Contact Information
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Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Master of Arts in Asian Studies
(with focus in South Asian or Middle Eastern studies)
The Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (CSAMES) promotes research and scholarship in South Asia and Middle East. CSAMES was designated a National Resource Center (Title VI) 2006-2010 by the US Department of Education for the study and teaching of Middle East, enabling us to further strengthen our commitment to an academic inquiry into a region that is home to some of the world’s oldest religions and civilizations.

Housed in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, CSAMES administers the South Asian and Middle Eastern concentration of the MA in Asian Studies, which is offered through the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures.

The MA program provides basic preparation in language and area training for students intending either to continue in a PhD program in a related field or to enter a career not requiring a doctorate.

Who can apply
We admit graduate students with diverse academic backgrounds, both in terms of their disciplinary training and the geographical focus of their research. We offer advising and academic support to students by working closely with more than a dozen departments and affiliated faculty of over eighty members, who bring to the Center their expertise and diverse areas of interest.

Some of the disciplines that CSAMES faculty are associated with are contemporary and historical studies of South Asia and Middle East, and inquiries into such topics as religious and social identities, cultural values, literary expression, urbanization, politics and gender. Our students specialize in either South Asian Studies or Middle Eastern Studies.

Prospective students can write to the department or to any of the affiliated faculty members with questions about the program, courses, admission details, language requirements, etc. Brief bios and contact details of our current MA students are also posted on our website (www.csames.illinois.edu). We strongly encourage applicants to get in touch with them to get a better idea about the Center.

Financial support
Graduate students are encouraged to apply for FLAS Fellowships and assistantships in other departments.

Admissions requirements
Applicants for admission must meet the minimum standards established by the Graduate College for graduate study at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, but final selection is determined by a CSAMES committee. Applicants must submit:

- The application form
- A statement of purpose
- Full transcripts of undergraduate and graduate work
- A writing sample
- GRE scores (verbal, mathematical, and analytical)
- Three letters of reference completed by teachers, advisors, or recent employers
- TOEFL scores

Applicants are expected to have a strong background in at least one South Asian or Middle Eastern language; normally, this means a minimum of two years of formal study. Applicants must specify a concentration in either South Asian or Middle Eastern studies.

Application deadline: January 15