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 and the Assistant Dean of Students for Admissions in the Social Sciences (Lindsey Weglarz, lweglarz@uchicago.edu). These meetings should happen in the Autumn Quarter of the student’s third year.

Application

Applicants are recommended, but not required, to have a GPA of 3.55 or higher.

Applications are due on the same timeline (https://socialsciences.uchicago.edu/admissions/deadlines-decisions/) as all applications for MA admission.

The application is submitted online to the dean of students of the Division of the Social Sciences.

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

Application Requirements

• A completed online graduate application.
• A candidate statement exploring your motivations and preparation for undertaking graduate study in CIR specifically.
• Two 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 approximately 15 pages, ideally from a single seminar paper or research project.
• Resume/CV
• Unofficial transcripts
• 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 Assistant Dean of Students for Admissions in the Social Sciences (Lindsey Weglarz, lweglarz@uchicago.edu) for the most recent list of approved courses.

BA/MA applicants are not charged an application fee.

Prospective BA/MA students must meet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies in their College major, filling out a form available for download from the online application, to confirm their eligibility for the BA/MA, to specify how many of the nine graduate courses they would take will be double-counted to satisfy their BA requirements, and to assure that all BA requirements will be met no later than the June Convocation of their
fourth year. That form, with the signature of the Director of Undergraduate Studies (or their designee), must be submitted as part of the BA/MA application.

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 all program requirements listed here.

Students must complete both the BA and MA degrees, the second award no later than the end of the Summer Quarter following a September matriculation.

By default, the nine MA-level courses during the dual enrollment year (fourth year) can be double-counted as general elective credit toward the bachelor’s degree. BA/MA students may choose instead to double-count MA courses toward BA major or minor electives or requirements, with approval of the Director of Undergraduate Studies for their major/minor. Questions regarding double-counting or degree logistics should be directed to Lindsey Weglarz, Assistant Dean of Students (lweglarz@uchicago.edu).