasis in conducting exercises and learning from applied examples. At the end of RAPS II, students will be able to evaluate critically most studies that use statistical tools in political science research, and be able to design and carry out original research applying quantitative methods. Among other topics, we will examine the violations of regression assumptions (e.g., multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, autocorrelation, measurement error, and specification error), interaction terms, analysis of residuals, maximum likelihood estimation procedures, models with ordinal dependent variables, and non-linear models. There will be an emphasis in using graphical tools to aid interpretation and presentation of results.

The *Process Tracing, Counterfactuals, Archival Analysis and Interviews* mini covers qualitative research tools. Some of our MS IRP students will want to conduct interviews for their theses and future work. In this course, students will become familiar with the inferential logic of process tracing and the basics of the counterfactual approach to observational data analysis. They will also learn how to conduct case studies and collect and manipulate primary-source records.

A third goal is to guide students in the production of a significant thesis. A mini semester course, *Thesis Proposal Tutorial*, is devoted to improving intentionality in formulating a thesis proposal. This course will familiarize students with the structure of a thesis, the roles of its different elements, and its connection to the broader research literature. As part of the mini course, faculty members will illustrate these processes as manifested in their own research. Students will have the opportunity to submit their work for publication in the [Center for International Relations and Politics \(CIRP\) Journal](#).

The fourth goal is to prepare students to enter the policy world (should they choose to do so) with a deserved sense of self-efficacy, accompanied by professional skills. Students are required to complete a summer internship in a related field between the first and second year of the program. The internship will allow students to synthesize the program's studies in the context of practical and hands-on experiential learning opportunities. IPS has dedicated staff to support students in all aspects of the internship process.

In addition to the required internship, students will participate in IPS-sponsored networking receptions and policy-oriented events (mostly centered in our Washington, DC, Capitol Hill offices) in order to expand their network and come into direct contact with political, business, and community leaders while learning about the most pressing policy issues of the day.

The [CIRP Policy Forum](#) is one key way in which IPS brings international relations and politics into the intellectual conversation at CMU. The CIRP Policy Forum regularly brings diplomats, scholars, policymakers, journalists, and other thought leaders to the university to address major issues facing the United States and the world. MS IRP students will enroll in a three-unit Policy Forum Seminar each semester and be expected to participate in and reflect on their interactions throughout the CIRP Policy Forum lectures and roundtable discussions.

IPS offers a competitive degree to students seeking advanced coursework in the field by providing a robust methodological framework, interdisciplinary social science content, and practical experience. The international security concentration allows for a unique dive into cybersecurity issues in the current and evolving political landscape. Small classes within IPS result in close student-faculty relationships and, often, publishable work. Graduate student work is published twice per academic year in the *CIRP*

Journal. IPS's position on Capitol Hill, dedicated staff to support the internship and job search process, robust opportunities through the CIRP Policy Forum and networking receptions, work in concert to position our master's students and alumni to successfully navigate the professional world of policy and current political landscape.

The MS IRP is a two-year full-time program with a required internship in the summer between the first and second years. Students may take a maximum of 54 units per semester and a minimum of 36 units per semester. Part-time options are available only after consultation with the department.

Curriculum (186 units)

Core Courses (96 units)

Students must complete all of the following core courses.

- 84-701 Regression Analysis for Political Science I (12 units)
- 84-702 Regression Analysis for Political Science II (12 units)
- 84-710 Thesis Proposal Tutorial (6 units)
- 84-711 Process Tracing, Counterfactuals, Archival Analysis, and Interviews (6 units)
- 84-720 International Security Graduate Seminar (12 units)
- 84-721 American Politics Graduate Seminar (12 units)
- 84-722 Comparative Political Institutions Graduate Seminar (12 units)
- 84-725 International Organizations and International Law Graduate Seminar (12 units)
- 84-791, 84-792, 84-793, 84-794 CIRP Policy Forum Seminar (12 units total, 3 units per semester)

Internship (84-705): (0 units)

Students are required to complete a summer internship in a related field between the first and second year of the program. The internship will allow students to synthesize the program's studies in the context of practical and hands-on experiential learning opportunities. IPS has dedicated staff to support students in all aspects of the internship process.

Thesis (84-799): (18 units)

Students must complete a graduate-level thesis paper (84-799) in the final semester. Please view the Thesis Proposal Guidelines on the [IPS website](#) for further details.

Concentration Courses (72 units)

Students must complete one course in each of the four concentration areas (48 units), plus an additional two courses (24 units) in chosen concentration.

International Relations

- 84-610 International Political Economy
- 84-611 International Development: Theory and Praxis
- 84-618 Politics of Developing Nations
- 84-620 Global Perspectives on International Affairs
- 84-622 Nonviolent Conflict and Revolution
- 84-623 War and Peace in the Contemporary Middle East
- 84-662 Diplomacy and Statecraft

84-665 Psychology and International Relations
84-669 Decision Science for International Relations
84-682 Conflicts in the Middle East: Iran, Iraq, and Proxy Warfare

International Security

84-605 The Future of Warfare
84-614 International and Subnational Security
84-670 Global Nuclear Politics
84-672 Space and National Security
84-673 Emerging Technologies and the Law
84-680 Grand Strategy in the United States
84-682 Conflicts in the Middle East: Iran, Iraq, and Proxy Warfare
84-683 War Powers
84-686 The Privatization of Force
84-687 Technology and Policy of Cyber War
84-688 Concepts of War and Cyber War
84-689 Terrorism and Insurgency
84-690 Social Media, Technology, and Conflict

Comparative Politics

84-608 Political Economy of Latin America
84-615 Contemporary Debates in Human Rights
84-621 Autocrats and Democrats
84-624 The Future of Democracy
84-663 Comparative Legal Systems
84-664 Comparative Presidential Behavior: Leadership, Personality, and Decision Making

American Politics

84-602 Judicial Politics and Behavior
84-609 Political Behavior
84-619 US Foreign Policy and Interventions in World Affairs
84-625 Contemporary American Foreign Policy
84-652 Representation and Redistricting
84-666 The American Presidency
84-693 Legislative Decision Making: US Congress

Sample Plan of Study

Fall- Year One	Units	Spring- Year One	Units
84-722: Comparative Political Institutions Graduate Seminar	12	84-720: International Security Graduate Seminar	12
84-701: Regression Analysis for Political Science I	12	84-702: Regression Analysis for Political Science II	12
84-721: American Politics Graduate Seminar	12	Concentration Course 2	12
Concentration Course 1	12	Concentration Course 3	12
84-791 CIRP Policy Forum Seminar	3	84-792 CIRP Policy Forum Seminar	3
TOTAL Units	51	Total Units	51
Summer: Required Internship 84-705			
Fall- Year Two	Units	Spring- Year Two	Units
84-725: International Organizations and International Law Graduate Seminar	12	84-799: IRP Graduate Thesis	18
84-710 Thesis Proposal Tutorial	6	Concentration Course 5	12
84-711 Process Tracing, Counterfactuals, Archival Analysis, and Interviews	6	Concentration Course 6	12
Concentration Course 4	12	84-794 CIRP Policy Forum Seminar	3
84-793 CIRP Policy Forum Seminar	3		
TOTAL Units	39	TOTAL Units	45