Universität Basel

Philosophisch-Historische Fakultät

Degree Profile

Master in Near & Middle Eastern Studies

Organizational unit	Department of Social Sciences, Near & Middle Eastern Studies Section
Degree	MA Near & Middle Eastern Studies
Scope, Duration, Start	65 ECTS Major, 35 ECTS Minor; 4 semesters (if full time), fall and spring semester
Language of instruction	English

Program Goals

Students acquire in-depth interdisciplinary knowledge in the field of modern Middle Eastern history and politics. They learn social science methods and theories and how to combine these with the source-critical working methods of the humanities when analyzing topics related to the Islamic-Ottoman Middle East.

Program Characteristics

Orientation	Scientific-oriented education
Majors	–
Program structure	The students select a major (65 ECTS), a minor (35 ECTS) and free elective (20 ECTS). The curriculum consists of the following modules: Topics in Near & Middle Eastern Studies (8 ECTS); Advanced Near & Middle Eastern Studies (8 ECTS); Methods in Near & Middle Eastern Studies and Social Sciences (6 ECTS); Research in Near & Middle Eastern Studies (8 ECTS); Master's examination (5 ECTS); Master's thesis (30 KP, if Near & Middle Eastern Studies as Major).
Distinctive Features	The master's program in Near & Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Basel focuses on the complex issues of social and cultural continuities and ruptures in the former "Ottoman world" in Southeast Europe, Turkey, and the eastern Arab world, including Egypt. In addition, the program stands out in the field of Islamic and Middle Eastern studies due to its explicit regional focus and its scientific self-image as a historical social science.

Career Opportunities

Employment	Intercultural cooperation, integration/migration, aid agencies and international organizations, diplomatic service, journalism, civil service, business and banking, museums, publishing houses, libraries/archives/documentation centers, translation/interpreting (additional training required).
Further Studies	Doctorate

Teaching

Approaches	Excursions, research-oriented learning, interactive learning, literature research, internship, (supervised) self-study, language course, language practice.
Assessments	Written and oral examination, active participation in courses, seminar paper, master's examination.

Competences

Generic Attitude / Communication Approach / Management	Students acquire the skills to … – work critically with scientific research literature. – familiarize themselves independently and quickly with new disciplinary and methodological approaches, – work on questions and hypotheses, alone and in groups, using appropriate approaches and methods. – develop their own questions and research outlines and independently carry out projects from conception to communication. – present complex and systematic relationships scientifically and communicate them comprehensibly in writing and orally. – approach foreign cultures with critical openness. – defend their own findings against criticism, critically reflect on their own positions, and modify them if justified. – present scientific findings in writing and orally in a comprehensible manner to both a scientific audience and the general public, and defend them in discussions.
Subject-related Knowledge / Understanding Application / Judgment Interdisciplinarity	Students acquire the skills to … – understand and analyze the modern history of the Middle East. – identify and describe the political, historical, and cultural connections between Southeast Europe, Turkey, and the Eastern Arab world. – become familiar and proficient with the Arabic or Turkish language as well as with academic texts in English. – describe and apply social science methods, models, and theories comprehensively. – convey specialist knowledge to a broader public for the purpose of promoting an unbiased understanding of the Middle East region. – express well-considered opinions on current social issues in their own society, particularly on issues relating to Muslim migration, Islam as a political and religious phenomenon in modern societies, and the conflict-prone nature of the Middle East. – become familiar with academic research practices and actively participate in scientific discussion forums. – apply social science theories to the practical and analytical examination of social phenomena.

Learning Outcomes

Graduates of the master's program in Near & Middle Eastern Studies...

– are familiar with the historical developments of the Middle East from European expansion around 1500 to the present day and are able to apply this knowledge in detail to selected questions about the political and intellectual history of this region in the 19th and 20th centuries.
– can describe the constellations and problems of the modern Middle East from a social and cultural science perspective and independently draw further connections and relevance from this, as well as view the region of the Islamic-Ottoman-influenced Middle East in a dynamic, diverse, and global context.
– have good receptive and productive skills in Arabic or Turkish (reading and listening comprehension, written expression, oral expression) and are thus able to classify, translate, interpret, and discuss texts in Arabic and Turkish in their historical and sociocultural context.
– are able to use modern Arabic and Turkish independently as tools for historical and social science analysis of the Ottoman era in the eastern Mediterranean region, thereby broadening the current understanding of the Middle East and Islam through methodological and thematic links with related disciplines.
– are familiar with paradigmatic methods, practices, and ethical consequences of social research processes and theory formation, and are able to analyze and reflect on socio-political issues in the Middle East in a scientifically sound manner, with particular attention to current theoretical debates.
– are able to present acquired knowledge clearly and comprehensibly, both orally and in writing, using academic argumentation, and to communicate subject-specific content to non-academic audiences.
– are able to independently analyze large amounts of text in Arabic or Turkish within a specified time frame with regard to a thematic question and to work on larger corpora in the original language with guidance.
– are able to work with sources in the original language in accordance with academic standards and to address specific regional and subject-related questions in written form in English or German.