

Cornell University
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

# Master of Professional Studies (MPS) Program Handbook

## Field of Global Development

## MPS Degrees in

## International Development

## &

## International Agriculture and Rural Development

# Preface

The Field of Global Development offers MPS degrees in both International Development (ID) and International Agriculture & Rural Development (IARD). Both degrees require a flexible and challenging two-semester program of graduate professional studies in international development that is designed to hone practical and technical skills and prepare students for careers in grassroots development projects, as well as program administration, project coordination, development communication, and other applied fields of interest. This program handbook is designed to help MPS students—with the guidance of their faculty advisors—create programs of study that are appropriate to their interests and career aspirations. It provides information pertaining to degree requirements and program protocols. It also includes forms that will expedite paperwork for satisfying academic requirements.

No handbook can present the full spectrum of individual learning, professional activities, and intellectual challenges to be experienced at Cornell. With the help of their advisors, MPS students are encouraged to explore and design a two-semester program of study that addresses their own particular interests. It should prepare them for a lifetime of leadership whether this is in the public sector, private sector, nongovernmental organizations, advocacy groups, corporations, and any other institutional base.

We welcome you to Cornell University!



Steven Kyle
Director of Graduate Studies

# Introduction

Developing countries face many critical problems that require focused attention and action on the part of their governments and civil society. However, development programs often lack enough planners, administrators, evaluators and others well trained on the emerging problems and processes of development. The MPS degree is an interdisciplinary graduate-level program aimed at the successful development of professionals who require a combination of skills that include knowledge of the substantive areas for which they are responsible and analytical tools by which such knowledge is transformed into action. The curriculum is especially relevant to experienced practitioners from any country that require broad-gauged perspectives and knowledge to equip them for work in the field in low income countries whether in agriculture, urban areas or any other sector. The MPS graduate program provides various forums for critically analyzing alternative strategies and for learning about practices, technologies, approaches, and trends in development efforts around the world. The program is designed for people who have already embarked on an international career and whose professional plans include upgrading relevant skills and knowledge important to their future needs. With help from the Special Committee of faculty advisors, students tailor programs to suit their objectives from a wide selection of courses in the College of Agriculture and Life Science (CALS) and other colleges. In addition to their coursework, MPS students submit a final problem-solving paper that serves as a capstone to their studies and demonstrates their ability to address real world development problems in a practical and useful way.

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# GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT MPS PROGRAM

## Required Coursework

A candidate for the Master of Professional Studies in the Fields of ID or IARD must complete the following items to be eligible to graduate:

- Two registration units and a minimum of 2 semesters of coursework for a total of 30 credit hours. One registration unit may be earned by successfully completing a minimum of 12 credit hours in a single semester at the Cornell University campus.
- Candidates are required to register for 2 semesters of *IARD 6990 or IARD 6070: MPS Seminar*.
- Candidates must submit an approved project paper. The aim of the project paper is to give students supervised experience in dealing intellectually and analytically with a professional problem related to a substantive area of international development. This paper may be the execution of an action program, the development of materials or methodology suited to the student's situation, or development and execution of research appropriate to the profession. The project can be based either on library, laboratory or fieldwork. The subject must be approved in advance by the student's Special Graduate Committee. Students are eligible to receive a maximum of 6 credit hours for work on the project paper that can be used towards the required 30 credit hours if necessary.
- MPS candidates must maintain a minimum grade point average of 2.5 and complete the degree within a 12 month period.
- A maximum of 6 credit hours earned outside the program at Cornell University or elsewhere may be counted toward requirements at the discretion of the Special Committee. These credits must be appropriate to the subject of the chosen field of study and completed not more than 5 years prior to admission.
- A petition to the MPS committee for exceptions to credit hour requirements may be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies. Language courses will not normally be considered toward the credits required for the degree.

## An IARD MPS candidate must also complete the following to be eligible to graduate:

- Out of the 30 credits, 20 must be in CALS; 18 must be for a letter grade; 24 must be in graduate courses or seminars 4000 and higher.

## An ID MPS candidate must also complete the following items to be eligible to graduate:

- Out of the 30 credits, 18 must be for a letter grade and 24 must be in graduate courses or seminars 4000 and higher. 12 of the 24 hours must encompass a concentration (international nutrition, international planning, international population, science and technology policy, or development policy in some designated area) and the other 12 hours must fall into the following areas of analysis: development administration and planning, development economics, development politics, development sociology, or international communications. Students with sufficient prior training in some of these areas may take courses in other areas to round out their analytical and action skills.

## International Development (ID) Concentration

Candidates in ID each select a concentration that is appropriate for their respective backgrounds and their career interests. While it is possible to pursue a career transition in the IARD/ID MPS program, one year is not enough time to obtain the subject matter depth and breadth necessary to compete with seasoned practitioners already operating in the new subfield. This is the reason the MPS program only accepts candidates who have at least two years prior field experience in a developing country in order to be competitive in the employment market post-graduation. However, there is a great deal of flexibility in putting together a concentration.

The choice of courses to constitute a candidate‘s concentration is one of the most important parts of any MPS course of study. The concentration should NOT be a smorgasbord or potpourri of diverse courses. Candidates should consider what combination of subjects within their chosen concentration will give them both reasonable breadth (coverage) of the area chosen and also some identifiable expertise within that concentration, possibly amplified by work done in the problem-solving project or for a professional report or thesis.

Candidates are positioning themselves, by their choice of courses and by the competences that they develop while at Cornell, for careers along certain trajectories. There will be various career-changing opportunities that arise in most people‘s lives, so it is good to be prepared intellectually for a range of career paths.

## MPS Seminar

All MPS candidates are required to register for *IARD 6990 (IARD students) and IARD 6970 (ID students): MPS Seminar* for a minimum of 2 semesters at Cornell. This seminar features invited speakers who address a diverse range of issues in project planning and international development, helping MPS students make links between their coursework and a wide array of challenges in international development work. It also helps MPS students to progress on their own project papers through presentation and discussion of project paper ideas and proposals as well as looking at past project papers and presentations from previous students in the program.

## Project Paper

By the time an MPS candidate completes the program, they should have acquired and/or polished – and be able to demonstrate – high-level skills for writing and analysis, with experience in oral presentation of their work.

By the end of the first semester of study, candidates should file the following documents with the Graduate Field Assistant (GFA) (see Academic Forms on page 35):

- Special-committee form with major and minor advisor’s listed
- International Development Declaration of Concentration (only for MPS ID students)
- MPS Program Worksheet (listing any courses already completed, proposed coursework to be taken and indicating which project paper option will be completed.)

These forms should be signed by a candidate‘s advisor so that the advisor is aware of the candidate‘s plans. These documents provide a venue for focused discussion of what candidates want to get from the program.

In the second semester of MPS study, each candidate will make a **formal oral presentation** on their project paper topic. Candidates may write a **problem-solving paper**, a **professional report** growing out of their international work experience, or a **development-related research paper** in a more academic manner.

## Problem-Solving Project

The problem-solving project offers an opportunity for students to apply the knowledge and skills that they have acquired through coursework and international work experience to solving practical problems faced in development work. In order to qualify for the problem-solving project, a defined problem must be identified either from personal experience or through an organization in which the candidate may provide consultancy services as part of the process or as an output.

The project paper may analyze and evaluate the execution of a particular program, the development of a plan of action for dealing with a selected problem, the development of materials or methodology for field programs, or the development and execution of research appropriate to a selected problem of development. For the problem-solving project, the student will propose solutions to a defined problem that are relevant and actionable. Problem-solving projects typically are multidisciplinary and experiential in nature though it is also common for students to do a library based research project (see below). Candidates are expected to produce written products and make oral presentations.

Other Cornell courses that provide a substantial consultative engagement may be used as a starting point for the problem-solving paper. For example, the Johnson School's Sustainable Global Enterprise (SGE) Immersion course and CIIFAD's Student Multidisciplinary Applied Research Teams (SMART) offer similar consultancy work. Any group work being presented as a project paper will need to specifically identify individual contributions that are approved by your committee as satisfactory in completion of the project paper.

Paper ideas need to be discussed with both the candidate‘s academic advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.

## Professional Report and Research Paper

Some candidates, based on their professional and career objectives, will prefer to focus on writing a more thorough and authoritative **professional report** or a **research-based paper** with explicit international development relevance. This option is discussed more below.

These kinds of written products differ more in their intended audiences than in quality or quantity of work. Professional reports are written for a specific audience (client), to assist in decision-making and program management or evaluation, while research papers are written for a general audience, for anyone in the world who would be interested in their subjects.

Candidates should make a decision on which route they will take for meeting their project paper requirement by the end of their first semester.

## Professional Report

All candidates must have a minimum of two years relevant experience working in international development, and most of these require some written report or output from the work engaged in. Some candidates, having done this professional work, will want to develop their analysis to a higher level, with more research, more data assembly and analysis, more detailed evaluation and explanation. Candidates choosing this option to demonstrate professional writing and analytical skills may spend a semester enrolled in an independent study or directed reading course with a field faculty member. This will develop the candidate's writing and learning into a more complete and useful document.

## Research Paper

For some candidates, perhaps because they have some particular **topical concern** within the broad domain of international development that can be well-served by broad ranging but focused research, writing a research paper that corresponds to the Graduate School's MPS degree requirements will be another acceptable way to meet the professional writing requirement. Candidates who choose this option will be responsible for finding a faculty member, preferably within the field of Global Development, who will serve as a thesis advisor. Students and faculty

should both be aware that the research paper differs to a typical MS thesis. The MPS paper is equivalent to 6 credits worth of work and if primary data is to be collected, time and funds should be considered. The following examples would be appropriate for an MPS research paper:

- A comprehensive literature review of a particular area. In this case, the data for answering the research question and the material for writing up the final project will come from the existing literature.
- A student skilled in statistical methods might choose to do a secondary analysis of a data set related to a particular research question. Or, alternatively, develop a data set and do a primary analysis of the data.
- A small-scale qualitative study to generate analytical insight into a particular research question.

## Procedures and Timeline

Candidates should discuss the paper options with their respective academic advisors and make a tentative decisions among the three options by the end of their first semester, incorporating this plan into their respective Program Worksheets that are prepared by candidates approved by their advisor, and filed with the Graduate Field Assistant by the end of the first semester of the first year (see Academic Forms, page 33). This Course of Study can be amended at any time by mutual agreement of the candidate and his/her advisor. Some candidates plan to complete the writing of a thesis or professional report during the summer after their second semester, receiving their degree in August or later.

Occasionally, the subject area chosen for a thesis or professional report can best be advised on by a faculty member who is not a member of the field of Global Development. In consultation with his/her academic advisor, the candidate may seek agreement from a faculty member outside the field to serve as his/her thesis/professional report advisor, since subject-matter expertise is valued and something to be developed during a candidate‘s career at Cornell. In many cases, Cornell faculty will be invited to join the field of Global Development if they take on an advisee in the field.

## Completing Your MPS Project Paper

The degree candidate will prepare and submit a project paper under the supervision of his or her faculty advisor. You and your faculty advisor are responsible for the content and length of your paper. A maximum of six-credit hours can be awarded for satisfactory completion of this project paper.

All project papers must adhere to the thesis format requirements of the Graduate School. Grammar, punctuation, spelling and other mechanical issues are your sole responsibility. Graduate School formatting requirements and tools can be found online at http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/thesis-and-dissertation.

## Submission Process

- Obtain project paper approval from your Special Committee, including completion of the Thesis Approval Form or the MPS ID Project Approval Form (page 36). Thesis Approval Forms are required to be included in IARD bound project papers, it is optional for ID students. If an ID student does not wish to include the Thesis Approval Form, they may choose to submit the MPS ID Project Approval Form. Students enrolled in IARD must also complete the Attestation Form.
- If you are an IARD student, send your approved project paper, and signed forms, to Ann Gantner (amg28@cornell.edu) for formatting approval. If you are an ID student, send your paper and signed form to your Graduate Field Assistant.
- When the approval process is complete, send a PDF of your project paper to libcopycenter@cornell.edu (CU Olin Library Copy Center, B41 Olin) and provide your Student I.D. number to have it printed and bound. The charge for printing and binding will be added to your Bursar bill.
- If you are an IARD student, you are required to provide a bound copy of your project paper to Ann Gantner with the signature of your research advisor in the upper right hand corner of the Abstract page. This copy will be submitted to Mann Library by the College. You are also required to submit a copy to your advisor if he/she requests one. ID students are

required to submit one copy to their Graduate Field Assistant and one copy to their advisor if he/she requests one.

## Leadership Roles

At the end of each fall semester, the MPS program accepts applications for leadership positions for the following:

- Teaching Assistant (TA) for the IARD/ID MPS program to assist with undergraduate IARD 2020 course and the IARD 6990 MPS seminar course for the Fall/Spring semesters.
- Training Assistant (TA) position for the Hubert Humphrey Fellows from Spring to Fall semesters.

Applicants must be in good academic standing. Applicants must be willing to commit themselves to remaining in residence at Cornell during the two academic semesters required of the respective positions. Those who are appointed to these positions will receive a full tuition waiver for their term and a stipend.

Applicants should submit a current resume and statement of interest detailing knowledge, skills, abilities, and leadership experience to the Director of Graduate Studies, Steven Kyle, for the MPS TA position and to Francine Jasper for the Hubert Humphrey TA position by the first of November.

## Graduating

If you have completed the degree requirements and are ready to graduate, the following steps must be completed:

- Visit the Graduate School website for degree conferral dates and deadlines.
- Fill out the Graduate School's Graduation Manager (you will need to login with your NetID and password). Submit degree information for section 1 and choose "My degree does not require the submission of a thesis or dissertation to The Graduate School." On section 2, click "next" and then "submit" to complete the process.

## Diploma Information

All diplomas will be mailed from the University Registrar's Office, B-7 Day Hall, within six months of the conferral date. Diplomas for August and February graduates will be mailed (no charge) approximately three months after the degree conferral date. Update the home address in Student Center to ensure mailing to the correct address.

## Professional Portfolio

The IARD/ID teaching assistant will work with any candidates who wish to assemble their own **Portfolio of Professional Work**, suitable for presentation to potential employers. This will be formally bound and will contain the following:

- Introductory preface or letter, including a statement of professional interests and career objectives.
- Resume both in a one-page summary format and in a more comprehensive, extended format.
- Executive memoranda that demonstrate ability to communicate in this condensed format, preparatory to decisions/actions.
- Substantial international development papers, showing ability to marshal data and evidence, and to analyze these, presenting conclusions based on appropriately acquired and well-selected, sufficient and persuasive empirical foundations.
- A major analytical project report, such as would be prepared as a problem-solving project, a professional report, or a thesis.

These materials would be assembled and bound by the end of class meetings in the semester of planned graduation, and submitted for review to the CALS Career Services Coordinator.

## International Students

### English as a Second Language

The Cornell University School of Continuing Education and Summer Sessions offer Academic English for Graduate Students. The program is designed to help international students in Cornell‘s graduate fields succeed in their academic writing and speaking. Students who take any of these courses are responsible for paying the tuition. The charge will appear on their bursar bill.

Offered from August 28 to December 6, the program offers three courses:

- ENINT 1001, an ***academic writing*** course that focuses on techniques to improve organization, grammar, vocabulary, and style. (This may be taken concurrently with ENINT 1002.)
- ENINT 1002, an ***academic speaking/listening/culture*** course that will help students develop techniques for participating in formal classroom discussions and presentations.
- ENINT 1003, an ***advanced academic writing*** course that will allow more opportunities for students to expand and refine their written language skills.

All three courses bear transcript credit and are graded S/U. Small class size and carefully crafted instruction will ensure that the specific needs of all students are met. To find out more about the Academic English for Graduate Students program, please visit their web site at: http://www.sce.cornell.edu/exec/aegs/index.php, call 607.255.7259, or e-mail cusp@cornell.edu.

**International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO)**

ISSO is available to assist individual international students and foreign academic staff and their families by advising them concerning federal immigration, tax and labor regulations, and by providing counseling on personal, academic and cultural matters. ISSO offers many different programs and events for international students. Visit their website to learn about all they offer.

# ACADEMIC ADVISING

## Role of the Advisor

The role of the faculty advisor for the MPS project paper, and the faculty advisor and supervisor from the client organization for the professional report, is to provide periodic advice to the candidate on issues related to the scope, content and organization of the professional report or thesis, and to ensure the quality of the final project prior to submission. Responsibility for writing an acceptable thesis or professional report remains fully with the candidate.

## Approval of the Project Paper

Approval of this writing project is conveyed by faculty advisors signing the paper's abstract, or an executive summary of the project paper, as well as by signing the Thesis Approval Form, and for IARD students the Attestation Form. Where the project paper advisor is a member of the field of IARD or ID, only his/her signature is needed on the report/thesis to be filed with the Graduate Field Assistant, to be kept in the permanent archives. Where the advisor is not a field member, both that advisor and the candidate's academic advisor will need to sign the abstract of the thesis or project paper and the associated approval forms. This ensures that all MPS project papers are approved by a member of the field of IARD or ID to be considered as completing the degree requirements. Candidates completing a professional report must also obtain the approval of their supervisor and the host (client) organization as noted above.

Candidates who wish to have an advisor who is not a member of the field can request that this faculty member be designated as a special advisor, or possibly the faculty member can be added (elected) to the field of Global Development (but this requires some time). As noted above, the candidate's academic advisor will also need to approve the project paper, which will require more time between completion of the draft and final approval (allowing time for any necessary revisions or polishing). While the advisor has primary responsibility for supervising and approving the project paper, candidates should keep their academic advisor informed on the timeline and substance of the project.

To get sufficient and timely feedback from faculty supervising an MPS project paper, drafts need to be submitted to advisors enough in advance for the material to be read and commented upon. Schedules for submission of drafts need to be worked out with advisor in advance. Research papers and professional reports that are not of an acceptable quality, in presentation as well as substance, may not be approved in time for degree conferral as anticipated if too little time for feedback is allowed.

## Expectations of Faculty/Advisors and Students

### Faculty/Advisors

- **Familiarity with general MPS requirements** for graduation and those for Global Development (GD):
    - http://www.cals.cornell.edu/cals/prospective/mps/upload/MPS-Checklist-of-Requirements.pdf
    - http://ip.cals.cornell.edu/academics/mpsiard_degreerequirements.cfm
- **Regularly scheduled meetings:** In order to check on status and ensure continued progress toward the degree, advisors should meet with students at least once per month (to include at least one meeting as early as possible to discuss class selection – This should be done before preregistration but in no case later than the first week of the semester). A brief summary of these meetings should be forwarded to the Graduate Field Assistant for inclusion in the student's file to ensure a complete record of progress made.
- **Development of academic outline:** By the end of September of their initial semester each student should submit a time line of milestones to be completed on the way to finishing the degree. These should include both the process of formation of a committee and the process of writing a project paper. Plans may vary due to differing program lengths and may be amended as needed, but should be written or reconfirmed at least once a semester and copied to the GFA for inclusion in the student's file.
- **Supervising Project Paper Credits (IARD 5990)**: Anywhere from 1-6 credits per semester may be taken as Project Paper Research though only a maximum of 6 may be counted toward the degree. Students may take these credits either pass/fail or for a letter grade. It is the chair's responsibility to award the appropriate grade and to set explicit requirements in writing for attaining a passing grade or a letter grade. Typically, these credits are taken S/U

(i.e. pass/fail) but may be taken for a letter grade if, e.g., a student needs additional letter grade credits to satisfy graduation requirements.

**Please note that the dates for forming a committee are as follows:**

- Chair to be designated by Fall Break
- Second member to be designated before the beginning of the second semester

**Project Paper dates should be no later than the following:**

- Four to five page outline/prospectus to be completed by the end of the first semester
- First draft to be completed as agreed with Chair depending on planned length of student program. Typically, for a May degree this should be by the end of Spring Break and for an August degree by mid-July. **First drafts for January degrees should be completed by the end of Thanksgiving Break.** An email acknowledging completion of a first draft or an expected date of completion should be copied to the GFA by the dates above.

**Students**

- Formation of Special Committee. As noted above, a Chair must be selected by Fall Break and a second member before the beginning of the second semester.
- In order *to be placed on the Degree Conferral List* students must do the following:
  1. Submit an MPS checklist to the GFA signed by both the student and the Chair.
  2. Fill out the Graduate School's Graduation Manager http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/thesis-and-dissertation/uploading-graduation-manager (you will need to login with your NetID and password).
  3. Complete a project paper and then:
     - have it approved by both Chair and second member.
     - have format approved by the GFA (ID students) or Ann Gantner (IARD students).
     - have the Thesis Approval Form signed. If you are an IARD student you must also submit a signed Attestation Form.
     - call Olin Library and have project paper printed.

## Director of Graduate Studies and GFA Responsibilities

- The DGS (or co-DGS's) will be responsible for preliminary admissions screening and matching of students with advisors. Some may be admitted without a designated chair if there is a faculty field member willing to commit to being the "default" advisor in the event that a student is unsuccessful in signing on with a faculty member after arrival at Cornell.
- Conduct an orientation session before course selection.
- The DGS (or co-DGS's) will conduct a weekly seminar with all MPS students (attendance required) with four interrelated goals:
    1. Familiarizing students with Cornell's facilities, resources and requirements
    2. Promoting interchange and collegiality between students to enable them to critique and support each other's work
    3. Lead students through the process of writing a preliminary prospectus/proposal capable of serving as a the basis for a request for a Cornell travel grant or other research funding by the end of the first semester
    4. Continue to familiarize students with the expectations for MPS project papers and related topics in the second semester
- The GFA will serve as a focal point for information regarding student progress and will flag those whose progress is inadequate to ensure completion of the degree. The GFA will be responsible for maintaining the file sharing system which will serve as the central repository of required documentation for each student.

# MASTER'S INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM

Students without the necessary two years of experience overseas can still apply for an MPS degree under the Master's International Program. This is a program (open to all MPS degrees in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the College of Architecture, Art and Planning ) in which students first complete two semesters of coursework and only write their project paper after (or during) their overseas assignment as a Peace Corps Volunteer.

Applicants must first apply to the MPS program of their choice and can then go through the process of applying to the Peace Corps (PC). It is important to note on your application that you are applying as an MI w/ Peace Corps Option student.

**Other items to note:**

- When Master International students arrive in country and meet with the PC staff. They should inform the staff that they are MI students and share their interests.
- Regarding training and placement, May, June, July and August are the most active months. Quarter 3 is more for generalists and 1 and 2 for specialists.
- All MI students and PC volunteers should delay their medical part of their application until later in the year.
- All MI students need to sign a photo/quote release form before departing for their service.
- Review packet given to you from International programs.
- Normally MI students can find out what region they will likely be placed. This is only after they have been cleared medically, which is usually 6 months before they are ready to leave.

**Note Peace Corps application timeline:**

- Applicants should make sure that Cornell knows you are applying to the MI program and intend to serve in the PC after their coursework is completed

- Before being accepted by Peace Corps into the MI program you will need to present an official acceptance letter to Cornell. (This should be done before you begin your academic program).
- The application process is lengthy and students should be sure to get all material back in a timely manner. Failure to do so can result in a delay in field placements.
- Students should hear about their PC placement during the final semester of their coursework (mid-Spring).

For further information and/or assistance please contact Denise Percey in 252 Emerson Hall or by phoning 607-255-3035.

# FUNDING INFORMATION

**Global Development Research/Travel Grants for MPS Students**

Research and travel grants for MPS students are available from the Field of Global Development to help support field research or other project paper related needs. Applications for these grants will be explained and arranged through attendance in the required IARD 6990 MPS seminar that all students take.

**Fellowships Database – http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/fellowships**

**Richard Bradfield Research Awards –** The Richard Bradfield Research Award is made annually to support research intended to enhance the wellbeing of small farmers (i.e., resource poor farmers) and their families in third world countries. All geographic areas of the world and all disciplines in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences are eligible, as long as the proposed research is expected to provide economic or food security benefits for small farmers. Research designed to improve genetic capacity of plants or animals, soil inputs, pest controls, mechanization, social organization, and the like is appropriate, however options developed should be realistically achievable given small farmers' key constraints (e.g., current supplies of land, labor, credit). Research outcomes or impacts should be "scale-specific" to favor small farmers. "Small" is relative, and applicants should explain how their target group of farmers can be considered "small farmers" in relative terms.

**First Presbyterian World Hunger Awards Program**

Modest supplemental research funds are available to further develop human capital and to address the critical challenges in the developing world. The First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca created a fund to primarily help alleviate hunger in developing countries. Research topics can range from environment and natural resources issues to nutrition to soil science and water quality. This opportunity is for international students. http://ip.cals.cornell.edu

**Leland International Hunger Fellows Program – Congressional Hunger Fellowship**

http://www.hungercenter.org/fellowships/leland/

**Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships**

U.S. citizen and permanent resident graduate students in master's or Ph.D. programs who are pursuing coursework (generally students in their first through third year) are eligible to apply for FLAS fellowships to support advanced training in foreign languages (excluding some Western European languages and areas). These awards provide a nine-month stipend and a tuition allowance. All FLAS fellows receive the balance of tuition from the Graduate School. Ph.D. students who receive FLAS awards also receive a stipend supplement to bring the award to the nine-month assistantship minimum, along with individual Cornell Student Health Insurance (SHIP). Applications, usually due in late January, are available from the Einaudi Center.

**Provost's Diversity Fellowships**

Designed to support Cornell's diverse graduate student population, Provost's Diversity fellowships are awarded on a competitive basis to U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

**Applicants for Diversity Fellowships**

An announcement (including application form) is distributed to the graduate fields in February. Applications are submitted to the Graduate School through the Director of Graduate Studies. To be considered for these awards, students must submit a supplemental essay with your application that addresses how the following criteria apply to you:

1. a history of overcoming disadvantage;
2. first-generation college student;
3. member of an underrepresented minority group (American Indian or Alaskan native, Black/African American, Mexican American, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, Puerto Rican, Other Hispanic).

To be eligible for the award, nominees must have received at least one year of support (e.g., assistantship, training grant, etc.) from their field.

**External Fellowships**

Cornell students have been highly successful in competing for external fellowships (those awarded by outside agencies such as the NSF, Javits, or the Social Science Research Council. To assist students in identifying external fellowship the Graduate School maintains a searchable database of over 700 opportunities. Students are encouraged to work with their Director of Graduate Studies and/or special committee chair to develop effective application materials.

**Research Travel Grants**

The Graduate School awards a small number of grants to graduate students for spring and summer research-related travel. Applications are due to the Graduate School (350 Caldwell Hall) by 4:30 p.m. Feb. 1 for spring or summer travel. (If the deadline falls on a weekend, applications are due the following Monday.) Research travel grant applications are available at www.gradschool.cornell.edu/forms. Awards will be announced in early March.

In awarding research travel grants, the Graduate School gives priority to Ph.D. students who have or will have passed the A Exam prior to initiating their research travel. Priority also is given to requests for pre-dissertation research. Prior awardees are given low priority. Field trips related to academic classes are also given low priority.

Because the Graduate School seeks to award a maximum number of grants from limited funds, awards are typically no more than $2,000. Students are encouraged to submit requests that reflect careful budgeting. For example, applicants should use public transportation when practical, plan on preparing their own meals whenever possible, and secure modest accommodations.

Please note that research travel grants are for travel that is directly related to dissertation research, not conference travel. Conference grant applications are available at www.gradschool.cornell.edu/forms/

**Conference Travel Grants**

The Graduate School provides grants to students who are invited to present papers or posters at professional conferences. Award amounts are based on geographic location, not actual expenses. (For example, a student attending a conference in Italy may receive the full $675, but a student

attending a conference in Washington, D.C. may receive $225.) Awards will not, under any circumstances, exceed $675. The Graduate School tries to fund most requests from students. Conference grant applications are available at www.gradschool.cornell.edu/forms/.

**International Research Travel Grant**

The Mario Einaudi Center and its associated Programs sponsor the International Research Travel Grants. These grants provide travel support for Cornell University graduate students conducting short-term research and/or field work in countries outside the United States.
http://einaudi.cornell.edu/travel_grants

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## Frequently Asked Questions for the Global Development MPS Program

**1. Do I have to take the IARD 5990 Project Paper Research credits?**

No. You are required to complete 30 credits as specified in the credit worksheet, complete two residence units (i.e. two semesters of tuition), and hand in a Project Paper. But you are not required to actually register for project paper research credits. However, you can, if you like, register for up to 6 of these credits per semester and up to six of these can count toward the 30 required for the degree. Students will often register for these credits if they don't want to take a full load of courses but still want to get enough credits (average of 15 for each of the two semesters of residence) to make progress toward the degree. Alternatively, 5990 can also be used as a way to get enough credits at the 4000 level or above, or to ensure the minimum of 18 for a letter grade or the minimum of 20 CALS credits needed. These credits are always supervised by the student's advisor or by the Director of Graduate Studies and they are the ones to assign the grade at the end of the semester.

**2. What do I do if my project paper isn't finished by the end of my second semester?**

Students are expected to finish their project paper during the summer following their two semesters of coursework. In the event that circumstances beyond the student's control cause them to miss the August deadline they may then petition to the Director of Graduate Studies for permission to apply to the Graduate School for a Leave of Absence or In Absentia status. These are not routinely granted to MPS students but may be allowed under special circumstances. An In-Absentia Petition allows the student to remain active in the Registrar's computer, keep their Net/ID, eligible for fellowships, assistantships as well as student health insurance. To be eligible you must be study in a location located at least 100 miles away from campus. Students applying for "in-absentia" for the full semester are charged $200 tuition.

**The Graduate School forms and explanations are located here:**

http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/forms.

International students *should consult with the International Student Services Office about maintaining their visa status before filing for any Leave or In Absentia status.*

**3. What does In-Absentia status mean?**

In absentia status is a type of registration that allows you to maintain student status at Cornell while completing research elsewhere. You must discuss your particular situation with your graduate student services representative or professional school advising office to find out if you are eligible and what procedures you need to follow. The in-Absentia fee is $200 per semester. The Grad School statement about this status is:

> In absentia status provides an opportunity for graduate students to engage in approved study in a location at least 100 miles away from the university's Ithaca campus during the academic year while continuing to work under the guidance of the special committee. Students studying in absentia are eligible for fellowships, assistantships, student health insurance, and educational loans. (In absentia status lasts for the academic year only. There is a separate form for summer registration.) In Absentia status will not approved for immigration or financial issues.

**4. What does Leave of Absence mean?**

Students who must interrupt the regular academic program may be granted a one-year leave of absence by the graduate school, your professional school or your college advising office. While you are on a leave of absence, you will not have student status which may affect student loan deferment and access to campus facilities and services. Please check with your graduate student services representative in 143Caldwell Hall for the details and procedures. The Grad School statement about this status is:

> A leave of absence can be granted for personal or medical reasons, but the process is different for each type of leave. A student on Leave can still be residing in Ithaca. A student who takes a leave of absence relinquishes the access to campus facilities and personnel that normally accompanies student status. However, students are eligible to enroll in the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) for a period of up to 12 months by contacting the Student Insurance Office. U.S. government regulations require that a student holding a non-immigrant visa who takes a personal leave of absence must either (1) leave the U.S. within 15 days or (2) apply for optional practical training before the

effective leave of absence date. Before leaving Cornell, such a student taking a leave of absence should contact Graduate School Student Services and the International Students and Scholars Office for information on maintaining visa eligibility for re-entering the United States.

MI students who enter the Peace Corps after their two semesters of coursework may qualify for Leave of Absence with exception with sponsor for 30 months or so. You can maintain your net ID and can continue to have access to electronic collections when you return to campus. Physical access to the library wouldn't be an issue. This service is free of charge. After returning if you want to check out books, you can request "local resident" option for $20 a month. That doesn't provide interlibrary loan, but it does give borrowing privileges for books here.

**5. What if I plan to return from a leave of absence just to hand in my project paper?**

If you plan to return from an approved leave of absence for the purpose of defending your project paper, contact your graduate student services representatives to find out the correct procedures and requirements. It is NOT necessary to register for another semester in order to submit your project paper.

**6. What are "registration units"?**

Cornell requires MPS students to complete two registration units in order to get the degree. A registration unit is one semester of full time study (12 credits). What this means is that each student must pay for two semesters of full time study to finish the MPS. Of course, if desired a student can stay for longer and take more courses – two is the minimum.

**7. What funding is available for MPS students?**

The Field of Global Development has up to two tuition waiver/reduction awards that are available to Peace Corps returnees wanting to earn an MPS in either ID or IARD. Other than this, Cornell has no funds allocated to pay tuition for new MPS students but some do find employment as research assistants after arrival at Cornell. Second year students can apply for the Teaching Assistant position which involves helping with the first year students and also TA'ing undergrad IARD courses. Also available to second semester students are jobs assisting the Humphrey Fellows Program and as the campus Peace Corps representative (Peace Corps

returnees only). While none of these positions is reserved for IARD/ID students, many have the necessary qualifications and have gotten these positions in the past.

**8. When do I need to get my Advisor and Second Committee member?**

In Cornell's system, all graduate students are advised by a committee. MPS students are required to have two members, a chair and a second member. The Chair (if not assigned prior to arrival) must be designated by Fall Break and the second member by the beginning of the second semester. Until a Chair is designated, the Director of Graduate Studies acts as the temporary Chair. You will add your Committee Chair (also known as your advisor) online via Student Center. You cannot add your second committee member online; you will need to send that name to your GFA to be recorded internally by the field.

**9. Can I change members of my Committee?**

Yes. Changes of advisors and/or second members are routine since students often find that their particular interests are best matched by a faculty member other than the original ones on their committee. This is done online via Student Center.

**10. What if the faculty member I want on my committee isn't a member of the IARD field?**

Ask the DGS to have them listed as a member and we will go ahead and do it. Alternatively, they can be made your project paper Advisor while a faculty member in the field of Global Development serves as your Academic advisor.

**11. What if I want to take a course that is listed below the 4000 level?**

You are allowed to count up to 6 credits below the 4000 level toward the degree, so you are OK for at least that many credits (typically two courses). If you want to take more than 6 credits at below the 4000 level you have three options

- Petition the Director of Graduate Studies for a waiver. Go see the DGS and explain your situation. Assuming you have legitimate reasons for wanting a waiver you will be asked to put it in writing for the record (and for the Grad School).

- If you have not used all of your IARD 5990 credits (i.e. you still have not registered for the maximum of 6 allowed to count toward the degree) you can add some of these credits to your schedule to make up the required number of 4000 and above credits.
- Add the needed number of credits at 4000 or above by taking additional courses either at Cornell or elsewhere (a maximum of 6 can be transferred in to Cornell for the degree – See below).

**12. Can I transfer credits in to Cornell to count toward my MPS degree?**

A maximum of 6 credits can be transferred in but these cannot be credits that were used to satisfy the requirements for a different degree at Cornell or elsewhere. That is, you can't simply take some credits from your undergrad transcript and count them toward Cornell's MPS. But you can count courses taken at Cornell or another institution that did not lead to a degree.

**13. Can I earn credits via Independent Study?**

Yes. Independent study credits are earned under the supervision of a faculty member who sets the requirements for the credits and is responsible for certifying that they have been completed. The course number used is IARD 5970 and 1-6 credits may be used toward the degree.

**14. Can I take courses Pass/Fail?**

In the Cornell system Pass/Fail is called S/U. MPS students are required to take at least 18 of their 30 credits for a letter grade. Students must do work at least at the level of a C- in order to pass a course being taken S/U.

**15. Do I have to take courses in IARD?**

No. Apart from the MPS student seminar (IARD 6990 – 1 credit) there is no formal requirement to take IARD courses though many students do.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY

## MASTER'S INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

1. **What about student loans?**

   For those MI students who select the in-absentia status, you are not required to continuing making school loan payments. If you select the leave of absence option, while a Peace Corps volunteer, you should not have to make loan payments.

2. **Who pays my In-Absentia fees while I am serving?**

   It is the student's responsibility to find funding ($200/semester). Apply for scholarships; ask your advisor for department money, etc.

3. **What do I do about Health Insurance coverage while on leave?**

   While serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer you will not need to carry the Cornell Health Insurance since you have complete coverage through PC. You must waive the Cornell health insurance. You must complete the SHIP waiver before your departure from campus or else you will be charged health insurance.

4. **Do I need to enroll in classes while I am serving?**

   Yes, there is an in-absentia class, and your Graduate School Counselor can help you find the number for enrolling at the beginning of each semester. Make sure to enroll before the deadline is over.

5. **What is my graduation date?**

   Your graduation date should be one semester after you have returned from your service, but it is up to your discretion. Make sure that your graduation date is correct a semester into your first year, or else Cornell will think you are graduating, and/or allow your student loans to think they can start billing you. You should contact your student service representative at the graduate school to confirm graduation date.

6. **What about student loans?**

   For almost every loan, being in in-absentia status means that you are still a full-time student and do not have to pay your student loans until you graduate. Check to make sure your graduation date is set to after you return from Peace Corps service and you won't have to pay anything until you are done at Cornell. The same should hold if you select the leave of absence option.

7. **How do you handle the MPS project paper?**

   It is up to each advisor /program how your project paper is handled. Students often enroll in absentia for one or two semesters to devote time to the field component of their program and writing their special project paper. Students must take IARD 5990 International Agriculture and Rural Development MPS/Project Paper to begin this process. You should take two full semesters of coursework. Enroll as "In Absentia" for the time you are on assignment and writing your project paper. It is up to the department regarding the number of semesters you can carry an incomplete.

# USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

## Contact Information

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**Graduate School**
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# USEFUL LINKS

**International Programs**
http://ip.cals.cornell.edu/

- Global Development MPS Program
  http://ip.cals.cornell.edu/academics/

- Master's International MPS Program (w/ Peace Corps Option)
  http://ip.cals.cornell.edu/academics/

**Cornell Graduate School**
http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/

- New Students
  http://newstudents.cornell.edu/

- Official Forms
  http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/forms

- Project Paper Formatting Guidelines
  http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/thesis-and-dissertation

- Degree Conferral and Commencement
  http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/thesis-and-dissertation

- Big Red Barn Graduate and Professional Student Center
  http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/life-cornell/big-red-barn

- Graduate School Policy
  http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/policies

- Cost and Funding
  http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/costs-and-funding

**Cornell College of Agriculture and Life Sciences**

- Submitting your MPS Project paper (IARD students)
  http://cals.cornell.edu/cals/prospective/mps/completing-mps-project.cfm

**Cornell Financial Office**
http://www.finaid.cornell.edu/

**International Students and Scholars Office**
http://www.isso.cornell.edu/

# ACADEMIC FORMS

# MPS International Development Declaration of Concentration

Name _____ Date _____

Cornell ID# _____ E-Mail _____

**Chosen Area of Concentration**: (Please check one from the list below.)

_____ International Nutrition

_____ International Planning

_____ International Population

_____ Science and Technology Policy

_____ Development Policy

**Study Plan and Objectives**: Please list the concentration coursework you intend to take to fulfill the requirements for your concentration. ATTACH A ONE-PAGE STATEMENT OF YOUR PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVES FOR CHOOSING THIS CONCENTRATION, AND SOME RATIONALE FOR COMBINING THIS SET OF COURSES INTO A CONCENTRATION.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

**Anticipated Graduation Date** (Semester/Year): _____

**Academic Advisor's Concurrence:** _____

(signed)

Date: _____

***Candidates: This form is to be completed and submitted to the GFA by the end of your first semester in the MPS program.***

# MPS IARD/ID Project Paper Prospectus Form

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-Mail _____

Cornell ID# _____

Project Title: _____

**Approval**

By signing here, the advisor acknowledges that the attached thesis prospectus meets the academic expectations of the MPS program in International Agriculture and Rural Development or International Development.

Signature of thesis advisor _____

Printed name of advisor _____

Date _____

***Candidates: This form, along with a copy of the thesis prospectus, must be submitted to the GFA no later than the end of your first semester. (December 1st for fall admission start date and May 1st for spring admission start date.)***

# MPS ID Project Paper Approval Form

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-Mail _____

Cornell ID# _____

Project Title: _____

**Approval**

This is an acknowledgement that the above-named candidate has completed a thesis for the Master of Professional Studies degree that meets the academic standards set forth by the MPS program.

*Signature of thesis advisor _____

Printed name of advisor _____

Date _____

*If the thesis advisor is not a member of the field of IARD/ID, the candidate‘s academic advisor must also approve the thesis.

*Signature of MPS academic advisor _____

Printed name of advisor _____

Date _____

***Candidates: This form, along with an electronic copy of the thesis on CD, should be submitted to the GFA no later than two weeks before graduation.***

**CORNELL UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL**
**APPROVAL OF THESIS/DISSERTATION**
**http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/pubs_and_forms/forms/thesis_approval.pdf**

Name of candidate: _____
First Name Middle Name Family Name

Graduate Field: _____

Degree: _____

Title of Thesis/Dissertation:

**COMMITTEE SIGNATURES:**

Chairperson: _____Date: _____

Member: _____ Date: _____

Member: _____ Date: _____

Member: _____ Date: _____

Member: _____ Date: _____

Member: _____ Date: _____

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_____
(Student Signature)

## ATTESTATION FORM (IARDMPS)

**http://cals.cornell.edu/mps/upload/MPS-Attestation-Form.pdf**

I. Successful Completion of Problem-Solving Project for MPS (Agriculture and Life Sciences) Degree.

This is to certify that _____has completed the problem-solving project requirement for the MPS (Agriculture and Life Sciences) degree in the field of _____.

Date: _____

_____
Faculty Advisor

II. Recommend to Graduate School for MPS (Agriculture and Life Sciences) Degree

Date: _____

6/2012
(This form is to be completed by the Faculty Advisor and returned to Ann Gantner, Office of Academic Programs, 173 Roberts Hall.)

**CHECKLISTOF IARD/MPS (AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES) REQUIREMENTS (http://cals.cornell.edu/mps/upload/MPS-Checklist-of-Requirements.pdf)**

Name of Student: _____

Field/Committee Chair: _____

Date Admitted: _____ Date Requirements Completed: _____

Minimum requirements for the degree:

1. Two (2) semesters in residence — Yes _____ No _____

   a. 1 unit earned by carrying a minimum of 12 credit hours in a single semester — Yes _____ No _____

2. 30 course hours earned — Actual _____

   a. Minimum of 20 in Agriculture — Actual _____

      Minimum of 24 of 400 or above — Actual _____

   b. Maximum of 6 granted for special project — Actual _____

   c. Maximum of 6 transferred into program (attach summary of courses, grades and institution) — Actual _____

3. Minimum GPA of 2.5 based on a minimum of 18 hours at Cornell with letter grades — Actual _____

4. Successful completion of a problem solving project — Date _____

Agricultural Department

1. Special requirements for specific field — Yes _____ No _____

MPS (Agriculture) Committee

1. The student is required to submit one bound copy of their problem-solving project paper for inclusion in Mann Library. — Yes _____ No _____

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**TO BE COMPLETED BY OFFICE OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

Degree approved by Committee: _____ Date of Degree: _____

**Courses and Credits Worksheet for Global Development ID/MPS Students**

| Semester | Class | Credits | Grading (S/U or Letter) | CALS Courses | 4000 or higher (at least 24 credits) | Letter Grade (at least 18 credits) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fall | IARD 6990 | 1 | S/U | 1 | 1 | |
| Fall | | | | | | |
| Fall | | | | | | |
| Fall | | | | | | |
| Fall | | | | | | |
| Fall | | | | | | |
| Spring | IARD 6990 | 1 | S/U | 1 | 1 | |
| Spring | | | | | | |
| Spring | | | | | | |
| Spring | | | | | | |
| Spring | | | | | | |
| Spring | | | | | | |
| **Totals** | | **2** | | **2** | **2** | **0** |
| Required Minimum | | 30 | | 2 | 24 | 18 |

Note: A maximum of 6 credits of 5990 (Project Paper Research) may be counted toward the 30 credit total. These 6 may be either S/U or Letter