

**DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
MASTER OF ARTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES  
University of Michigan**

The Center for Southeast Asian Studies awards a master's degree for interdisciplinary studies concentrating on Southeast Asia. A sample course sequence follows the list of requirements.

Three distinct types of requirements must be satisfied to earn the master's degree: area course work, area language and a master's essay pertaining to the area.

**I. AREA COURSE WORK: A minimum of twenty-five semester hours of graduate credit for courses on the area is required.**

- A. In most departments, courses numbered 400 or above carry graduate credit, but there are some exceptions in which 400-level courses do not carry graduate credit. The student is responsible for ascertaining from the department or instructor that a particular course carries graduate credit.
- B. A course is considered to be a Southeast Asia studies course if at least one-third of the student's effort in the course relates to Southeast Asia. The course instructor will determine whether a course meets this criterion where the course title or syllabus does not make this obvious. The student is responsible for ascertaining from the instructor that this criterion is met. The student must obtain an [MA Degree Credit Special Request Form](#) from the center and return it with the appropriate explanation and signatures.
- C. The twenty-five hours of area course work must include SEAS 501, Introduction to Southeast Asian Studies, as well as courses taken in at least three different disciplines. In addition, students are required to take a one credit course, SEAS 502, SEA Research Prospectus, in the semester after taking SEAS 501. In this course, supervised by the associate director of the Center, students will develop their research ideas for their master's essay, and will draft a research proposal of 5 pages that will describe the topic, methods, and provide a bibliography.
- D. At least four of the courses used to meet the credit requirements must be primarily or exclusively for graduate students (usually these are at least 500-level courses) and must carry at least three semester hours credit each. One of these must include a substantial research writing component (usually at least a 600-level course). Additionally, one course must focus on methodology or research design. Normally, one methodology/research design course must be taken during the first or second semester, with the approval of the director or associate director.
- E. Only one non-language independent study course may be taken as part of the 25 credits. (See paragraph III. C. for one way to utilize this independent study.) Students must petition the associate director of the Center for permission to take additional independent studies. A directed readings course in a language of the region used to fulfill the requirements of the Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowship for an advanced language course beyond fourth year will be counted as a language independent study, and is not subject to this limit.

**II. LANGUAGE: The equivalent of second-year competence in an area language is required.**

- A. The language requirement can be fulfilled by completing the intermediate level course in a language from the student's area of concentration or by demonstrating the equivalent language competence. The appropriate Center faculty associate in the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures is responsible for assessing whether a student has the necessary language competence in instances where the student does not enroll in an intermediate level language course.

- B. Course credits earned in either elementary or intermediate level language courses are undergraduate credits, and hence these do not count toward meeting the area course work requirement.
- C. Course credits earned in advanced language courses (at least 400-level) are graduate credits, and these can be used to count for the area course work requirement. A maximum of six (6) credits of the 25 required can be earned in advanced language courses.

**III. MASTER'S ESSAY: A substantial research paper approved by two faculty members is required.**

- A. The master's essay is the product of an individual research project with professionally significant results. The work should achieve the quality of a publishable academic article or set of articles. By the beginning of the second year, the student is expected to have developed a relationship with a Center faculty associate who will serve as the student's essay advisor. The research and writing is done under the supervision of the essay advisor, who serves as the primary reader. Both the primary reader and one other faculty member must approve the final written work, and the student is expected to work with both readers to determine the topic, methods, content, and format of the essay.
- B. The essay should be a minimum of 30 pages, in consultation with/subject to approval of the thesis supervisor. The draft prospectus for the thesis, developed during the SEAS 502, SEA Research Prospectus (described under Area Course Work I.C.), must be approved by the advisor before thesis research can commence. Once the essay is complete, a [Master's Essay/Thesis Reader's Form](#) must be completed and submitted to the Center with a bound, clean, unmarked copy of the approved thesis.
- C. You may elect to enroll in an independent research or directed reading course closely related to the work on the master's essay. This course can carry graduate credit that will count towards the area course work requirement, and is typically taken the semester before the term in which the student plans to complete the essay.
- D. After the first year in residence, students will be required to meet the director or associate director at least once per semester to review progress towards completion of the essay.
- E. During the semester that the essay is being completed, you must enroll in SEAS 798, MA Essay in Southeast Asian Studies for 1-6 credits. These credits do NOT count toward your area total of 25. The number of credits is determined in consultation with your essay advisor.
- F. Normally, graduating students will present their essay at a public presentation held in late March or early April of the student's second year in residence.
- G. In rare instances, the essay may be waived with the permission of the student's academic advisor and the director. The student must have completed 30 hours of area course work including two courses requiring a substantial research writing component. The student must submit a letter of request and explanation to the advisor. The advisor then submits the student's letter and a letter of agreement to the associate director. The associate director will inform the student's advisor and the student if the waiver is granted. The initial request should be submitted no later than the semester prior to the semester in which the student plans to graduate.

### SAMPLE COURSE SEQUENCE

This sample course sequence incorporates the degree requirements listed above; it is an example only. The flexible nature of the degree allows students to choose between courses from a variety of departments.

Year 1	Fall Term		Credit
	SEAS 501	Introduction to Southeast Asian Studies (required)	3
	History 698	Problems in Early Southeast Asian History	3
	Asian 480 or History 452	Topics in Southeast Asian Studies (changes each term) Or Late Colonial Southeast Asia 1780-1942	3
	Asianlan	First Year Language I (4 uncountable credits)	-
	<b>Winter Term</b>		
	History 453	Post- Colonial Southeast Asia 1942-2000	3
	Dept. of choice	A methodology or research design course (required, with course approval of Director or Associate Director)	3
	SEAS 502	SEA Research Prospectus (required)	1
	Asianlan	First Year Language II (4 uncountable credits)	-
Year 2	Fall Term		
	Advisor Dept.	Independent Research or Directed Readings	3
	Urban Planning 658 Or Asian 550 Or Strategy 584	Urban & Regional Planning in Developing Countries Or Cultural and Comparative Studies of Asia Or Business in Asia (has a 1.5 credit course prerequisite)	3
	Asianlan	Second Year Language I (4 uncountable credits)	-
	<b>Winter Term</b>		
	SEAS 798	MA Essay Southeast Asian Studies (1-6 credits, uncountable)	-
	Poli. Sci. 677	Proseminar in Southeast Asian Politics	3
	Asianlan	Second Year Language II (4 uncountable credits)	-
	<b>Total Credits toward MA</b>		<b>25</b>