

Study Plan and Regulations for the Master of Arts in International Relations

October 2021

1 Purpose and Scope

This document lays out the specifications of the program Master of International Relations (MA), including the profile and learning outcomes, the structure of the curricula, program development, and the criteria for admission and conferment of a degree.

This study plan and regulations is applicable to all students pursuing the Master of International Relations starting on or after September 1, 2021. It pertains to the degree (MA) offered by WVPU which is accredited by the Agency for quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria in accordance with the Private Universities Act §2 and §3(1). The requirements for US-accredited degrees conferred by Webster University based in Saint Louis, USA may vary slightly. Students are encouraged to consult with their advisor for details.

2 Overview Table

Degree program name	International Relations (MA)
Common form name	Master of Arts in International Relations
Type of study program	Master degree program
Academic degree	Master of Arts (MA or M.A.)
Cycle (Bologna)	2
NQF-Level	VII
Organizational structure	International Relations Department
Workload (ECTS)	90
Regular study period	1.5 years, 3 semesters
Course weeks per semester	12
Language of study	English
Maximum intake per year	25
Study format	Full time
Entry points / dates	2 / begin winter/summer semesters
Beginning of the winter semester	August/September
Beginning of the summer semester	January/February
Internships	Encouraged, but not required
Study Abroad	Encouraged, but not required

3 Profile and Learning Outcomes

The Master of Arts in International Relations (MA) enables students to analyze the complexities and processes involved in world politics and international affairs. The program prepares students for leadership and service in the international diplomatic, professional, and academic communities and

to compete for positions in a governmental agency, an intergovernmental organization, a non-governmental organization, or a multinational corporation. This program is particularly suited for individuals seeking careers or advancement among the Vienna-based International Organizations (IAEA, UNOV, UNIDO, CTBTO, World Bank among others) and is also recommended for students planning to pursue a doctoral program or an academic career.

Stemming from a multitude of nations, International Relations students examine great powers politics, humanitarian issues, and the dynamics of the international political economy, learning how to employ competing theories, methods, and approaches. Coursework provides exposure to the key subfields of the discipline including International Security, European Integration, EU-Asia Relations, Terrorism and Energy Security and relevant issues such as globalization, human rights, humanitarian action, and economic development.

The Master of Arts in International Relations program prepares students to take on positions of leadership and responsibility in the public and private sectors, to take on roles as advocates as well as analysts, and navigate the sensitivities and complexities of international politics, diplomacy and foreign policy to advance their cause and benefit the public good thereby keenly matching WVPU's profile and objectives. Graduates of the Master of Arts in International Relations program are fully qualified for the degree they earned and are critical and adaptive thinkers capable of succeeding in a complex, changing and competitive labor market. The program's strong focus on research, methods, and analysis combined with frequent exposure to real-world cases ensures that its graduates are professionally ready to step in and make a difference and possess the academic background to pursue a terminal degree.

3.1 Learning Outcomes

Students who complete this program will be able to:

1. Explain and apply theories of international relations, predominantly realism, liberalism, constructivism, feminism, critical theory, sub-theories and other IR-specific models such as the rational actor or bureaucratic behavior models.
2. Apply qualitative and quantitative methods to answer cross-countries research questions based on scholarly literature reviews.
3. Critically analyze international events and issues and identify causal relationships between variables that explain political, economic, security political, military, and societal conflicts.
4. Demonstrate working knowledge of several subfields of the international relations disciplines and neighboring disciplines.
5. Analyze current political, diplomatic, economic and/or security crises of both global and regional scale and propose policy options from the perspective of various actors.
6. Demonstrate strong research skills incorporating knowledge of state-of-the-art scholarly research in several of the following fields: US Foreign Policy, European Integration, Asia-Pacific Studies, Energy Security, International Law, International Political Economy, Terrorism, International Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations, and more.
7. Demonstrate effective written communication skills and produce publishable research papers at a professional or scholarly level.

The Master of Arts in International Relations program learning outcomes align closely with those of [NQF Level VII](#)¹ in all areas of knowledge, skills, and competence.

		Master of Arts in International Relations Learning Outcomes						
		LO1	LO2	LO3	LO4	LO5	LO6	LO7
NQF Level-VII	Knowledge	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Skills	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Competencies		X		X			X

4 Curriculum Overview & Workload

The Master of Arts in International Relations curriculum is organized into four modules: Core Competencies (22.5 ECTS), of which all courses are required, a Clusters Module divided into International Politics (30 ECTS) and Comparative Politics (15 ECTS) of which the required ECTS may be earned from any of a short roster of pre-selected courses, and Electives (7.5 ECTS), whereby students may earn from a larger pool of pre-selected discipline-specific courses, and finally culminating in a thesis (15 ECTS). The total required workload is 90 ECTS in 10 courses plus the thesis.

Full-time students working toward the Master of Arts in International Relations will usually carry a course load of four courses per semester. For each course in the Master of Arts in International Relations program with the exception of the thesis, students attend 36 hours of courses and conduct approximately another 151.5 hours of self-learning. Students working toward the Master of Arts in International Relations (MA) can complete the program in a minimum of 3 semesters.

Full course descriptions, individual learning outcomes, details about ECTS, weekly study schedules, and assessment criteria are available in each course syllabus, available via WVPU's publicly accessible [course schedule](#)².

4.1 Curriculum Overview

4.1.1 Module 1: Core Competencies (22.5 ECTS)

Course	Type ³	Format ⁴	h/w	AT/SL	ECTS
INTL 5000 Introduction to International Relations ⁵	CC	IL	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5100 Research Methods and Perspectives	CC	IL	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5900 Advanced Research Methods	CC	IL	3/12	36/151.5	7.5

¹ https://www.qualifikationsregister.at/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/NQR_Infoblaetter_Deskriptoren7.pdf

² Available at: atlas.webster.ac.at/public/cp_pub.cfm

³ Types of courses include: Competency Courses (CC), Discipline Courses (DC), and Enrichment Courses (EC)

⁴ [IL] – Interactive Lecture, [SE] – Seminar, [PT] – Practical Training, [CO] – Colloquium, and [TH] – Thesis

⁵ Students with an undergraduate degree in International Relations may exchange this course with any from any of the other modules.

4.1.2 Module 2: Clusters (45 ECTS)

Students must select 6 courses in all with 4 from the International Politics Cluster and 2 from the Comparative Politics Cluster. The courses presented below are examples of classes offered in these clusters module. New courses may be added to the course catalogue with varying topics and sub-topics.

Module 2/Cluster 1: International Politics (min. 30 ECTS)

Course	Type	Format	h/w	AT/SL	ECTS
INTL 5510 Theories of International Relations	CC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5530 International Law	EC	IL	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5400 International Political Economy	EC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5540 International Organizations	CC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5550 War and Diplomacy	EC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5590 International Security	CC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5560 US Foreign Policy	EC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5860 Issues in International Politics: Energy and Environmental Security	EC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5860 Issues in International Politics: Monetary Relations	EC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5860 Issues in International Politics: The Emerging Field of Geoeconomics	EC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5870 International Law and Politics of Outer Space	EC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5890 Terrorism in World Politics	EC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5

Module 2/Cluster 2: Comparative Politics (min. 15 ECTS)

Course	Type	Format	h/w	AT/SL	ECTS
INTL 5050 Comparative Politics	EC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5580 Politics of Development	EC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5625 Middle East Area Studies	EC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5605 Topics in Comparative Politics: EU Foreign Policy	CC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5605 Topics in Comparative Politics: The European Union and Asia Pacific	CC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5605 Topics in Comparative Politics: The State and the Arts in the EU and the US	EC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5635 Western European Area Studies	EC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5645 Asian Area Studies	EC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5

4.1.3 Module 3: Electives (7.5 ECTS)

Students must earn 7.5 ECTS from any of the courses below or from the Cluster module.⁶ The below courses are to be understood as example courses and WVPU might only offer a selection of the

⁶ In addition to those listed, the following courses from other programs are accepted as meeting the Elective requirement: MRKT 5000 Marketing, MNGT 5590 Organizational Behavior, BUSN 5200 Basic Finance for Managers.

classes listed below while at the same time presenting new elective courses in the respective semesters.

Course	Type	Format	h/w	AT/SL	ECTS
INGO 5000 Non-Governmental Organizations	EC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5500 Professional Seminars	EC	PT	3/12	36/151.5	1-7.5
INTL 5610 Non-Thesis Readings/Research	EC	SE	3/12	36/151.5	7.5
INTL 5300 Field Work	EC	PT	-	varies	1-7.5
INTL 6500 Internship	EC	PT	-	varies	1-7.5

4.1.4 Module 4: Thesis (15 ECTS)

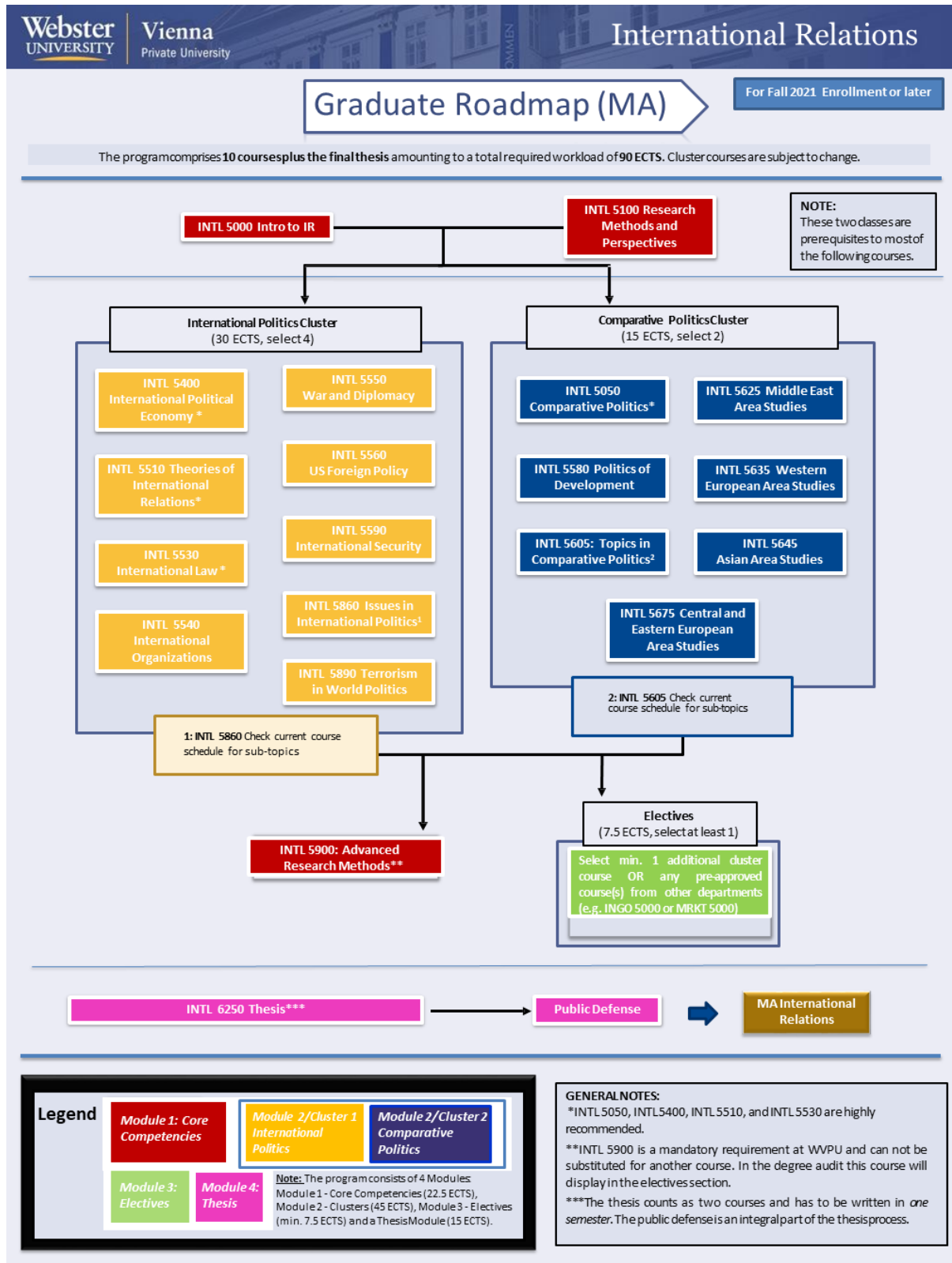
Course	Type	Format	h/w	AT/SL	ECTS
INTL 6250 Master Thesis	CC	TH	-	25/350	15

5 Roadmaps and Course Sequencing

While students working toward a Master of Arts in International Relations can complete the program in a minimum of 3 semesters, most students complete the program in 4 semesters. Graphical roadmaps for each program illustrate a typical student's progression through the degree, with special attention given to course sequencing within the major. Curriculum in this program develops as students progress through their studies. For that reason, adhering to prescribed course sequencing is an essential component to success. The course syllabus or WVPU's publicly accessible course schedule both list course prerequisites, if any.

Advisors are available to assist students with degree planning to help ensure proper course sequencing. Though most students will adhere to their respective program roadmap, advisors can help develop individualized degree plans when the situation warrants deviation from the roadmap. Advisors must approve all course registration requests before they are processed. Advisors also consult on issues related to academic and career goals, and university resources.

Roadmap for the Master of International Relations



6 Program Development and Enhancement

The Master of Arts in International Relations program is subject to WVPU's systematic [Internal Quality Management System](#)⁷ that incorporates continuous measures and involves the Executive Board, academic department heads, and the University Senate. This ensures that its learning outcomes and the content of its curriculum impart advanced knowledge in the discipline while delivering the skills and competencies requisite for a master's degree. WVPU's quality management processes include a triannual program review and assessment of learning outcomes, course evaluations, an annual review of academic policies and processes, semi-annual performance reviews with units and employees and collected stakeholder feedback through semi-annual meetings and surveys supported by the university's internal information systems.

Department faculty interview all incoming candidates of the MA in International Relations, allowing the department to directly assess the quality of candidates and thereby sustaining the high standards of the program. At the course level, each syllabus (including criteria and methods of assessment) is reviewed and approved by the department at least one semester prior to being published on the university's [course offerings website](#)⁸, ensuring that learning outcomes are clearly stated and appropriately paired to the course's content and assessment criteria. All students have access to the syllabus before the course begins, and in addition, faculty are required to review the syllabus on the first day of class. During the running of any course students interact with both the faculty member and the department's administration alerting them to any problems that might arise and triggering procedures based on academic policies and procedures, particularly with reference to disputes between students and faculty.⁹

The base selection of course offerings for any academic year is determined two years in advance through regular planning sessions. The process includes consultation with representatives of student government and incorporates additional student feedback through face-to-face meetings, town halls, and anonymous course evaluations. Teaching assignments pairing faculty to courses are completed one year in advance. Prior to assigning a course to a faculty member, the department head verifies the individual's qualifications and experience as an instructor. Students evaluate all first-time instructors in the third week of their course to provide feedback and allow for corrective measures if necessary.

Other continuous processes also play an important role in sustaining and enhancing the integrity of the program. All incoming Master of Arts in International Relations candidates are interviewed by members of the International Relations Department, allowing the department to directly assess the quality of candidates and thereby ensure that the high standards of the program are sustained. The head of the department meets monthly via video conference with counterpart degree program heads of Webster University and its campuses around the world not only to evaluate the program and suggest changes – thereby adding and shaping curricula and course content to meet WVPU student

⁷ A description of WVPU's Internal Quality Management System is available at: <https://webster.ac.at/academics/missionandvalues/quality-management.php>

⁸ Available at: atlas.webster.ac.at/public/cp_pub.cfm

⁹ See the Study and Examination Guidelines available at: https://webster.ac.at/documents/a14-examination_guidelines.pdf

needs and national regulations – but also to integrate experiences from around the world and coordinate program enhancement at all locations where elements of the degree program are taught.

7 Admission to the Study Program

Admission to the Master of Arts in International Relations program follows the [General Admission Requirements for Graduate Programs](#)¹⁰.

8 Supplementary Requirements for Conferment of the Degree

WVPU confers the academic degree of Master of Arts in International following the successful completion of all modules as stated in the *Curriculum Overview* and in accordance with the following rules:

1. Candidates must complete all modules (90 ECTS) as stated in the *Curriculum Overview*;
2. Students must successfully earn 75 ECTS in residence including all courses in Modules and a master thesis
3. All courses must be completed with a grade of B- or better.

The University reserves the right to approve and assign transferred credits as equivalencies to courses, which could result in fewer than 75 overall ECTS completed in residency.

9 WVPU Policies and Student Obligations

WVPU policies support and maintain the highest quality of education and service level for students. All students attending WVPU are obliged to adhere to university [academic policies](#), including the [Study and Examination Guidelines](#)¹¹ and the [Code of Conduct](#), available on the WVPU website.¹² Students are solely responsible for familiarizing themselves with all applicable university policies and procedures including those dictating academic standards.

Students are also fully responsible for managing their degree progress in compliance with the curriculum. This includes, but is not limited to: ensuring schedule accuracy each semester, adhering to all registration and payment deadlines, proactively addressing any issues that may interfere with degree progress, exclusively using the university assigned email address for all academic-related correspondence, and observing course-specific deadlines and policies.

WVPU retains the right to update policies and procedures. Students will be informed of any such changes in a timely manner.

¹⁰ Available at: https://webster.ac.at/documents/general_admission_requirements.pdf

¹¹ Available at: https://webster.ac.at/documents/a14-examination_guidelines.pdf

¹² <https://webster.ac.at/academics/academicpolicies.php>