

International studies deals with relations among states within the international system, including the roles of state and non-state actors (NGOs). An education focused on international studies emphasizes an interdisciplinary approach that teaches students to think critically about international political, economic, cultural, and business processes, while also allowing students to immerse themselves in the politics, culture, and history of different parts of the world.

THE PROGRAM

The program in international studies at Virginia Wesleyan offers three tracks of study: international politics, international business, or international cultural studies. The program provides students the opportunity to explore the world and its cultures both inside and outside of the classroom. Virginia Wesleyan University, located in the international port of Hampton Roads, allows students to gain international intern experiences without ever having to leave the region. Intergovernmental organizations including the United Nations and NATO, Virginia Port Authority, and Virginia International Terminals have offices close by, as do national intelligence, security, and military branches of the government.

THE MAJOR

International studies majors complete a minimum of 54 semester hours in specified coursework in addition to an internship or study abroad experience. The classroom experience is supplemented by both long-term and short-term study abroad, as well as internship opportunities, bridging classroom knowledge with real-life international experiences. Virginia Wesleyan provides students with opportunities to study at academic institutions around the world. VWU has direct exchange programs that send students abroad to countries such as Italy, Germany, Mexico, Japan, and Spain. Many students study abroad with no additional cost beyond tuition by obtaining scholarships offered through the University's Global Scholars Program.

THE COURSES

Classes at Virginia Wesleyan are small and interactive. Some of the courses within the international studies major include: International Law and Organizations, World Religions, International Political Economy, Micro and Macroeconomics, American Foreign Policy, Globalization and Its Discontents, European Union in World Politics, and International Human Rights. In addition, students are encouraged to pursue foreign language studies as a complement to their coursework.

INTERNSHIPS/UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

Through the Senior Capstone Experience (SIE), international studies majors will complete 12 hours of either foreign language study, study abroad experience or an internship experience completed locally or abroad. Internships and study abroad allow students to gain supervised experience in applying knowledge from the major in real-world settings and in developing the professional skills, providing students with the opportunity to expand their intellectual and cultural horizons.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

The skills that students gain through the international studies program enable students to pursue careers in a wide array of areas, including international work with governments, with non-governmental organizations, and in international business. Outside of the classroom, Virginia Wesleyan students actively participate in simulations, including Model United Nations. Students routinely travel nationally and internationally to participate in these simulations. In addition, a number of graduates seek postgraduate degrees such as J.D., M.A., Ph.D., and M.B.A. degrees.

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