The master of arts in the field of security policy studies (SPS) degree program is policy-oriented, focusing on international security issues, with a particular emphasis on the security challenges for the 21st century and how to respond to them. These challenges include, but are not limited to, weapons of mass destruction proliferation, transnational threats, terrorism, changing regional power dynamics, weak and failing states, international crime, effectively linking security and development, and ensuring U.S. national security.

The curriculum provides a strong grounding in the national security and defense policy making process. Students choose two specific concentrations, which can range from transnational security issues to conflict resolution to defense analysis. Students also have the option of emphasizing a particular region, such as East Asia, the Middle East, or Latin America, by selecting a regional field as one of their two concentrations.

Specific admission requirements are shown on the Graduate Program Finder. (http://www.gwu.edu/all-graduate-programs)

Visit the program website (https://elliott.gwu.edu/academics/graduate/sps) for additional program information.

REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisite: a bachelor’s degree with course work in international affairs or other relevant social sciences, including introductory micro- and macroeconomic principles; study of a modern foreign language is preferred

Field Requirements

All students take three courses in the required core field of international security issues. A specialized field is chosen from U.S. national security and defense policy; transnational security issues; energy security; intelligence; security and development; conflict and conflict resolution; political psychology; homeland security; strategic concepts and military history; science, technology, and weapons of mass destruction; or regional security. A second specialized field is selected from the above or from other M.A. programs in the Elliott School or may be designed in consultation with the program director. Students must successfully complete an economics requirement and skills-based courses. Foreign language credit does not count toward this program.