



Departmental Distinction in International Studies

The Departmental Distinction Program in International Studies seeks to promote the integration of advanced knowledge in the field of international relations with valuable research and analytical competencies. In order to graduate “with Distinction” in International Studies, eligible students are required to complete the Distinction curriculum outlined below, which includes an INTS thesis project. The thesis is an in-depth research & writing project, which focuses on a particular area of interest within the field of International Studies, and often marks the start of specialization in relation to future academic and/or professional objectives.

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Departmental Distinction Resources

Students considering or participating in the Departmental Distinction Program should regularly check the [Departmental Distinction Tab](#) of the [Korbel BA Program Portfolio](#) webpage.

The Departmental Distinction Tab includes the most up to date versions of the following items:

- Departmental Distinction Handbook
- Application for Departmental Distinction in International Studies
- Request to Enroll in INTS 3990
- Departmental Distinction Thesis Approval Form

The Departmental Distinction Tab will also include any new or relevant information for Departmental Distinction students. If you have a question, please first check the Korbel BA Program Portfolio or this handbook for your answer. If you still have a question after checking these resources, you can send an email to the [Director of Undergraduate Student Affairs](#) and we will do our best to get you an answer.

Eligibility Criteria

Interested students must meet the following criteria to be eligible for Departmental Distinction in International Studies:

- International Studies (INTS) Major
- Minimum overall GPA of 3.50 *and* major GPA of 3.70 (at time of application and at time of graduation);
- Course Pre-Requisites Prior to Application:
 - INTS Core Course (INTS 1500, 1700, & 2975)
 - At Least Two 3xxx-level INTS Courses
- The Departmental Distinction Timeline shows the various applications, classes, and requirements to complete the departmental distinction program.
 - **Failure to submit a required application on time will result in the student forfeiting their current or potential position in the departmental distinction program.**

Note: If Studying Abroad in Spring of Junior Year, Students Must Submit Their Application by November 1st of Sophomore Year to remain eligible for Departmental Distinction.

Required Curriculum

Students accepted to the Departmental Distinction Program must successfully complete the following curriculum in a satisfactory manner to achieve distinction in INTS:

- INTS 3000 - Research Methods & Design
 - This class is available in Spring Quarter. Students will generally take this class in their junior year. If the student plans to study abroad in spring of their junior year, they must apply to the Departmental Distinction Program a year early so they can take this class in spring of their sophomore year.
 - Enrollment Process:
 - Submit Departmental Distinction Application (due Nov. 1st of Junior year)
 - Receive Committee Approval to Participate in Departmental Distinction

- Enroll in INTS 3000
- INTS 3990 – Honors Thesis in International Studies
 - This class is available in Fall or Winter Quarter. Students must submit their Request to Enroll no later than the start of the quarter.
 - Enrollment Process:
 - Successful completion of INTS 3000
 - Submit “Request to Enroll in INTS 3990 - Honors Thesis”
 - Receive Approval to Enroll
 - Complete “[Application for Independent Research](#)” and obtain required signatures
 - Enroll in INTS 3990

Curriculum Course Descriptions

INTS 3000 - Research Methods & Design

This course is for advanced International Studies majors, including Departmental Distinction, that intend to write a thesis in INTS. The course introduces students to the fundamental elements of social science research. It also serves as a workshop to complete a literature review and write a research prospectus. The basis of any scientific investigation is a research proposal in which you formulate a question and design a process by which you will explore that question through a systematic collection and analysis of evidence. The design process is the same whether you are writing a short class research paper, or are conducting a major research project, such as a thesis. The manner in which evidence is gathered and analyzed, however, will vary based upon the research question, research goals, and resources. We will therefore go through the process of research design. Because the discipline of international studies provides multiple methods of inquiry, we will also explore quantitative and qualitative methods used to gather and analyze evidence.

INTS 3990 – Honors Thesis in International Studies

The INTS thesis project will be an original contribution to the understanding of issues relevant to international studies and to at least one of the specialization areas in INTS. The thesis is not a report or survey of literature of an area of interest. Instead, the thesis goes well beyond a typical class paper in both length and depth, and represents a rigorous, analytical, and complete work of research and analysis. The thesis must feature original research and should critically investigate a theoretically informed hypothesis, using critical and scholarly sources to support an evaluation of the research question. The INTS thesis must show clearly the following elements: excellent critical thinking and writing quality, coherent presentation, and adherence to the general guidelines set forth by the department and faculty advisor.

Note: Both INTS 3000 and INTS 3990 require explicit departmental permission in order to enroll. To obtain the required authorization and thereby register, students must either receive an invitation to participate in the INTS Distinction Program based on successful application, or set-up an appointment with the [Director of Undergraduate Student Affairs](#) to discuss their particular situation.

General Thesis Requirements

The International Studies thesis project is the academic culmination of the Departmental Distinction Program. All students who wish to graduate “with distinction” in International Studies must complete a thesis project. The general thesis requirements are as follows:

- Successful completion of INTS 3000 – Research Methods & Design
- A viable research topic and **approval from a participating JK SIS faculty member that is willing to advise the thesis**
 - It is the student’s responsibility to seek out and secure an appropriate INTS faculty advisor for the thesis
 - Faculty collaboration is voluntary, and based on the alignment of appropriate and mutual research interests
 - Please see the timeline for more information on when students should start looking for a faculty advisor and what aspects of the program require faculty advisor input
- 50-75 pages
 - Typed
 - Standard font and margins
 - Cover page and table of contents included
- Thesis format should adhere to the Turabian style
 - *Kate L. Turabian: A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 7th edition, 2007*
 - The [University Writing Center](#) offers additional resources for students writing a thesis
 - If appropriate for the thesis, the student can obtain written permission from the thesis advisor and the [Director of Undergraduate Student Affairs](#) to use another thesis format
- The student must submit a final, **electronic** copy to the [Director of Undergraduate Student Affairs](#) in .doc, .docx, or .pdf format by the deadline (see timeline to determine deadline)
 - Note: Students enrolled in the UHP should ensure they are aware of UHP requirements and timelines
- Distinction candidates are required to submit a final, graded thesis by week four of the quarter in which they intend to graduate. This is required to comply with University timelines governing official graduation and commencement records. Late submissions will disqualify a student from earning Distinction in INTS and may result in a failing grade for INTS 3990.

NOTE: Once a student has secured an advisor, work on the thesis may begin. Generally, a student will submit several drafts before a final thesis is accepted and graded. It is important that the student and faculty advisor establish clear expectations of one another during this process, as well as a specific and reasonable timeline for comments/edits to assist revisions on the thesis. Students should not expect faculty advisors to examine their work at the last minute or beyond the agreed upon timeline.

Korbel5 Program

Students who are pursuing both the Korbel5 Program and the Departmental Distinction Program must ensure that they meet with their academic advisor regularly. Both of these programs include competing timelines and requirements that require careful planning. **It is ultimately the student’s**

responsibility to ensure they understand and fulfil the various requirements of these programs.

University Honors Program

International studies majors enrolled in the University Honors Program (UHP) must complete departmental distinction in international studies. If a student has a second major in addition to international studies, they can do departmental distinction in international studies OR their second major. UHP students must meet the requirements for departmental distinction outlined in the next section.

Remember, the deadlines for the University Honors Program are determined by that office and may be different from the INTS Distinction timeline. For more information about these specific deadlines and requirements, please contact the [University Honors Program](#) directly.

International studies majors not enrolled in the UHP can also earn departmental distinction.

Departmental Distinction Program Timelines



Legend

- Green
- Orange
- Purple

Applications & Requests to Enroll
Required Courses
Faculty Advisor Participation