

# CHICAGO STUDIES

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Department Website: <http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu>

Chicago Studies (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/>) works to help the College forge genuine bonds with Chicago's diverse communities, offering classes, programs, and resources that support students being more than visitors in the city and enabling them to have a positive impact on their new home. As part of the Office of the Dean of the College, and working with both citywide partners and academic programs across the College, Chicago Studies facilitates the development of reciprocal, respectful collaborations between campus and city that empower students in the College to deeper critical inquiry in ways that enrich and build upon their fields of study. Chicago Studies' intensive, place-based encounters, research experiences, and opportunities for academic engagement help students think critically and substantively about urban issues, and develop the praxis of reflexive, hyper-local civic participation in students and instructors alike.

Throughout the academic year, Chicago Studies collaborates with dozens of departments and academic programs to sponsor cross-listed (CHST) courses and immersive quarters that focus on Chicago themes or that are enriched by experiential learning in the city. It complements these curricular offerings with a wide range of para-curricular programs, developed in close collaboration with both on- and off-campus partners, that introduce the College to the communities, resources, issues, histories, and ecology of the Chicago region. Regular on-campus collaborators include the Program on the Global Environment, Office of Civic Engagement, UChicago Arts, the Mansueto Institute for Urban Innovation, the Urban Theory Lab, the Parrhesia Program for Public Discourse, the Institute of Politics, and the Department of Athletics and Recreation; regular off-campus collaborators include the Chicago History Museum, the Newberry Library, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Field Museum, the Chicago Architecture Biennial, WBEZ (National Public Radio), and a diverse array of Chicago nonprofits, activist organizations, governmental bodies, media outlets, and cultural institutions.

Programmatically, Chicago Studies curates and develops virtual and in-person experiences for students seeking to explore the city's histories and built and natural environments; sponsors regular lectures, community conversations, and Chicago research discussions to introduce College students to potential mentors, methodologies, and resources for Chicago-focused scholarship; collects, archives, and promotes the use of Chicago-focused datasets and research, including student research, to support new scholarship about the city; offers an annual Undergraduate Research Prize and colloquium to highlight the best scholarship produced by University of Chicago undergraduates on the history, politics, and cultural life of Chicago; and publishes the Chicago Studies annual (<https://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/research/annual/>), a professionally edited and designed journal of exemplary student research and writing on the city. A subcommittee of the Chicago Studies Faculty Advisory Board considers submissions, which may be from any discipline, for both the prize and the annual each spring.

## CHICAGO STUDIES COURSES

Chicago Studies encourages the rigorous study of Chicago by supporting instructors in developing and offering Chicago-focused courses (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/classes/>) (cross-listed as Chicago Studies/CHST courses) across the College, and by sponsoring special curricular opportunities such as the Chicago Studies Quarters (see below). Some of these are offered by Teaching Scholars, practitioners hired by Chicago Studies from organizations and cultural institutions around the city to offer unique courses in their areas of expertise. Chicago Studies supports Chicago-based teaching and learning (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/faculty/>) with course/instructional design consultation, micro-grants, and logistical support for experiential learning, as well as course development grants and student research assistantships for University of Chicago faculty and course instructors.

Many Chicago Studies courses explore aspects of Chicago's ecology, culture, politics, history, social structure, and economic life. Others, though not exclusively focused on Chicago, illustrate their academic contents with sustained reference to/engagement with Chicago communities, data, or histories. Most of these courses are cross-listed between departments and therefore may fulfill requirements in multiple academic programs; many are also integrated into the Environment, Geography, and Urbanization major (<http://collegecatalog.uchicago.edu/thecollege/cegu/>). All CHST-designated courses contribute to students' completion of the academic requirements of the College's interdisciplinary Certificate in Chicago Studies (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/certificate/>) (see below). Chicago Studies publishes thematic listings of these courses each term prior to pre-registration on the Chicago Studies website (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/classes/>), in addition to designating them with the CHST cross-list in the course catalog.

## CHICAGO STUDIES QUARTERS

Chicago Studies Quarters (<https://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/classes/quarters/>) (CSQ) and course sequences offer cohesive sets of courses that join classroom instruction with experiential learning opportunities, using the city and the region as sites of inspiration and instruction. Whether structured as selective, quarter-long academic programs or as multi-quarter sequences of individual classes, these structures aim to form small learning communities of students and faculty who collaboratively devote themselves to intensive study and exploration of one or more aspects of Chicago. Admitted students enroll in interrelated courses joined by a common theme, taught by distinguished scholars in various disciplines. Like Study Abroad programs, such

Chicago-focused quarters and sequences utilize excursions within the city, guest speakers, and engagement with civic groups and leaders to enrich class readings and assignments. Participants in traditional (one-term) CSQs may register for additional courses of their choosing during the term of their Quarter, provided these do not conflict with the required classes or the mandatory excursions associated with the Quarter they have chosen. Many Quarters include additional, optional para-curricular experiences for their participants that complement their formal studies, including priority access to professional development opportunities and internships/research fellowships focused on the Quarter's topics.

The Chicago Studies Quarter: Calumet focuses on topics of human land use in the Calumet Region just south and east of the city. It is a full-time, one-quarter experience intended to help students bridge theory and practice in environmental studies. The program features three or four integrated courses, projects, field trips, guest lectures, and presentations, and is offered every other year in the spring term (even years only).

Chicago Studies Quarters are designed for undergraduates in good academic standing who have completed at least two quarters of study in the College. While the program stipulates no minimum grade-point average, an applicant's transcript should demonstrate that the applicant is a serious student who will make the most of this opportunity. The Chicago Studies Quarters are open to University of Chicago undergraduate students only; applications from outside the University are not accepted. For more information, please contact Christopher Skrabale (cskrable@uchicago.edu), Executive Director of Chicago Studies & Experiential Learning and Assistant Dean of the College.

## INTERDISCIPLINARY CERTIFICATE IN CHICAGO STUDIES

The College's interdisciplinary Certificate in Chicago Studies (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/certificate/>) recognizes the meaningful integration of academic inquiry with positive, impactful engagement in Chicago. The certificate is available to students in any field of study; the specific fulfillment of its requirements (below) is up to the individual student, with close advising and support from Chicago Studies' team. Students may choose to focus their certificate on discipline-based, academic study of the city; pre-professional experience with Chicago institutions; deep engagement with a particular community; or social change.

Students may begin pursuing the Chicago Studies Certificate at any time during their College careers. Completion of Certificate requirements is tracked in Canvas; enrollment in the Canvas site requires a prior advising meeting with a member of the Chicago Studies team. All Certificate requirements must be documented no later than the last day of the reading period of the term in which a student intends to take their degree to allow the Chicago Studies team and the Registrar's Office adequate time to process their application.

Students who complete the Certificate will have that designated on their transcript. The transcript designation and the certificate itself are standalone recognitions, conferred by the College and its partners without reference to students' formal degree programs. Students may choose to complete the Certificate for many reasons, but many pursue the designation (in part) to affirm their commitment to and investment in the city, often with future Chicago-based careers in mind.

The Chicago Studies Certificate includes the following requirements:

1. Introductory/Preparatory Experiences (at least three for first- and second-year students; may be waived for upper-level students)
2. Chicago Studies Courses (at least three CHST cross-listed classes or a Chicago Studies Quarter)
3. Direct Community Engagement (at least 200 hours)
4. Capstone Project (often a BA thesis or topical capstone in one's discipline)

### 1. Introductory/Preparatory Experiences (at least three)

These not-for-credit, non-curricular introductory experiences—which may be on- or off-campus—should expose students to local civic actors, leadership and research skills, and Chicago social issues. As a first stage of the Chicago Studies Certificate, first- and second-year students who wish to pursue the certificate must identify and participate in three such "experiments in Chicago-ing" to help them frame, focus, and reflect on the kind of impact they hope to have as engaged scholars.

A list of possible/previously pursued experiences may be found on the Chicago Studies website (<https://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu>). Existing programs sponsored by Chicago Studies partners (both internal and external to the University) may fulfill one or more of these requirements; students should discuss this during their initial advising appointment. *NB: This requirement may be waived for third- and fourth-year students who elect to pursue the Chicago Studies Certificate in conjunction with a more fully developed academic or civic project.*

### 2. Chicago Studies Courses (at least three)

The Chicago Studies Certificate requires completion of three Chicago Studies (CHST) cross-listed courses with a C– or above. In some cases, special permission may be granted for inclusion of one or more non-designated courses, provided that students can demonstrate their individual application of course content to their overall Certificate project, e.g., completion of a Chicago-focused research project as part of course requirements. Students wishing to claim one or more non-CHST courses will need to propose and receive approval for their chosen sequence of courses. Such petitions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, in relation

to the petitioner's stated rationale for including specific courses in their program of study and engagement. The General Petition Form (<https://humanities-web.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/college-prod/s3fs-public/documents/GeneralPetition.pdf>) is available on the College website and on the Chicago Studies Certificate Canvas site. It should be directed to Sabina Shaikh ([sabina@uchicago.edu](mailto:sabina@uchicago.edu)) (Sabina@uchicago.edu), faculty director for Chicago Studies. Advising on this academic component and selection of appropriate courses is available; visit the Chicago Studies website (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/classes/>) for current listings of Chicago Studies courses or search for "Chicago Studies" (CHST) in the course selection portal.

### 3. Direct Community Engagement

Certificate recipients must demonstrate a sustained, impactful engagement with Chicago's diverse communities in the following ways:

- complete at least 200 hours of community-benefiting engagement in Chicago; AND
- receive a positive recommendation from a community-based supervisor of or partner in their engagement; AND
- articulate both academic learning and skills development from this experience and its relevance to the student's capstone project in a significant way.

Advising on the selection of appropriate engagement opportunities is available from the Chicago Studies team (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/people/>). Some examples of existing opportunities that could fulfill this program requirement include:

- 200+ hours of documented volunteer engagement on a single community issue through leadership in a community service recognized student organization
- 200+ hours of student employment with a single community organization or on a single issue through community-based Federal Work-Study
- completion of the University Community Service Center's Summer Links internship and social justice education program
- completion of the Institute of Politics Summer Political Internship (in Chicago)
- completion of a Pozen Family Center Human Rights Internship (in Chicago)

### 4. Capstone Project

A Capstone Project is a high-impact learning practice that requires students to integrate, apply, and articulate their learning across a sequence of experiences. Many capstones will be completed during the fourth year of study, but it is possible to complete a capstone earlier.

To receive the Chicago Studies Certificate and transcript designation, program participants must successfully produce a major paper, project, or product (e.g., a discipline-based research project, investigative journalism series, creative production, action research product, etc.) that integrates aspects of the student's academic and community-based learning throughout the student's fulfillment of previous Certificate components and takes Chicago either as its focus OR uses it as a significant example.

The Chicago Studies team can assist students in identifying appropriate community partners, issues, and audiences for capstone projects. In the case of capstones based on or closely related to a student's formal academic work (e.g., a BA thesis), capstone adjudication will assess only the capstone's successful integration of the student's academic and community-based learning, as required for the Certificate. Such evaluations should not be taken as direction of the student's formal discipline-based academic research.

Questions about the Chicago Studies Certificate may be directed to Christopher Skrable ([cskrable@uchicago.edu](mailto:cskrable@uchicago.edu)), Executive Director of Chicago Studies & Experiential Learning and Assistant Dean of the College. Additional information is also available on the Chicago Studies website (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/certificate/>).

### PRIMARY CONTACTS

#### General Information; Pedagogy and Course Support; Undergraduate Research; Certificate Program

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#### Faculty Advisory Board; Curricular and Faculty Professional Development

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