

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD)

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) program is for individuals who have already earned a Master's degree (or have other substantial research experience) and seek to further their expertise as scholars and practitioners of international relations. PhD students work closely with faculty advisors to develop an academic plan that best supports their dissertation research. Throughout the program students develop a comprehensive understanding of qualitative and quantitative analytical skills, international relations, economics, and regional studies.

PhD students begin their studies in Washington, DC. During the dissertation stage, students can explore opportunities to study at SAIS Europe, the Hopkins Nanjing Center, or at other prominent global institutions.

Johns Hopkins SAIS graduates are sought after by employers in the public, private and nonprofit sectors. Their knowledge of economics, analytical abilities, regional expertise, diplomatic skills, international experience, language proficiency, as well as capacity to apply theory to real-world problems, give students a distinct professional advantage.

PhD Fields of Study

PhD students will have one of the following concentrations (either a policy or region):

International Policy Areas

- American Foreign Policy
- Energy, Resources and Environment
- Global Theory and History
- International Development
- International Relations
- International Political Economy
- Strategic Studies

Regions of the World

- African Studies
- Canadian Studies
- China Studies
- European and Eurasian Studies
- Japan Studies
- Korea Studies
- Latin American Studies
- Middle East Studies
- South Asia Studies
- Southeast Asia Studies

Faculty Advisors

Our faculty experts and scholars are internationally recognized for their scholarship, experience, and quality of teaching. They are award-winning scholars, authors, diplomats, thinkers, and senior ranking officials who are authorities on international economics and international relations and who have expertise in contemporary issues around the world.

All PhD students have a tenured, faculty advisor. The advisor has primary responsibility for coordinating the candidate's research agenda. Another senior member of the dissertation committee or "second reader" monitors the student's research throughout the dissertation project. Both the faculty advisor and the second reader are to be substantively involved in the student's preparation of the prospectus and the dissertation.

While the student will work actively with the first and second readers to prepare a dissertation prospectus, the student should also consult with the three supporting committee members throughout the doctoral research.

Prospective and current PhD students are encouraged to use the Faculty Directory to identify individuals to approach about involvement in their research and dissertation.

Degree Requirements

Campus: Washington, DC

Duration: Four to nine academic years (average 5.5), Full-time

Course delivery: In-person

PhD Program Structure

The PhD is divided into pre-dissertation (resident) and dissertation (non-resident) stages.

In order to earn the degree, students must fulfill all requirements and earn a cumulative GPA of 3.33 or above.

Pre-dissertation, Resident Stage

Pre-dissertation status lasts up to two years for students who have completed the Master of Arts of International Relations (MAIR) degree at Johns Hopkins SAIS and up to three years for those without an MAIR degree from the school. Students complete coursework, comprehensive exams, and defend the dissertation prospectus.

Pre-dissertation students are on-campus full-time taking courses, attending seminars, and/or approved independent study. During this time students are required to take *Research Methodology, Statistics, and Econometrics* in addition to coursework agreed to by a faculty advisor. PhD students must successfully pass *Theories and Methods of Qualitative Political Research* and *Research Design and Causal Inference*, plus two other research training courses approved by their faculty advisor. Prerequisites for *Research Design and Causal Inference* include *Statistics for Data Analysis* (waiver exam available) and *Econometrics*.

Within six months of passing the second comprehensive exam, students must prepare a written prospectus of the dissertation and present it in a formal defense that is open to members of the university faculty.

Dissertation, Non-Resident Stage

Students advance to the dissertation stage after successfully defending a prospectus and are not required to be on campus, however are still considered full-time status. Students should defend the dissertation within five years of the prospectus defense.

Comprehensive Exams

PhD students must select two examination areas (with no more than one regional area) from among the following :

- American Foreign Policy
- Comparative Politics

- Conflict Management
- Energy, Resources & Environment
- International Development
- International Law
- International Political Economy/ Comparative Political Economy
- International Relations Theory
- Strategic Studies
- Regional Studies:
 - Africa Studies
 - Asia Studies (China, Korea, Japan, South Asia, Southeast Asia)
 - Canadian Studies
 - European and Eurasian Studies
 - Latin American Studies
 - Middle East Studies

Comprehensive exams from other divisions of Johns Hopkins University may be considered on a case by case basis.

PhD Dissertation

At the time of application, students will propose a research topic they would like to pursue for their doctoral dissertation. During their course of study, students will hone this topic in consultation with a faculty advisor and defend a prospectus that outlines the dissertation's research questions, mission, and methodology.

The PhD dissertation must be an original and analytical treatment of a subject of conceptual importance that involves the creation of new knowledge and not simply the master of existing knowledge. To conduct the research for, write, and defend the dissertation, a candidate will have a period of five years from the defense of the prospectus. It is understood that in fields with exceptionally difficult languages the process may take longer.