



Faculty of Social Sciences

**SAMSE, Master Programme in Politics and Society of the  
Contemporary Middle East, 120 credits**  
*Masterprogram i politik och samhälle i det samtida Mellanöstern,  
120 högskolepoäng*

Second cycle degree programme requiring previous university study / *Program  
med akademiska förkunskapskrav och med slutlig examen på avancerad nivå*

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## Decision

The programme syllabus is established by Pro dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences 07-06-2023 (Dnr U 2023/445) to be valid from 16-10-2023, autumn semester 2024.

## Programme description

This interdisciplinary Master's Programme aims to develop in students deep social-scientific knowledge about the Middle East of today. It trains students in critical thinking and gives them the ability to apply this to current events and debates in and about the region. The social-scientific focus of the programme means that students will learn how to apply various theories and research methodologies to study the societies, politics, and contemporary history of countries in the region and their populations both at home and in the diaspora. Particular emphasis is given to the processes, norms and flows that continuously shape the Middle East, such as migration, refugeeship, legal, political, social, and economic conditions, as well as cultural and gender constructs.

The programme uses a comprehensive definition of the Middle East and North Africa region to include some of the members of the Arab League (Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen) in addition to Iran, Israel/occupied territories, and Turkey.

The programme provides a basis for third-cycle (PhD) studies as well as professional careers in areas such as diplomacy, aid and development work, work linked to

migration, integration and societal development, as well as educational and journalistic work with a connection to the Middle Eastern and diasporic contexts.

## Goals

In accordance with the Higher Education Ordinance, students studying for a Master's degree shall be able to demonstrate the following:

### Knowledge and understanding

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised knowledge in certain areas of the field as well as insight into current research and development work, and
- demonstrate specialised methodological knowledge in the main field of study, Middle Eastern Studies.

### Competence and skills

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge and analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations even with limited information
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues critically, autonomously and creatively as well as to plan and, using appropriate methods, undertake advanced tasks within predetermined time frames and so contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as the ability to evaluate this work
- demonstrate the ability in speech and writing both nationally and internationally to clearly report and discuss his or her conclusions and the knowledge and arguments on which they are based in dialogue with different audiences, and
- demonstrate the skills required for participation in research and development work or autonomous employment in some other qualified capacity.

### Judgement and approach

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study, Middle Eastern Studies, informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues and also to demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work
- demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning.

In addition to the aims specified in the Higher Education Ordinance, students on the Master's degree programme shall be able to

- demonstrate knowledge about, and understanding of, how the Middle East has been conceptualised historically, in political as well as scientific terms,

- demonstrate knowledge about the processes and debates that characterise the Middle East of today as well as the diasporic context.

## Course information

The programme offers a combination of compulsory and elective courses. It emphasises the students' development through supervision as well as in contacts with the research network to which the programme offers links.

The first course of the first semester, Introduction to Middle Eastern Studies (15 credits), introduces the student to core themes of the programme. This is followed by courses in theory of science for the social sciences, and/or in research methods, which provides the student with the skills required for independent research.

The first course of the second semester, Middle Eastern Studies: Theory and Society (15 credits) links to research areas at the Centre for Advanced Middle Eastern Studies. This is followed, in the second half of the second semester, by courses in theory of science and/or research methods.

The first half of the third semester is elective, and the student can choose to apply for a field course (15 credits), internship course (15 credits), elective courses (15 credits) or exchange studies (30 credits, or 15 credits, if an exchange agreement with 15 credit option is available). The second half of the semester comprises a thematic profile course in Middle Eastern Studies. Students admitted to exchange studies for a full semester (30 credits) need to find the equivalent of at least 15 credits within the main field of study at the partner university.

The programme's final semester consists of a degree project within Middle Eastern Studies, 30 credits, with supervision and seminars.

*Additional information in appendix Programme overview SAMSE.*

## Degree

Degree titles

Degree of Master of Science (120 credits) in Middle Eastern Studies

Major: Middle Eastern Studies

*Filosofie masterexamen i mellanösternstudier*

*Huvudområde: Mellanösternstudier*

To be awarded a Degree of Master of Science within the programme requires the student to have completed the courses stated under "Course Information" or equivalent courses at another higher education institution.

## Requirements and Selection method

### Requirements

To be eligible for the programme the applicant must have the equivalent of a Swedish Bachelor's degree with a major (i.e. at least 90 ECTS credits) in a Social Sciences discipline or in History, Economic History, Economic Development, Area Studies, or equivalent.

A good command of English language both spoken and written, equivalent to English

B/6 (advanced) proficiency in the Swedish secondary system, is required. Equivalence assessments will be made according to national guidelines.

### **Selection method**

The applicant's estimated capacity to complete the programme is the primary criterion for selection. Students are selected on the basis of their previous study results (grades on courses and thesis in the Bachelor's degree), proficiency in English and a statement of purpose.

### **Other information**

Students who have previously studied corresponding courses within the programme can apply to have these credits transferred. English is the language of instruction, which means that teaching sessions and exams are conducted in English.

## Appendix

### Programme overview

Semester	Course	Course	Course	Course
1	Middle Eastern Studies: Introduction to Middle Eastern Studies, 15 credits		Theory of science and/or research methods, 15 credits	
2	Middle Eastern Studies: Theory and Society, 15 credits		Courses in theory of science and/or research methods, 15 credits	
3	Field course, 15 credits or Internship course, 15 credits or Elective courses, 15 credits or Exchange studies, 15 credits (if an exchange agreement with 15 credit option is available at the elective semester.)		Profile course in Middle Eastern Studies, 15 credits	
	OR Exchange studies, 30 credits, with at least 15 credits in Middle Eastern Studies as main field of studies			
4	Middle Eastern Studies: Master's degree project, 30 credits			