

2020–2021

MA International Studies Program Handbook



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MA International Studies Student Handbook

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Graduate Student Handbooks and the Graduate Catalog

This program handbook is intended as a resource guide for graduate students in the International Studies MA program, where you will find answers to frequently asked questions and helpful information.

However, the [Graduate Catalog](#) is considered the official representation of program requirements for all graduate programs at Chapman University. If a conflict between the information in this handbook and the Graduate Catalog arises, the information in the Graduate Catalog prevails.

The [Chapman University Graduate Student Handbook](#) is the location for graduate student academic policies, expectations, and helpful information as well as non-academic information, resources, and support. Important information will not be repeated here, and graduate students are encouraged to utilize both handbooks.

In addition to their program handbook, the Graduate Catalog, and the Graduate Student Handbook, all Wilkinson College graduate students are expected to adhere to the [The Student Code of Conduct](#).

If you have questions or need information that is not addressed in this handbook, you can seek guidance from the following individuals:

MA in International Studies Program Director

Dr. Crystal Murphy

(714) 628-2763

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Graduate Programs Coordinator

David Krausman

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Conditions of Accuracy

The information within this handbook is accurate as of the time of publication. Students are responsible for informing themselves of and satisfactorily meeting all requirements pertinent to their relationship with the University. Students and others who use this handbook should be aware that the information changes from time to time at the sole discretion of Chapman University and that these changes may alter information contained in this handbook. More current and complete information may be obtained in the appropriate department, school, or administrative offices. The University reserves the right, at any time and without notice, to make any changes to all rules, policies, procedures, and any other information that pertains to students or to the institution including, but not limited to, admission, registration, tuition and fees, attendance, curriculum requirements, conduct, academic standing, candidacy, and graduation. This handbook does not constitute a contract or terms or conditions of a contract between the student and Chapman University.

IN CASES OF CONFLICT BETWEEN THE HANDBOOK AND GRADUATE CATALOG

The [Graduate Catalog](#) is considered the official representation of program requirements for all graduate programs at Chapman University. If a conflict between the information in this handbook and the Graduate Catalog arises, the information in the Graduate Catalog prevails.

CURRENT INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES may be found on the [Institutional Policies at Chapman webpage](#). They include:

[Graduate Catalogs](#)

[Discrimination and Title IX](#)

[Religious Accommodations Policy](#)

[Sexual Misconduct, Sex Based/Gender Discrimination and Title IX](#)

[Student Code of Conduct](#)

[Student Complaint Procedures](#)

[Integrity in Research Policy](#)

[Inventions and Patents Policy](#)

[Accessibility Policy \(Web and Electronic Resources\)](#)

[Administering Online Surveys Involving Students, Faculty and Staff](#)

[Computer and Acceptable Use Policy](#)

[Copyrighted Works Policy](#)

[Records Retention and Destruction Policy](#)

[Reporting Misconduct](#)

[Smoking Policy](#)

[Student Privacy Policies \(FERPA\)](#)

[Electronic Records Accessibility Policy](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Personal Computer Support Policy](#)

Academic and Enrollment Policies can be found in the [Graduate Catalog](#), and contains the following university policies:

[Academic Integrity](#)

[Add/Drop/Withdrawal](#)

[Degree Conferral and Commencement](#)

[Grades/GPA/Incompletes](#)

[Grade Reviews](#)

[Leave of Absence](#)

[Petitions and Appeals](#)

[Probation and Dismissal](#)

[Repeating Courses/Course Audits](#)

[Thesis/Dissertation Committee and Comprehensive Exams](#)

[Transfer Credits/Residency Requirements](#)

Core Faculty

Dr. Deepa Badrinarayana, Professor of Law

(BA, LLB India University, Bangalore; LLM SJD, Pace University)

Research Interests: Environmental law, public health law, international trade, corporate social responsibility, South Asia

Dr. Victoria Carty, Associate Professor of Sociology

(BA, University of California at Santa Cruz; MA PhD, University of New Mexico)

Research Interests: Transnational social movements, immigration, public sociology

Dr. Claudia Fuentes-Julio

(BA, Universidad de Santiago de Chile; MA, University of Kent, England; PhD, University of Denver)

Research Interests: International/universal human rights, the global south, post-conflict transitions)

Dr. Lynn Horton, Associate Professor of Sociology

(BA, University of Virginia; MA, New York University; PhD, University of Texas at Austin)

Research Interests: Latin America, gender, development, qualitative methods, social movements

Dr. Minju Kwon, Associate Professor of Political Science

(BA, MA, Seoul National University; PhD, University of Notre Dame)

Research Interests: State and non-state actors' compliance with international law, International human rights, humanitarian law.

Dr. Nancy Martin, Associate Professor of Religious Studies

(BA, University of Puget Sound; MA, University of Chicago; PhD, University of California at Berkeley)

Research Interests: South Asia, world religions, global ethics, gender and religion

Dr. Andrea Molle, Assistant Professor of Political Science

(BA MA, University of Genoa; PhD, University of Milan)

Research Interests: East Asia, Europe, religious extremism, warfare and strategic studies

Dr. Crystal Murphy, Assistant Professor of Political Science

(BA, Vanguard University; MA, PhD University of California Irvine)

Research Interests: political economy, post-conflict development, NGOs, sustainability, Middle East and East Africa

Professor Prexy Nesbitt, Presidential Fellow in Peace Studies

Research Interests: Race relations in South Africa, race, multiculturalism and anti-racism and/or diversity in the US, African renaissance

Dr. Raymond Sfeir, Professor of Economics and Management Science

(BA, American University of Beirut; MA PhD, University of California at Santa Barbara)

Research Interests: International economics, applied econometrics, statistics, and forecasting

Dr. Tekle Woldemikael, Professor of Sociology

(BA, Addis Ababa University; MA PhD, Northwestern University)

Research Interests: Africa, nationalism, race and ethnicity, immigrants and refugees

Program Requirements

Students must complete 39 credits of academic work, enroll in 3 zero credit GUS 530 workshops, demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language equivalent to having completed two courses in the language at the 300 level, complete a 240-hour international internship and successfully complete a master's thesis.

Students pursuing the Master of Arts in International Studies degree are held to the University's Academic Policies and Procedures. In addition these specific degree standards apply:

- Minimum grade "C+" or above in all coursework
- Maintain 3.000 GPA in the degree
- Complete 39 credits
- Successfully complete and defend a master's thesis and six credits of IS 698 Thesis

The following courses make up the Master of Arts International Studies degree curriculum:

Required Courses (24 credits)

- IS 502 - Peace, Conflict and Human Rights (3 credits)
- IS 503 - Challenges of Development (3 credits)
- IS 505 - Research Design (3 credits)
- IS 511 - Economic Analysis for International Studies (3 credits)
- IS 512 - Global Political Economy (3 credits)
- IS 680 - Cultural Diversity/Ethnic (3 credits)
- IS 698 - Thesis (6 credits)

Five of the following elective courses (15 credits)

- HUM 500 - Anastamos Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Journal (0-1½ credits)*
- IS 501 - The Global Condition (3 credits)
- IS 507 - Issues in National Security (3 credits)
- IS 529 - Experimental Course (3 credits)
- IS 611 - The Environment and Sustainable Development (3 credits)
- IS 612 - Development Strategies and NGOs (3 credits)

- IS 620 - International Law and Organization (3 credits)
- IS 621 - International Regulation and Corporate Social Responsibility (3 credits)
- IS 633 - Social Movements: A Comparative Perspective (3 credits)
- IS 641 - Language, Identity and Power in Latin America (3 credits)
- IS 642 - Cultures of Violence and Resistance in Latin America (3 credits)

Additional Course Requirements

- GUS 530 - Three zero credit Graduate Student Workshops

Total Credits: 39

*HUM 500 must be taken twice for 1.5 credits to satisfy one 3 credit elective course.

Additional Elective Courses

Students are also permitted to enroll in graduate-level courses in other departments at Chapman University that have a significant international focus with the approval of the MAIS Program Director.

Examples include:

- BUS 686 - Building Cross-Cultural Business Competencies
- HIST 529 - War and Society Elective Course
- POSC 500 - US Presidents at War

Additionally, up to two travel courses may also be accepted for academic credit with prior approval from the MAIS Program Director. More information on travel courses is available online at the Center for [Global Education's page for faculty-led travel courses](#).

Language Requirement

All MAIS students must demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language equivalent to having completed two courses in the language at the 300 level. If a student has not yet achieved proficiency in a foreign language, they should make arrangements to improve their language skills as soon as possible upon entering the program. To gain language proficiency students may enroll in intensive language classes as part of their internships, enroll in or audit university language classes, and/or use online tutoring programs.

Students may document their proficiency in a foreign language in the following ways:

- Provide official transcripts to document that the student successfully completed two university foreign language courses at the 300-level or above
- Provide official transcripts to document that a student completed a high school and/or university degree in a foreign language
- Complete an American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) reading and writing assessment
- The program will reimburse the cost of the exams the first time a student takes it. Once the student has paid for the exam, please forward the receipt to the Graduate Programs Coordinator for reimbursement.
- If a student needs to take the ACTFL assessment more than once, they will be responsible for the fee of the retest.
- It may take up to 8 weeks to receive assessment results, so students are encouraged to take the test in semester 3 at the latest.
- Students looking to take an assessment would need to go to [ACTFL's Individual Site](#), enter Chapman University as the institution name, and go through the online ordering and payment process.

Internship Requirement

All students are expected to perform an international internship between their first and second year of study. These internships give students exposure to life and work overseas, while providing them an introduction into the field to which they aspire. For example, students who hope to pursue a career in the NGO arena will participate in an international internship with an NGO.

The intention of the internship requirement is for students to expand their global know-how and enhance professional skills through a 240-hour internship experience. MAIS students choose from a variety of international options the summer after their first year. Students may work with non-governmental organizations in Africa to help alleviate poverty, explore trade issues in eastern Asia, promote gender equality in Latin America, investigate human rights issues in Europe, or assist in developing policy briefs for the U.S. State Department. These internships and the interdisciplinary focus of the MAIS program, which links global theory and practice, prepare graduates for a wide range of international careers in non-profit humanitarian and development work, diplomacy, education, and business.

Identifying an Internship

Students should consider their personal academic and professional goals in identifying potential internship sites. Students may also wish to combine work on an internship with data collection for their MA thesis. It is important to start this process early as internships with well-known international and U.S. government institutions are highly competitive and have very early deadlines. Students may also contact organizations without established internship programs to see if an internship is possible. Examples of recent MAIS student internship sites include ActionAid, Red Cross, United Nations, and the U.S. Department of State.

A few websites that list opportunities for internships include [devex](#), [idealist](#), and [reliefweb](#). Additionally, students are encouraged to check with both the [Center for Global Education](#) and [Career Development Center](#) here on campus.

Internship Criteria

The MAIS internship should incorporate a substantial international focus and serve to enhance student global knowledge, professional skills, and experience in working multicultural environments. Students may undertake an internship outside of the United States or complete an internship with the U.S. if the work has a primary international focus.

Students need to complete a total of 240 hours in their internship. These hours are generally completed over a single six-week period of full-time work between the student's first and second year in the program. In some cases, students may choose to complete their 240 internship hours over a longer period of time so they are able to conduct research and experience the global location they are working in. The internship can either be volunteer or paid. Students do not register the internship for course credit as it is already part of their degree requirements.

Internship Approval and Reimbursement

Before departure for their summer internship students must complete several documents available through the [Center for Global Education's Global Gateway](#). From there, click "Apply Now" which will direct the student to log in with their Chapman username and password. Students will need to complete five questionnaires: FERPA, Flight Itinerary, Health Form, Internship Proposal, and Passport Information. In addition, students will need to sign five documents: ACE Travel Insurance Registration, Code of Conduct, Health Form Agreement, STEP Enrollment, and Waiver of Liability. The ACE Travel Insurance is required and the cost is covered by the university. The student application status in the Global Gateway **MUST** be marked as accepted prior to commencing the internship in order to fulfill program internship requirement.

The MAIS program will reimburse each student for **travel-related** expenses incurred during their internship, up to \$2,000 with submission of a MAIS Internship Reimbursement Application. After completion of their internship, students should request a letter from their internship supervisor confirming the dates and total number of hours worked. They should submit that letter to the Graduate Programs Coordinator, along with their flight, lodging, transportation, etc. receipts for reimbursement.

If students have questions about the administrative details of internships, they should contact the Graduate Programs Coordinator.

Suggested Timeline for the Internship

Semester 1: Student identifies and contacts potential internship programs.

Semester 2: When the student has been accepted into an internship they will need to complete the requisite documents and questionnaires in Chapman University's Global Gateway per the steps in the above section.

Semester 3: To receive academic credit for the internship, students should request documentation from their internship supervisor in the form of a letter confirming the internship dates and hours worked and should provide an evaluation of the student's performance.

Thesis Guidelines

Questions about the thesis guidelines should be addressed to the MAIS Program Director. Questions about an individual thesis should be addressed to the thesis advisor.

Thesis Requirements

- Enrollment in IS 698 Thesis
- MAIS thesis topics will have a substantial international focus and incorporate theoretical perspectives and insights. The thesis should be analytical, rather than purely descriptive.
- The thesis may analyze secondary data or original empirical data collected by students. Any fieldwork involving human subjects must be approved in advance by [Chapman's Institutional Review Board](#) (IRB).
- The thesis should be a minimum of 50 pages, not including endnotes and bibliography.
- The thesis must include a minimum of 20 academic sources of peer-reviewed journal articles and/or books.
- Students may include data from NGO, government and other reputable sources, but these will not substitute for academic sources.
- The thesis will be double-spaced with one-inch margins and will incorporate the MAIS template for the title and signature pages.
- Students may choose MLA, APA, or ASA as their thesis style, as long as the style is used correctly and consistently.

Thesis Format

The thesis formatting guidelines are available at Leatherby Libraries as the [MA/MS Thesis Checklist](#). For an MA Thesis, some guidelines are optional; check with the individual Thesis Director and the library's Dissertations and Theses Librarian with any specific questions about formatting.

Additional University Thesis Requirements

If a student does not complete their thesis during the semester in which they are completing 6 units of IS 698, that student must register for 1 credit of continuing enrollment (IS 698A Thesis Continuing Enrollment) to work with the thesis advisor, use other university resources, and complete the thesis in a subsequent term. Students must register for 1 credit in Interterm or Summer if the thesis is to be defended in that term.

Thesis Submission

After a successful thesis defense, students are responsible for collecting their advisor's and readers' approval signatures for final submission. The thesis must be submitted to Leatherby Libraries, for inclusion in the Chapman University Digital Commons and ProQuest Dissertations & Thesis Global database.

Students are required for degree conferral to submit an electronic copy of the thesis for inclusion in the Digital Commons and in ProQuest. There is no cost associated with submission. You may find the instructions for submission, the required checklists, and the Deadlines for Completion of Library Requirements on the Library's webpage for [thesis submission guidelines](#).

The Dissertations and Theses Librarian supports all graduate students in the submission of their theses to Leatherby Libraries. You may contact the librarian in person at Leatherby Libraries or via email with questions or for help.

Students wishing to embargo or restrict access to their thesis on ProQuest or Digital Commons should consult [Chapman University's Digital Commons FAQ](#).

Thesis Proposal

The proposal should include the following components:

1. Hypothesis to be tested or research question to be addressed Background and rationale of the study

- a. General background of the subject area
- b. Specific background for the topic of investigation
- c. Definitions of all key terms
- d. The hypothesis or research questions to be addressed

2. Significance of the research

3. Methodology

- a. Identify and justify the choice of general approach and specific research method
- b. Subjects (if applicable; describe them and your rationale for their selection)
- c. Methods
- d. Limitations

4. Annotated bibliography with a minimum of 15 peer-reviewed sources

Students submit their thesis proposal to their thesis committee for approval by Friday of week 10 of the first semester of IS 698 Thesis.

Suggested Timeline for the Thesis

Semester 1: Take Research Courses and Workshop(s)

In preparation for their MA thesis, students are required to attend a total of three research and professional

development workshops. Workshop topics may include:

- How to Write a Thesis
- Quantitative Research
- Qualitative Data Analysis
- Exploring Careers in...
(topics include non-profit sector, government employment, national security, etc.)

Semester 2: Preparation for Thesis and Thesis Proposal

During the second semester, the student takes IS 505 Research Design. They will review [MAIS core faculty research interests](#) and identify a potential MA thesis advisor. Students should meet with this faculty member to explore possible thesis topics and options for conducting fieldwork over the summer and/or winter break. Registration for IS 698 Thesis requires faculty approval and a permission number obtained from the faculty advisor/Graduate Programs Coordinator.

Working in consultation with their advisor, students develop a thesis proposal.

MA thesis fieldwork may include surveys, interviews, or observations. Students may apply for MAIS research funds of up to \$1500 to cover fieldwork expenses. Funding is also available through Chapman's Scholarly/Creative grants program for graduate students. If students plan to conduct any research involving human subjects, they will need to apply to Chapman's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. The IRB approval process can take 4 to 6 weeks and students are encouraged to submit their applications well in advance of planned travel to fieldwork sites.

Semester 3: Committee Formation

In semester 3, students enroll in their first three credits of IS 698 and consult with their thesis advisor to form a 3-person thesis committee consisting of an advisor (chair), a second reader, and a third reader. The thesis advisor must be a full-time MAIS core faculty member. Students may request to include one outside person, who is not a Chapman University faculty member, as their third reader with the approval of the faculty director and Program Director. Students must submit the Thesis Committee Form to the Program Director by Friday of week 3 of the semester in which they enroll in IS 698. Students are expected to complete their entire thesis process with the same committee chair and committee members. Any changes to the thesis committee must be approved by the MAIS Program Director.

Semester 4: Completion of MA Thesis

In semester 4, students take IS 698 Thesis for their remaining 3 required units. During this semester, students are required to meet with their thesis advisor at least once every two weeks and to submit thesis draft sections for review on a regular basis. Students complete an oral presentation of their thesis on a date to be scheduled between week 12 and week 14 of the semester. As part of these presentations, students answer questions about their theses posed by faculty. Students submit their thesis for review by their entire thesis committee by Friday of week 12 of the semester. Thesis committee members will indicate in writing their approval of thesis or if further revisions are needed.

Student Research and Conference Funding

MAIS Funding Opportunities

Students are strongly encouraged to apply to present their research at national and international conferences such as those held by the International Studies Association, Latin American Studies Association, and the African Studies Association. If a student has their paper accepted at a conference, they can apply for up to \$1500 in MAIS program funds to help cover costs of conference attendance and/or fieldwork conducted for the MA thesis.

Chapman University Student Scholarly/Creative Grants and Conference Travel Grants

In line with Chapman University's commitment to the scholarly and creative activities of its graduate students, Scholarly/Creative Activity Grants and Conference Travel Grants are offered on a competitive basis to all current graduate students. Graduate Student Scholarly/Creative Activity Grants are intended to provide support for a variety of clearly defined scholarly or creative projects. Graduate Student Conference Travel Grants are intended to provide support for graduate students to travel to academic conferences.

Scholarly/Creative Activity Grants require a proposal, budget, and a letter of support from the faculty mentoring the project. There is no limit on the number of scholarly/creative projects Wilkinson College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences will fund as long as the awards do not exceed the \$500 yearly cap per student. However, given multiple strong proposals, priority will be given to applicants who have received the least funding within the current fiscal year.

Students planning to present at a conference should complete the Conference Travel Grant Application. The deadline for submitting conference travel grant applications is rolling; applications can be submitted at any time prior to the conference. However, funds are limited so students are encouraged to apply as early as possible and can apply before booking travel.

To apply for a Scholarly/Creative Activity Grant or Conference Travel Grant, or for more information about the Graduate Student Grant program, the expenditure of grant funds, and the submission of reimbursement requests please contact the Wilkinson College Graduate Programs Coordinator.

Graduate Student Employment Opportunities

Each semester, a limited number of graduate students may be selected for student employment affiliated to the program. The two main categories related to our program are Graduate Assistantships (GShips), which are flat-rate, stipend-based positions, and Graduate Assistants (Hourly), who are paid by the hour.

Within the GShip category, there is one main type of positions for International Studies students: Graduate Research Assistantships (GRA). All Gships are governed by the GShip Manual; students on GShip typically work 19 hours per week. A Graduate Research Assistantships' principal function is to assist a faculty member with their scholarly, creative, teaching, or administrative activities.

Within the hourly Graduate Assistant category, Graduate Program Assistants aid the Program Director with public programming, marketing of the graduate program, and student recruitment. Graduate Assistants (Hourly) normally work 8-10 hours per week; students can inquire with the Graduate Programs Coordinator for the current rate of pay.

Students interested in GShip positions should inquire of the MA program director, who will coordinate with the university's Vice Provost for Graduate Education. GShips are determined well in advance of the semester and have additional eligibility criteria (see page 7 of the GShip Manual).

Additional hourly Graduate Assistant and student work opportunities are posted online through the [student employment office website](#). Positions are typically posted a couple weeks before the start of each semester but may become available at other times.

Sigma Iota Rho: International Studies Honor Society

The Honor Society for International Studies, Sigma Iota Rho was first established in 1984 and now claims over 100 chapters on campuses across the nation. The Chapman University chapter, Delta Mu, was established primarily as a means to honor those students who have excelled academically and have shown extracurricular achievement. The purpose of the society is to promote and reward scholarship and service among students of International Studies, and to foster integrity and creative performance in the understanding of world affairs.

Membership Requirements

A student must:

- Be a Master's candidate for International Studies who has completed at least one semester of graduate graduate-level work; or
- An undergraduate with junior or senior standing who has completed at least twenty-one (21) units of coursework in anthropology, economics, foreign languages, history, peace studies, political science, or related disciplines, including two courses at the 300 or 400 level.
- Achieve and maintain GPA of 3.3
- Pay national dues of \$45.00

Benefits of Sigma Iota Rho Membership

- Opportunity to attend conferences at the United Nations, World Bank and more
- Opportunity to receive research and travel grant funding
- Access to professional networks
- Certificate attesting membership status Sigma Iota Rho lapel pin
- Copy of the latest issue of the nationally distributed Journal of International Relations, with an opportunity for contribution to the journal as an author or an editor
- Free chapter subscription to the Internationalist magazine
- Graduation regalia: honor cord (included) or stole (discounted purchase)
- Along with the tangible list of benefits surely come such things as life-long relationships, personal growth, development and realization of the leadership potential, opportunities to deepen one's understanding of international affairs.

For more information about the honor society, students can contact the MAIS Program Director or visit the [national website](#).

Frequently Asked Questions

What should I do to make sure I'm on course to graduate?

Use the [Program Evaluation](#) on My Chapman Self Service Portal to plan your courses. Review your Program Evaluation on a regular basis. Prior to the semester in which you will complete your degree requirements, use My Chapman Self Service Portal to fill out and submit an [Application for Degree Conferral](#).

Who is my advisor?

The MAIS Program Director is the official academic advisor for all graduate students. This includes advising on course requirements, internship selection and the like. All other members of the [program core faculty](#) can provide additional mentoring on intellectual and professional pursuits.

Before the end of the first year, students should request a Thesis Advisor whose interests and expertise are in the area of the student's interest. The thesis advisor is the instructor of record for the two semesters of thesis coursework and is the first reader of their students' theses.

The course requirements have changed since I arrived. Which requirements do I need to fulfill?

The set of requirements you need to fulfill is determined by the graduate catalog of the year you enrolled. Your My Chapman Self Service Portal Program Evaluation will indicate which catalog year you are when you view it as a PDF. The graduate catalogs can be accessed [online](#).

May I switch to the requirements of a newer catalog?

You may switch to a newer catalog by filling out the Change of Major form, available on the Office of the University Registrar website and submitting it to the MAIS Program Director for signature.

Why won't My Chapman Self Service Portal allow me to enroll in a course?

My Chapman Self Service Portal blocks registration when a class has reached its enrollment limit, when prerequisites have not been met, when a business hold is in place, or when enrollment requires faculty approval (e.g. thesis writing courses). Enrollment limits and prerequisites may be waived in specific situations, if the professor feels it is warranted. In these cases, you need to secure the professor's consent to enroll, and contact the Graduate Programs Coordinator. Business holds need to be resolved with the Student Business Services Office.

I'm an accelerated student. How do I register for graduate courses during my senior year of undergraduate studies?

Please use the [Undergraduate Request to Register for Graduate Course Form](#).

How do I add a course that has been closed in My Chapman Self Service Portal?

Once the semester begins, My Chapman Self Service Portal blocks enrollment in all courses that have reached their enrollment caps, even if seats are subsequently freed up. To add a course that has been closed, you will need to secure the professor's consent to enroll, and contact the Graduate Programs Coordinator.

How do I develop and register for an Independent Study or Reading and Conference course?

If you wish to do an Independent Study or Reading and Conference course with a member of the graduate faculty, you should contact that faculty member directly to discuss the possibility. Once you and a faculty member have agreed on an Independent Study or Independent Research course, you will need to fill out the [Individual Study and Research Form](#), develop a course description, course learning outcomes, and submit all documents to the Office of the Registrar. The Department Course Subject is IS, the course number 599.

Is it possible to substitute another course for a required course?

Substitutions are allowed when there is a compelling reason why the required course cannot be taken or why the substituted course would be of greater benefit to the student. Substituted courses should be comparable in rigor and content to the required course. To substitute one course for another, please contact the MAIS Program Director.

What is the policy for receiving an incomplete?

According to university policy, incompletes can be given only if extenuating circumstances prevent a student from completing a small portion of the assigned coursework. Please see the [Academic Policy for Grades/GPA/Incompletes](#) for more information.

What if I need to take a leave of absence?

A student can take a one-semester leave without making a formal request. The student should inform the Program Director and the Graduate Programs Coordinator.

If you need to interrupt progress toward your degree for more than one semester, a leave of absence may be granted. Leaves of absence can be granted for one year, with a possible renewal of one additional year. To apply for a leave of absence, the student must fill out and submit a [Graduate Petition form](#), as well as a written statement spelling out the reasons for the leave and bearing the signatures of the Program Director and an Associate Dean of Wilkinson College (which the Graduate Programs Coordinator can assist with). If interrupting enrollment before the end of the academic term, the student must also follow the steps to withdraw from your courses. A leave of absence cannot be approved retroactively.

If a student leaves the university in good academic standing or on academic probation and is absent no more than four consecutive regular semesters (excluding interterm and summer sessions), the student will not need to re-apply and may enroll for classes at Chapman, and retain the right to elect either degree requirements in effect for that student at the time of leaving Chapman or the degree requirements in effect at the time of re-entrance.

If a student leaves the university in good standing and is gone more than four consecutive semesters, the student will not need to re-apply, may re-enroll for classes at Chapman, and will be assigned the catalog requirements in effect at the time the student returns to Chapman. Students may request to return to their original catalog, and that request will be reviewed and decided upon by the Department or School; decision by the departments or School is final.

Any graduate student who has broken enrollment for a period of more than one semester (interterm and summer sessions do not constitute a semester) without receiving an approved Leave of Absence is required to request re-enrollment through the Department. The student is held to the degree requirements in effect at the time of return unless approved for the original catalog year requirements by the Program Director or Associate Dean.

Note that graduate students must complete their degree requirements within seven years of first matriculating. Leaves of absence do not suspend or extend this seven-year clock.

For more information about interrupting enrollment, see the [Interrupted Enrollment guidelines](#).

How do I apply for a leave of absence?

The student must fill out and submit a [Graduate Petition form](#), as well as a written statement spelling out the reasons for the leave and bearing the signatures of the Program Director as well as an Associate Dean of Wilkinson College, which the Graduate Programs Coordinator can assist with. If you are interrupting enrollment before the end of the term, you must also follow the steps to withdraw from your courses. Please note that leaves of absence cannot be approved retroactively.

Can I receive transfer credit for coursework taken during a leave of absence?

In some cases, transfer credit may be awarded. To receive transfer credit, you must provide transcripts to the Registrar's Office prior to re-enrollment. Please note unsatisfactory performance may nullify re-enrollment.

What if I need extra time to complete my thesis after finishing my coursework?

Students who need extra time to finish their theses may continue working on their thesis by enrolling in IS 698A Thesis Continuation for 1 credit or IS 698B for each additional semester. The continuous enrollment course allows students to remain in active status and retain access to university resources. Students electing not to enroll in the continuous enrollment course will lose active status and library privileges unless they make special arrangements. Whether active or inactive, however, no student may take longer than seven years from the time of first enrollment to complete all the requirements for their degree.

What if I file an Application for Degree Conferral but become unable to finish in time?

If you have applied for your degree and will not be able to complete some aspect of your program (e.g., coursework, thesis), you need to send an email to conferral@chapman.edu and request that your graduation date be moved to a later time.

When are graduation exercises?

The schedule of commencement ceremonies and events schedule is available online on the [graduation home page](#).

How do I buy academic regalia for graduation?

Once you submit your Application for Degree Conferral (via My Chapman Self Service Portal), you will be added to an email notification list that will advise you of the deadlines for walking in the graduation ceremony and the process for buying robes and hoods. If you have any questions, please contact the commencement team at (714) 997-6740 or commencement@chapman.edu.



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