Joint BA/MA in International Relations

Department Website: http://cir.uchicago.edu

General Information

The Committee on International Relations (CIR) has its origins in a conference on the causes and characteristics of major wars, which was organized in 1926 by University of Chicago political scientists Charles Merriam and Quincy Wright. In 1928, the research papers and collaborations spawned by this conference led to the award of several master’s degrees and thereby the establishment of CIR, now the nation’s oldest graduate program in international affairs.

Combining rigorous core instruction with an interdisciplinary curriculum, CIR’s one-year master’s program allows students to explore the complexities of global politics and interact with world-class faculty, scholars, and professionals (https://cir.uchicago.edu/content/core-faculty/) across the social sciences and the business, law, and public policy schools. Students develop depth of expertise by specializing in two fields of study and by producing an original MA thesis. A member of the University of Chicago faculty, CIR’s senior academic staff, and an assigned preceptor together mentor each student.

CIR also offers an extensive professional development curriculum. In addition to working with CIR’s in-house career services team, students access the expertise and funding of the University’s Center for International Social Science Research, Institute of Politics, and regional studies centers.

CIR maintains its own professional development fund for self-designed internships in the United States and abroad; for career exploration treks; for MA thesis field work; and for individual and group visits to the University of Chicago’s global centers in New Delhi, Beijing, and Hong Kong.

Joint BA/MA Program

Qualified students in the College who wish to pursue a joint MA degree in International Relations should consult with their College adviser, the Assistant Dean of Students for Admissions in the Social Sciences (Lindsey Weglarz, lweglarz@uchicago.edu), and CIR’s Associate Director (Matthias Staisch, mstaisch@uchicago.edu). These meetings should happen in the Autumn Quarter of the student’s third year.

Application

Applicants are expected to have a GPA of 3.55 or higher.

Applications are due by February 1.

Applications are submitted online to the Dean of Students of the Division of the Social Sciences (apply-ssd.uchicago.edu/apply (https://apply-ssd.uchicago.edu/apply/)). See How to Apply (http://collegecatalog.uchicago.edu/thecollege/internationalrelations/#How%20to%20Apply).

More information on the application process can be found at socialsciences.uchicago.edu/admissions (https://socialsciences.uchicago.edu/admissions/).

BA/MA applicants should not pay the application fee. Email ssd-admissions@uchicago.edu to ask how to receive the fee waiver.

A finished application should contain the following:

- A completed online graduate application.
- A candidate statement exploring your motivations and preparation for undertaking graduate study in CIR specifically.
- Three letters of recommendation, preferably from academic writers familiar with your work as a student and/or supervisors familiar with your work as a researcher.
- A double-spaced, solo-authored writing sample of 4,500 to 8,000 words, ideally from a single seminar paper or research project.
- A Proposed Curriculum document that identifies (1) up to three courses completed as part of the BA degree that will be petitioned to count toward the MA degree distribution requirements (see Program Requirements below), and (2) the graduate-level courses the applicant intends to take during their year in the program. Applicants should contact Associate Director Matthias Staisch (mstaisch@uchicago.edu) for the most recent list of approved courses.
- A signed Progress toward the BA Degree Form that confirms eligibility for the BA/MA degree program. Applicants must obtain this form from Lindsey Weglarz (lweglarz@uchicago.edu) in the Dean of Students office. They will then consult with the Director of Undergraduate Studies in their College major to (1) specify how many of the nine graduate CIR courses they would take will be counted to satisfy their BA requirements, and (2) assure that all BA requirements will be met no later than the Convocation in June.
of their fourth year. The form must be signed by the Director of Undergraduate Studies or the director’s
designee.

Space in the CIR BA/MA program is limited, and admission is very competitive. Admission to the MA
program is also subject to approval by the College. Students in joint residence status are charged tuition at
graduate rates.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS
Students selected to participate in the joint degree program must meet all the normal BA requirements for
their particular field of study, as well as all the general education requirements. In addition, joint degree students
in CIR must meet the following requirements:

1. Complete nine graduate-level University of Chicago courses for credit and earn a minimum 3.0 GPA.
2. Satisfy the CIR distribution requirements for these nine graduate-level courses.
   a. Take three courses in each of two fields of study. The CIR curriculum is divided into five
      fields of study:
      International Security, Conflict Studies, and Contentious Politics
      International Political Economy and Development
      Comparative Studies in Political Institutions and Identity
      Human Rights, Environment, and International Law
      Research Methods in the Social Sciences
   b. Enroll in two out of three CIR core seminars: INRE 43000 Core Seminar: International Order
      and Security, INRE 43800 Core Seminar: International Political Economy, and INRE 43100 Core
      Seminar: Global Governance, Rights, and Norms.
   c. Enroll in seven courses from the published lists of approved courses.
   d. Enroll in six for-credit courses within the Division of the Social Sciences.
   e. Up to three undergraduate-level courses may be counted toward the MA degree, by petition
to the Associate Director of CIR.
3. Receive a grade of “pass” in three sections of INRE 46500 MA Thesis Workshop, a required, non-credit
course that meets in Autumn, Winter, and Spring Quarter, respectively.
4. Complete an MA thesis paper with the approval of both a faculty reader and an assigned preceptor.
5. Complete both the BA and MA degrees, the second awarded no later than the August following a
   September matriculation.

Details are available at https://cir.uchicago.edu/content/curriculum (https://cir.uchicago.edu/content/
curriculum/).

How to Apply
The Application for Admission and Financial Aid, with instructions and deadlines, is available online at
apply-ssd.uchicago.edu/apply (https://apply-ssd.uchicago.edu/apply/).

For additional information about the program, please contact E. G. Enbar, Student Affairs Administrator, at
773.702.8312 or egenbar@uchicago.edu.