

MASTER OF ARTS IN THE FIELD OF SECURITY POLICY STUDIES

A master's degree in security policy studies can open doors to future employment in the security policy institutions of the federal government, the private sector, international organizations such as NATO, and the many nonprofit institutions engaged in security policy work. Security policy studies is a policy oriented program focusing on international security issues and the policy responses to those issues, with particular emphasis on emerging transnational threats. These threats include weapons of mass destruction; terrorism; regional and ethnic conflicts; international crime; and the security implications of a globalized economy.

The program also examines the national and international policy responses to these problems, including the operations of the intelligence community, the military, diplomats, and international economic policymakers. The curriculum provides a strong grounding in the national security and defense policy process. Students choose from four specific concentrations: U.S. national security; transnational security; conflict resolution; and science and technology. The program also offers students the option of completing their MA degree fully online. The only program is only available with the U.S. national security concentration.

Students also have the option of emphasizing a particular geographic region, such as East Asia, the Middle East, or Latin America, by taking elective courses with a regional focus. Program faculty include internationally recognized authorities in defense policy and resources, foreign policy, the national security policy process, and regional and transnational security issues. In addition, the program includes an outstanding array of adjunct faculty drawn from the many research institutions and policy organizations in the nation's capital.

Visit the program website (<https://elliott.gwu.edu/academics/graduate/sps/>) for additional information.

ADMISSIONS

Admission Fall: January 7th - Fellowship & Application Deadline deadlines:

Spring: October 1st - Fellowship & Application Deadline

Applications for admission will continue to be accepted on a rolling basis after the fellowship deadlines have passed, but students will not be considered for fellowships.

Standardized GRE/GMAT test- optional test scores:

Recommendations (2) letters are required. Applicants should submit one (1) academic letter from a professor and one (1) professional reference.

Prior academic records: Transcripts are required from all colleges and universities attended, whether or not credit was earned, the program was completed, or the credit appears as transfer credit on another transcript. Unofficial transcripts from all colleges and universities attended should be uploaded to your online application. Official transcripts are required only of applicants who are offered admission and choose to enroll.

If academic records are in a language other than English, English language translations must be provided. The English translations alone should be uploaded into the online application. Official transcripts and certified English translations will be required of applicants who are offered admission and choose to enroll.

Statement of purpose: All applicants are required to submit an essay of approximately 500 words that answers one of the two questions below:

State your purpose in undertaking graduate study at the Elliott School. As part of your statement of purpose, describe your academic and research interests, career objectives, how a degree from the Elliott School will enable you to achieve your goals, and what unique skills, talents and/or perspectives you will bring to your program. Please be specific.

- OR -

Please discuss an issue of international importance you wish to address in your professional career. Please include how the Elliott School and the academic program to which you have applied will prepare you to address this global issue.

Additional requirements: A resumé or curriculum vitae is required. Resumés/CVs must include dates of employment (if applicable) and date of degree conferral or expected degree conferral.

International applicants only: International Applicants may be required to submit official English Language tests scores with their application. Please see the Elliott School's English Language Requirements for guidance on whether you need to take the TOEFL/IELTS/PTE. Please send official TOEFL scores to institution code 5246.

The minimum English Language Test Requirements can be found below:

Eligible for Admission & requires EAP Courses:

- IELTS- 7.0 overall score, no band score below 6.0

- TOEFL- 100 (internet test) 600 (paper test)

- PTE- 68

Eligible for Admission & Exempt from EAP Courses**:

- IETLS- 7.0 overall score, no band score below 6.5

- TOEFL- 105 (internet test) 650 (paper test)

- PTE- 72

**Spring applicants must receive at least these scores to be considered for admission.

Please review International Applicant Information carefully for details on required documents, earlier deadlines for applicants requiring an I-20 or DS-2019 from GW, and English language requirements.

Supporting documents not submitted online should be mailed to:

Office of Graduate Admissions
The Elliott School of International Affairs
The George Washington University
1957 E Street, NW, Suite 301
Washington, DC 20052

Contact for questions:

esiagrad@gwu.edu ~ 202-994-7050 (phone) ~ 202.994.9537 (fax)
9:00 am – 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday

REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements must be fulfilled: 40 credits, including 6 credits in core field courses, a 4-credit capstone sequence, 0 to 3 credits in research tool courses, 15 credits in a concentration, 3 credits in professional skills courses, and 9 to 12 credits in elective courses. Students can choose to fulfill the tool requirement by demonstrating language proficiency*.

See notes regarding special topics and skills courses, the capstone sequence, and the thesis option**.

| Code | Title | Credits |
|--|--------------------------|---------|
| Required | | |
| Core field courses (6 credits) | | |
| IAFF 6161 | International Security | |
| IAFF 6162 | Security Policy Analysis | |
| Capstone (4 credits) | | |
| Students complete a two-course capstone sequence that most closely matches the thematic area of their project. The capstone sequence includes a 2-credit capstone workshop taken before the 2-credit capstone seminar. Students must have completed at least 18 credits of coursework prior to starting the capstone sequence. The two 2-credit capstone courses must be taken in consecutive semesters. | | |
| IAFF 6898 | Capstone Workshop | |
| IAFF 6899 | Capstone Course | |
| Tool requirement (0 to 3 credits) | | |
| Students can choose either a language or an analytical option to fulfill the tool requirement. | | |

Language option—This option can be completed by fulfilling the language proficiency requirement for ESIA’s non-regional programs. Additional information about the language proficiency requirements is available from the academic advisor.*

Analytical option—This option can be fulfilled by demonstrating proficiency with a minimum grade of B in a graduate-level methods course. It can be met by taking one of the courses listed below. Other courses can count toward this requirement if approved by the program director.

| | |
|-----------|--|
| IAFF 6501 | Quantitative Analysis for International Affairs Practitioners |
| GEOG 6304 | Geographical Information Systems I |
| IAFF 6118 | Special Topics in International Affairs (Applied Qualitative Methods) |
| IAFF 6118 | Special Topics in International Affairs (Data Analytics for International Affairs) |
| IAFF 6198 | Special Topics in International Economic Policy (Advanced Quantitative Analysis) |
| IAFF 6216 | Analytic Tools for Global Policy |

Concentration (15 credits)

Students complete a concentration by taking at least 15 credits selected from one of the thematic concentrations listed below. Students are encouraged to discuss their course selections with their advisor.

- U.S. national security (<http://bulletin.gwu.edu/international-affairs/graduate-programs/ma-security-policy-studies/us-national-security-concentration/>)
- Transnational security (<http://bulletin.gwu.edu/international-affairs/graduate-programs/ma-security-policy-studies/transnational-security-concentration/>)
- Science and technology (<http://bulletin.gwu.edu/international-affairs/graduate-programs/ma-security-policy-studies/science-and-technology-concentration/>)
- Conflict resolution (<http://bulletin.gwu.edu/international-affairs/graduate-programs/ma-security-policy-studies/conflict-resolution-concentration/>)

| Code | Title | Credits |
|--|-------|---------|
| Professional skills courses (3 credits) | | |
| Three 1-credit professional skills courses taken under IAFF 6502 and/or IAFF 6503. | | |

Electives

9 to 12 credits in at least three substantive 3-credit graduate-level courses.

Optional thesis

Students who wish to continue to a PhD program or to pursue a research-oriented job can consider writing a thesis in addition to the capstone requirement. The thesis is an independent, in-depth research project that takes a year or more to complete. To pursue the thesis option, students must have a minimum GPA of 3.5 after completing 18 credits of graduate work and the approval of the full-time faculty member they wish to have serve as their thesis director. Thesis students also must complete at least one research methods course. Thesis credits are counted as elective or specialization/concentration credits with program director approval. The two required thesis courses must be taken in consecutive semesters.

IAFF 6998 Thesis

IAFF 6999 Thesis

*The language proficiency option for the tool requirement can be completed in one of the following ways:

- Having earned a minimum grade of *B* in a sixth-semester university-level advanced language course completed no more than three years prior to matriculation in the Elliott School's master's degree program.
- Having earned a minimum grade of *B* in a sixth-semester university-level advanced language course at GW, or in an approved course taken at another institution of higher learning, including Elliott School exchange partner institutions, while enrolled in the Elliott School master's program.
- Passing the Elliott School administered language proficiency reading and speaking examination at the currently required level of proficiency (<https://elliott.gwu.edu/foreign-language-proficiency-requirement/>). The Elliott School administers language proficiency examinations once in the fall and once in the spring semesters. Students should plan to take the language proficiency examination as soon as possible following their matriculation in the program. Students have three opportunities to pass the examination. Failure to pass the examination for a third time results in dismissal from the program.
- Achieving the required proficiency level in a reading and speaking examination administered by an Elliott School-approved language assessment institution, at the student's expense, while enrolled in the Elliott School's master's program.

*Specific subject matter covered in special/selected topics courses varies by semester. Consult the Schedule of Classes (<http://my.gwu.edu/mod/pws/>) for each semester's offerings. Topics courses not listed here can, with permission of the program director, be used to fulfill program requirements.

Additional information regarding skills courses (<https://elliott.gwu.edu/professional-skills-courses/>), the capstone (<https://elliott.gwu.edu/global-capstone/>), and the thesis (<https://elliott.gwu.edu/thesis/>) is available on the Elliott School website.

Note regarding Law School courses—Students can, with permission of the ESIA-SPS program director, include courses from the Law School in their program. Enrolling in a LAW course also requires

permission of the Law School professor and dean of students. Students should consult the Elliott School's Graduate Student Services office before enrolling in LAW courses to review the registration process.

CONCENTRATIONS

Students in the master of arts in the field of security policy studies program must complete a concentration by taking at least 15 credits selected from one of thematic concentrations listed below. Specific requirements are listed under the "Concentrations" tab. Students are encouraged to discuss their course selections with their advisor.

- U.S. national security (<http://bulletin.gwu.edu/international-affairs/graduate-programs/ma-security-policy-studies/us-national-security-concentration/>)
- Transnational security (<http://bulletin.gwu.edu/international-affairs/graduate-programs/ma-security-policy-studies/transnational-security-concentration/>)
- Science and technology (<http://bulletin.gwu.edu/international-affairs/graduate-programs/ma-security-policy-studies/science-and-technology-concentration/>)
- Conflict resolution (<http://bulletin.gwu.edu/international-affairs/graduate-programs/ma-security-policy-studies/conflict-resolution-concentration/>)

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COMBINED PROGRAMS

Combined Programs

- Joint Master of Arts in Elliott School programs and Master of Business Administration (<http://bulletin.gwu.edu/international-affairs/graduate-programs/joint-mba-ma-international-affairs/>)
- Joint Master of Arts and Juris Doctor (<https://current.bulletin.gwu.edu/international-affairs/graduate-programs/joint-ma-jd/>)