

# INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

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## Departmental Guidelines & Mission

The International Studies major asks students to inquire broadly into social, political, economic, environmental, historical, and cultural processes, linkages, interdependencies, and power relations that connect individuals, communities, groups, states, and regions across the globe. These cross-border flows and processes are not new, but their increased intensity, complexity, and speed compel us to examine the world with the renewed emphasis on interconnectivity and interdependency as the fundamental human conditions under which we live today. These transnational and transregional cultural, political, and economic phenomena today are not mere outcomes of abstract and structural forces, but actively shaped by concrete human activities and decisions. Therefore, the major in International Studies helps students examine these phenomena within both historical and contemporary frameworks, and tackle shared dilemmas and challenges that tie the world's people together as committed global citizens.

Denison's International Studies major moves beyond traditional International Relations (IR) in that it transcends nation-state-centered perspective, and involves the use of theoretical tools from sociocultural analysis and political-economy. International Studies majors are also asked to move beyond traditional Area Studies approaches, in that the major problematizes seeing areas as bounded and distinctive historical and cultural zones, and instead stresses the ways in which regions are, and historically have been, tied together in complex patterns and processes.

International Studies is inherently interdisciplinary. While it borrows from and employs theoretical tools and concepts from a wide range of disciplines in the humanities, social sciences and arts, it stresses the need to use these tools and methods in ways that work together and that problematize the limitations of any single disciplinary approach. This interdisciplinary emphasis encourages students to view the processes that tie together and divide the world from multiple perspectives. In doing so, the majors in International Studies synthesize study of global forces with real-world experience of how these forces shape, and are shaped by, the peoples living in their unique sociocultural and political-economic situations.