

Stanford | Program in Global Studies | International Relations



About IR

International Relations (IR) is an interdisciplinary undergraduate major that studies the interaction of actors in international politics, including states and non-state actors, such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, Amnesty International, and other NGOs. Topics of study include foreign policy; international conflict and negotiation; war, peace, and international security; terrorism; international trade and economics; human rights, ethics, and humanitarianism; climate change and environmental issues; among others. The major's broad scope requires an interdisciplinary approach, drawing upon the fields of political science, economics, history, sociology, data science, law, foreign languages, and other fields.

The purpose of the program is to provide students with both foundational skills and specific knowledge necessary to analyze contemporary international relations. The major prepares students for a variety of careers—both domestic and international—in government, non-governmental organizations, and business. In addition, many IR students go on to pursue graduate study in law, business, economics, political science, or public policy.

Major

IR majors are required to take a set of core courses in political science, economics, history, and statistics; complete a primary and a secondary specialization; demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language; and complete a quarter of study abroad through the Bing Overseas Studies Program or a pre-approved non-Stanford program.

Specializations:

- Comparative International Governance
- Economic Development/ World Economy
- International History and Culture
- International Security
- Social Development and Human Well-Being
- Environment, Energy, and Natural Resources
- Africa
- East and South Asia
- Europe (East and West) and Russia
- Latin American and Iberian Studies
- Middle East and Central Asia



Minor

Students complete the IR minor by taking one core course in political science, four courses in a chosen specialization, and one IR elective for a total of 30 units.

Honors Program

The IR honors program offers qualified students the opportunity to conduct a major independent research project under faculty guidance. For a list of our past honors students and their thesis topics, please visit internationalrelations.stanford.edu/people/honors-students.