International Development Studies: Master’s
Collaborative Specialization

Since 1991 International Development Studies (IDS) at Guelph has successfully linked together various discipline-based Master’s programs on campus to provide a focal point for graduate teaching and research on international development topics. Students and faculty from different disciplines study the contemporary problems of poverty and inequality, as well as long-term change and cross-cultural comparisons, through a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches. Our faculty has expertise in a wide range of development-related areas such as international political economy, food security, environment and development, and gender.

Admission Requirements

Students enter IDS through a primary program. The most popular programs selected have been Political Science; Sociology/Anthropology; Geography; Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics; Economics; History; Capacity Development and Extension; Rural Planning and Development; Latin American & Caribbean Studies; Public Health; and Engineering. Prospective students must first meet specific program admission requirements. IDS applicants must demonstrate familiarity with the social sciences: they should have completed two courses in economics (micro and macro-economics), one course of sociological or political theory, and an empirical methodology course.

Degree Requirements

Students in our collaborative specialization Master’s complete the requirements for the departmental degree (most departments have requirements tailored to IDS) plus the IDS component. The latter includes an interdisciplinary seminar and one course each from politics, sociology/anthropology, geography and economics. We regularly offer about a dozen development-related courses such as The Politics of Development and Underdevelopment, Gender and Development, Development Geography, Agriculture in Economic Development and Communications for Social, Environmental Change, and Economic Development In Historical Perspective. Most primary programs offer both a coursework plus major paper/project or a thesis option that typically involves student field research and practice.

Our Students

Our students represent a wide diversity in cultural and academic backgrounds. We have students from Canada, from other OECD countries and from all parts of the global South. Most entrants to the specialization have already travelled or worked internationally. Typically, they share one or more of three goals: an academic interest in better understanding the sources of international inequality, (under-)development and the process and strategies for change; the acquisition of specific knowledge in order to enter the field of international development; and mid-career education/training in the development field. Our graduates hold positions in government in Canada and abroad with NGOs, international organizations and private consultancies. Many enter PhD programs.

The IDS Master’s specialization provides an interdisciplinary framework for the study of international development that combines training in a selected academic discipline with exposure to a broad range of social science perspectives. The joint MA, MSc or MEng degree with a specialization in “International Development Studies” gives extra flexibility on the job market while permitting disciplinary specialization required by most PhD programs.

CONTACT INFORMATION:
If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email us at: ids@uoguelph.ca
International Development Studies (IDS) at Guelph offers a PhD specialization that is a first of its kind in Canada. Based on the successful model of the Master’s specialization, IDS links together discipline-based PhD programs to provide a focal point for advanced research on international development issues. Based on the experience of faculty advisors in key primary programs, the collaborative specialization focuses on issues arising in international political economy, food security, environment and development, and other interdisciplinary cutting-edge topics in development.

Admission Requirements

Students enter IDS through a collaborating specialization with a PhD program (at present Sociology; Geography; Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics; Economics; Engineering; Political Science; Population Medicine; etc.) In addition to meeting specific program admission requirements, IDS applicants are expected to have a strong background in the social sciences, experience in development research and/or development practice, and a stated research interest relating to international development.

Degree Requirements

Our PhD students complete requirements for the departmental degree as well as the IDS components. The latter include an interdisciplinary course on theories and debates, and a course dealing with development research methods and practice. It is expected that the students’ PhD research will bridge two or more disciplines in a way that relates to the field of international development studies.

Our Students

Students suited to the collaborative specialization will have a demonstrable track record of intellectual or practical engagement with issues arising in some area of international development. The collaborative specialization allows Canadian and international students to pursue development-related doctoral research associated with their discipline and prepares them for academic careers and/or careers in the field of development practice.

The collaborative PhD specialization in IDS provides an opportunity for advanced students to engage with interdisciplinary development theories and to conduct research on international development. The PhD degree adds the specialization of “International Development Studies” to a program, discipline-based degree. This combination provides the necessary disciplinary qualifications for the academic job market as well as the interdisciplinary breadth required for development policy and practice.

Contact Information:

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email us at: ids@uoguelph.ca