MASTER OF ARTS IN
ASIAN STUDIES

» OVERVIEW

Asia’s growing significance in the 21st century is certain. Its unprecedented economic and demographic growth is transforming what was for centuries a predominantly agricultural region. Urbanization and international trade are major drivers of the continent’s burgeoning centrality in international relations. Problems still endure, however, as the continent is home to many of the world’s most intractable geopolitical flashpoints and the benefits of economic development remain unevenly distributed. The Elliott School’s Asian Studies program prepares students to navigate this dynamic environment and address complex diplomatic, economic, security, and cultural issues.

» IS THIS PROGRAM FOR YOU?

The Elliott School’s Master of Arts in Asian Studies has a unique, comprehensive curriculum that allows for both regional and functional specializations. This rigorous, interdisciplinary program blends the policy-specific and academic skills that are vital to careers in the public, private, and non-profit sectors. Our renowned faculty includes more than 90 individuals whose expertise spans the foreign affairs, security and policy, language and culture, economics, and history of East, Southeast, and South Asia. The program boasts a diverse array of course offerings such as: The Chinese Military, International Relations of South Asia, Education in Islamic Asia, and Modern Southeast Asian History, just to name a few.

» CURRICULUM

The interdisciplinary 40-credit-hour M.A. program can be completed in two years of full-time study or over a longer period of part-time study. The program requires:

- A nine-credit core that provides exposure to a wide range of topics in Asian Studies, including domestic policy, international relations, the history of conflict, and the politics of business and economic growth
- A nine-credit regional specialization that will enhance the student’s understanding of a particular geographic region; students may choose to specialize in East Asia, South Asia, or Southeast Asia
- A nine-credit thematic or professional specialization
  - Thematic specializations: Culture and Religions of Asia; History of Modern Asia; Politics and Policy in Asia; International Relations of Asia; and Asian Business and Development
  - Professional specializations: Research Methods; Conflict and Conflict Resolution; International Economics, Political Economy and Business; International Organization, Diplomacy and Globalization; International Security Policy; Science, Technology, and International Affairs; International Education; and International Health Policy
- Nine credits of elective coursework that students may use for language study, background coursework, a thesis, or skills courses
- A four-credit capstone sequence in which students work as a group under the direction of a faculty member on a policy-oriented research project
• Proficiency in an Asian language, demonstrated by passing a reading and speaking proficiency exam
• A thesis option is available to qualified students seeking to enhance their professional research and writing skills

The Elliott School’s Graduate Student Career Development office offers comprehensive career development services that result in unique job opportunities for our graduate students and graduate alumni. These services include individual career counseling, career panels and information sessions, networking events, and professional skills courses.

Individuals with a deep understanding of Asia are in high demand. Every year the Elliott School conducts a graduate employment survey of alumni six months following graduation. The most recent survey indicates that 92 percent of Elliott School Asian Studies graduate alumni had found employment. The same survey has consistently shown Asian Studies students to be among the best-compensated Elliott School graduates. Recent Asian Studies program graduates can be found working at the Clinton Foundation, U.S. Department of State, the National Bureau of Asian Research, Booz Allen Hamilton, and the Semiconductor Industry Association.

SIGUR CENTER FOR ASIAN STUDIES

The Sigur Center is an international research center of GW’s Elliott School of International Affairs. Its mission is to increase the quality and broaden the scope of scholarly research and publication on Asia, promote U.S.-Asia scholarly interaction, and educate a new generation of students, scholars, analysts, and policymakers.

Students in the Asian Studies program benefit from the many valuable resources offered by the Sigur Center. These include access to the Asian Studies library and study lounge, summer language and research grants, conference travel grants, interaction with visiting scholars from around the world, and participation in approximately 70 Asia-related special events a year.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Building a strong professional network is a critical part of achieving career success. Through the cohort experience of the Asian Studies program, students build relationships that will aid them throughout their careers. Incoming first-year students complete a series of core courses that serve as the academic foundation of their studies. Asian Studies students finish their degree program by completing a capstone course that draws upon the substantive knowledge, analytical frameworks, and professional skills acquired from previous coursework. In addition, students may participate in a wide range of social and professional activities such as alumni information sessions, Asia-specific resume critiques, happy hours, and Asian film nights.