

Persian/Iranian Studies, Graduate Specialization

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The School of Humanities' Specialization in Persian/Iranian Studies offers graduate students interdisciplinary training in the study of Iran and the wider Persian world. Students pursue the specialization simultaneously with the curriculum of their M.A. or Ph.D. program. Its flexible structure, encompassing any time period and humanities discipline where there is faculty expertise, provides students the opportunity to tailor the program to support their own research interests. The specialization's broad conception of Persian/Iranian studies is paralleled in and supported by the extensive programming of UCI's Samuel Jordan Center for Persian Studies and Culture (<https://www.humanities.uci.edu/persianstudies/>).

Prospective students must first apply and be admitted to the graduate program through which their potential advisor accepts students. Once they have accepted UCI's offer of admission and are enrolled, students join the specialization by submitting a summary of degrees earned and prior undergraduate and graduate coursework taken related to Persian/Iranian Studies, together with a brief statement of purpose that details their degree program, interest in the field, current or potential advisor, and potential dissertation research. This can be adapted from their UCI application materials. It should be submitted via email to the Director of the specialization at the start of their first quarter at UCI. Current students may also apply to the specialization at any time before candidacy if they have met its requirements.

The program structure of the specialization consists of four required components: coursework; languages and specialized training; examinations; and the dissertation or thesis.

Course Requirements

Students pursuing the specialization must complete at least four graduate courses on a Persian/Iranian topic. Courses are understood to fulfill this Persian/Iranian studies content requirement if they are offered under or cross-listed with UCI's IRAN course designation, taught by Persian/Iranian studies faculty, or in the case of writing practicums or seminars, meet course requirements with work focused on a Persian/Iranian topic.

A selection of courses for the specialization is listed below. All IRAN courses can be found on the courses tab.

IRAN 290	Special Topics in Premodern Iranian Studies
IRAN 292	Seminar in Premodern Iranian Studies
IRAN 280	Studies in Old Iranian
IRAN 281	Studies in Middle Iranian
IRAN 282	Studies in Classical Persian
IRAN 294	Curatorial Methods
IRAN 295	Special Methods
IRAN 297	Directed Readings in Persian/Iranian Studies
IRAN 298	Special Topics in Persian/Iranian Studies
IRAN 293	Directed Readings in Premodern Iranian Studies
IRAN 231A	History of Zoroastrianism
IRAN 231B	Ancient Persia
IRAN 231C	Medieval Persia

Language

All students are required to demonstrate reading knowledge of at least one Iranian language (either ancient, medieval, or modern). Students consult with the Director and/or their principal advisor(s) to determine the appropriate language(s) based on their interests, time period, and specialization. Advisors, moreover, may require the demonstration of reading knowledge in additional pre-modern or modern languages according to the scholarly demands of the student's specific subfield. The Director of the specialization can arrange for a reading exam or native-speaker certification if the student's home program does not have this capacity. All language requirements must be satisfied before students are advanced to candidacy for the Ph.D. and will be assessed according to their home program's procedures if they are intended to count towards the Ph.D. program's language requirements.

Examinations

For doctoral students, the Director must approve that at least one area of the qualifying examination incorporates Persian/Iranian content as a central concern.

Plan II M.A. students must have significant Iranian Studies content in their examination. There are no requirements concerning qualifying examinations for Plan I M.A. students.

Dissertation or Thesis

Ph.D. students pursuing the specialization must write and successfully defend an original dissertation that advances scholarship on a topic related to Persian/Iranian studies (broadly conceived, including the broader Perso-Iranian cultures of Western, Central, South and East Asia, Asia Minor, Caucasus, Balkans, and diasporas of Iranian peoples anywhere in the world, pre-modern to contemporary). It may be comparative in nature and deal substantially with other cultures as long as Persian/Iranian studies is a central focus. The dissertation must be advised or co-advised by a faculty member working in Persian/Iranian studies.

After advising and before advancement to candidacy, the program director will confirm their approval of the proposed topic through email. Ph.D. students writing an in-process M.A. thesis en route to the Ph.D. and Plan I M.A. students will similarly gain approval of their M.A. thesis topic. Alternatively, a research or seminar paper written under the guidance of one or more of the specialization faculty will be submitted to the director. There are no requirements concerning theses for Plan II M.A. students (see Examinations above).

Courses

IRAN 231A. History of Zoroastrianism. 4 Units.

Reviews major trends in the history of Zoroastrianism.

Restriction: Graduate students only.

Concurrent with HIST 131A.

IRAN 231B. Ancient Persia. 4 Units.

Survey of the history of Persia in antiquity.

Restriction: Graduate students only.

Concurrent with HIST 131B.

IRAN 231C. Medieval Persia. 4 Units.

A survey of Persian history in the context of Late Antique and Medieval Islamic history.

Restriction: Graduate students only.

Concurrent with HIST 131C.

IRAN 255A. Ancient India. 4 Units.

Examines the visual and religious history of the region defined as "India" today, but necessarily encompassing modern Bangladesh and Pakistan. Culminates with the supposed Golden Age of the Gupta empire and its far-reaching legacies.

Same as AHIS 255A.

Restriction: Graduate students only.

Concurrent with AHIS 155A.

IRAN 255B. Medieval India. 4 Units.

Begins with the Gupta period's aesthetic legacies in South Asia's architecture, sculpture, and painting. Explores the dispersal of Islam throughout South Asia, including the Muslim communities of southern India.

Same as AHIS 255B.

Restriction: Graduate students only.

Concurrent with AHIS 155B.

IRAN 280. Studies in Old Iranian. 4 Units.

Studies in grammars and texts of Old Persian and Avestan.

Repeatability: May be repeated for credit unlimited times.

Restriction: Graduate students only.

IRAN 281. Studies in Middle Iranian. 4 Units.

Studies in grammars and texts of Middle Iranian languages (e.g., Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian, Bactrian).

Repeatability: May be repeated for credit unlimited times.

Restriction: Graduate students only.

IRAN 282. Studies in Classical Persian. 4 Units.

Studies in the premodern literatures and historical texts of medieval and early modern Persian.

Repeatability: May be repeated for credit unlimited times.

Restriction: Graduate students only.

IRAN 290. Special Topics in Premodern Iranian Studies. 4 Units.

Studies in selected areas of premodern Iranian Studies. Topics addressed vary each quarter.

Repeatability: Unlimited as topics vary.

Restriction: Graduate students only.

IRAN 292. Seminar in Premodern Iranian Studies. 4 Units.

Seminar in selected areas of premodern Iranian Studies. Topics addressed vary each quarter.

Repeatability: Unlimited as topics vary.

Restriction: Graduate students only.

IRAN 293. Directed Readings in Premodern Iranian Studies. 4 Units.

Directed reading on a specific topic agreed upon by student and instructor.

Repeatability: May be repeated for credit unlimited times.

Restriction: Graduate students only.

IRAN 294. Curatorial Methods. 4 Units.

Development of curatorial methodologies with an instructor in conjunction with curatorial internship or practicum.

Repeatability: May be repeated for credit unlimited times.

Restriction: Graduate students only.

IRAN 295. Special Methods. 4 Units.

Reading course focused on the development of particular research skills (e.g. archaeological field methods, numismatics, digital humanities) often in conjunction with a practicum.

Repeatability: May be repeated for credit unlimited times.

Restriction: Graduate students only.

IRAN 296. Ethics, Law, and Art. 4 Units.

Addresses a broad range of ethical and legal issues pertaining to art, ownership, looting and theft, museum policies, and cultural heritage.

Prerequisite: Background in Art History or Legal Studies.

Same as AHIS 296.

Concurrent with AHIS 196.

IRAN 297. Directed Readings in Persian/Iranian Studies. 4 Units.

Directed reading on a specific topic agreed upon by student and instructor.

Repeatability: May be repeated for credit unlimited times.

Restriction: Graduate students only.

IRAN 298. Special Topics in Persian/Iranian Studies. 4 Units.

Studies in selected areas of Persian/Iranian Studies. Topics addressed vary each quarter.

Repeatability: May be repeated for credit unlimited times.

Restriction: Graduate students only.