



The Paul H. Nitze
School of Advanced
International Studies

JOHNS HOPKINS
UNIVERSITY

European Studies | M.A. Academic Requirements

Students concentrating in European Studies are required to pass three Comprehensive exams by the end of the two years (though they are encouraged to pass them as early as possible): Modern European History and Ideas (1600–1945), Pan European Political Economies (Post-1945) and Europe in the World Since 1945. The first two substitute for SAIS's Core exam requirements in **Evolution of the International System** and **Comparative National Systems**, and thus European Studies concentrators need not take any core exams if they take the three European Comprehensive exams.

The European Comprehensive examinations are based on the **European Studies Syllabus** (click to download ([MS Word](#) | [Adobe PDF](#)) link), which sets out the topics and offers a bibliography for each of the Comprehensive examinations. There are no required courses, except a country course requirement (chosen from Britain, France, Germany, and Italy). Incoming students are expected to prepare themselves through whatever combination of courses and independent reading suits their particular interests and previous education. However, candidates should consult with their faculty adviser.

The Comprehensive examinations are as follows:

COMP I – Modern European History and Ideas (1600-1945)

Students without a strong background in European history should take the specialized history Core course **Evolution of the International System**. This is offered in the second semester in Bologna, and a comparable course is also offered in Washington in the first semester. Although European Studies concentrators must pass COMP I, they need not take the Core course for credit. Those with a strong background in history may wish to opt for more advanced or specialized courses in history or political ideas, and then prepare for COMP I using the European Studies syllabus, preferably also auditing the Core course.

COMP II – Pan European Political Economies (post-1945)

COMP II encompasses the domestic political economies of the four major West European nation states, the European Union and European integration generally, the problems of transition in Central and Eastern Europe – including Russia, and Europe's relations with the American and global economies. The Bologna course, **West European Political Economies**, is strongly recommended to prepare for COMP II, along with **The Political Economy of Transition in Central and Eastern Europe**, offered in Washington. Normally, candidates attempt this Comprehensive exam in the fall or winter of their second year.

COMP III – Europe and the World Since 1945

Europe in the Cold War is offered in Bologna, and numerous courses offered in Bologna and Washington cover the post-Cold War years. All European Studies concentrators should take at least one country course from among those listed for Britain, France, Germany, and Italy. Germany and Italy are offered in Bologna, Britain and France in Washington. There are also several other country and regional courses.

[Click here for old COMP exams](#)

Besides courses related to preparation for the comprehensive exams, numerous other courses are offered in Bologna and Washington on Europe's history, foreign policy, political culture and ideas, and political economy. A joint Bologna/Washington Research Seminar is also offered in the second semester at both campuses for Ph.D students and a few MA candidates willing to write a major term paper.

Course Offerings in Bologna

Course Offerings in Washington

General Course Requirements

Sixteen course credits are normally required for the M.A. degree. M.A. students thus usually take four courses per semester, plus a language course. In addition, every student must concentrate in two fields, one of which must be International Economics.

International Economics

Economics forms a significant part of every SAIS student's course of study. Every M.A. student should have completed the basic economic sequence (Microeconomic Theory, Macroeconomic Theory, International Trade Theory, International Monetary Theory) in the first three semesters, or in the first two semesters for those who already qualify for Micro and Macro. In addition, M.A. candidates are required to take two advanced courses in economics by the end of their second year.

Reasonable knowledge of economics is highly useful for several courses in European Studies. Moreover, because of the program's highly interdisciplinary character, students usually find European Studies courses helpful in economic theory courses. There are also a number of economics courses that are cross-listed with European Studies, for example, **European Economic History** and **European Economic Integration**, which are offered in Bologna.

Language Requirements

European Studies candidates are required to pass a language proficiency examination by the end of their second year, preferably in French or German. For those interested in a Ph.D., both French and German are normally required. Candidates who have already qualified for French or German have a wide range of options in other languages in both Bologna and Washington.

M.A. Oral Examination

At the end of the second year, all SAIS M.A. candidates must pass an oral examination in their primary concentration and International Economics. Students may not take the M.A. oral until they have passed core examinations, fulfilled certain program requirements and received credit for 16 courses. Candidates submit in advance a brief paper with a topic they are prepared to discuss.

Candidates in European Studies are asked to discuss contemporary European issues in the light of their historical, institutional, political and economic settings. Participation in the non-credit newspaper seminar and at the various evening lectures on contemporary European political and economic issues is an excellent way to prepare for the oral.

For the economics part of the oral, candidates are required to demonstrate a broad understanding of international economic theory and its practical application. Majors in European Studies are expected to relate economic theory to contemporary European economic issues.

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