Office of the Provost

Proposed Change to an Existing Degree: Academic Component

Please answer all relevant questions below. Consultation with the appropriate Associate Provost on a draft of the proposal is recommended.

Using the relevant template, please submit a budget even if no additional resources are needed.

Title of Degree (e.g., Bachelor of Arts in History):

Master of Arts in International Relations (MAIR)

1. Please provide the name, title, email address, and phone number of the primary contact person for this academic program:

William Grimes, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, wgrimes@bu.edu, 617-353-9420.

2. Please describe briefly the proposed change to the existing degree:

The changes modify the structure and content of the current MAIR program, but the revised MAIR program will continue to be a 32-credit mid-career program. See point 5 below for a more detailed comparison between the current and revised program.

3. Please provide a rationale for the proposed change to the existing degree:

The Pardee School recently concluded a thorough review of all existing nine graduate programs. As a result of this review, the Pardee School will make several changes to the existing set of programs. Thus, the revisions to the MAIR program should be seen in the context of a broader set of revisions to the Pardee School’s graduate program offerings.
Going forward, the Pardee School will offer a smaller number of separate MA programs that are re-designed to attract a growing number of more qualified students from all over the world and provide these students with a world class education designed for the 21st century. The revised MAIR program solidifies and strengthens the Pardee School’s policy-oriented graduate school curriculum. The revised curriculum provides students with both foundational knowledge and practical skills intended to be of direct use in their subsequent professional careers.

The MAIR program is based upon a set of three core courses that all students take. The current MAIR curriculum, in contrast, requires students to select one course each from at least three of the four “core” subject areas. This structure does not emphasize acquisition of a set of core skills or knowledge despite the terminology; rather, it is a distributional requirement. Comparison with other Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs (APSIA) mid-career programs shows that this approach is out of step with peer and peer-plus institutions. Under the proposed structure of the degree, students will be exposed to core policy-relevant analytical skills (negotiation; economics or statistics) and to the fundamentals of IR scholarship and practice. The required courses for the MAIR overlap with required courses for the revised MAIA program (as well as some course required for the MAGP program), providing the students with a better and more comprehensive basis upon which they can then develop their specialization. In addition, each student selects five elective courses based on their functional and/or regional interests and professional needs.

In this proposed revision of the MAIR degree, the existing MA Paper requirement has been eliminated. Currently, students are almost never able to complete the MAIR in less than 12 months (and sometimes take 15 months or more). Moreover, competitor schools typically do not require a final product equivalent to the MA Paper, and we have not found the MA Papers completed by our MAIR students to be essential to their career advancement (which is often inside of a government agency that is sponsoring their training). Thus, we have concluded that the MA Paper is an unnecessary obstacle to enrollment by many potential students. It is particularly an obstacle for foreign officials who are sent by their governments, as these students often spend the summer before enrolling in intensive English language programs.

4. Please describe how the proposed change(s) advances the Strategic Plans of the department, of the school/college, and of the University:
The revised MAIR program advances the overall goals outlined in the Pardee School Strategic Plan that was adopted in the fall of 2015. This includes deepening and expanding our teaching in the areas of international and human security; global and human development; diplomacy, statecraft and governance; and culture, religion, policy and society.

One of the three School ambitions identified in the Strategic Plan centers on providing a world-class 21st century education. In support of this essential goal, the revised MAIR program allows us to deliver a meaningful education that enables and empowers our mid-career students to strengthen their roles as leaders in global affairs by cultivating the global competencies that they will need to further advance their careers. It would also be beneficial to our other graduate, as well as undergraduate students to have a more vibrant mid-career program. Mid-career students play an important role in many policy schools. Not only do they bring a dose of the “real world” to classroom debates and exercises, they also help to expand all of our students’ career networks in the US and foreign government, international organizations, and other potential employers.

The MAIR program is also revised with the intention to help the Pardee School make progress on fulfilling several of the nine Strategic Goals that are identified in the Strategic Plan. More specifically, these include:

Goal #3: To attract high-quality, diverse and committed students as well as to grow the graduate program to a size comparable with our peers, to maintain healthy recruitment in all degree programs, and to provide all Pardee School graduate students with a sense of shared community and pride in their ‘Pardee’ identity and its mission as students in smaller set of distinct graduate programs where the revised MAIR program is an essential part to attract more and better mid-career students.

Goal #5: To offer an exciting, streamlined and innovative set of graduate programs that respond to student interested and global trends, providing world class 21st century educational offerings. The graduate program revisions including those to the MAIR program help us to better capture the excitement of the Pardee School’s mission, to streamline existing programs into a smaller set of clearly differentiated and individually robust programs that cultivate
substantive individuality as well as shared community, and to identify and use innovative tools that help differentiate our students in skills and approaches available to them.

Among our competitors (defined as full APSIA members), the strongest and most prestigious programs typically offer a small number of MA degrees that are defined broadly, rather than a proliferation of niche programs. Our assessment is that this approach improves students’ educational experience and ability to advance their professional goals, while still operating within a clear structure. Mirroring many of our competitors, the proposed structure focuses on core skills plus the development of specialized knowledge in a particular area of international affairs.

Goal #6: To encourage pedagogical innovation that gives Pardee School students a distinct advantage. As the graduate program curriculum and individual courses are revised, faculty are encouraged and supported to adopt class-room innovations for better emphasizing critical thinking as well as building problem-solving skills through combinations of academic and practitioner teaching in relevant areas. The Pardee School will also continue to systematically use cross-listed and joint courses with other Schools and departments on campus to provide our students an interdisciplinary education focusing on real world issues, problems and solutions.

In conjunction with this curricular revision, the Pardee School has also been developing growing numbers of courses that utilize new and innovative pedagogy. These include, for example “policy labs,” team-based consulting for real-world clients, and cooperative education with classes at universities outside the United States.

Goal #9: To establish recognition, identity and pride in the Pardee School amongst current and future alumni. As with any professional school, our current and future alumni are a critical constituency with whom we must keep engaged and who will build bridges of engagement between the School and the outside world. A more streamlined, high-quality set of graduate program offerings with the MAIA program as a core component will improve the sense of community among graduate students across different specializations. This will strengthen their ties both to each other and to the Pardee School, which will help to expand career and alumni networks and community. The Pardee School will keep investing in our students to develop pride in the quality of the programs and a Pardee School identity that they will take with them after they graduate.

In addition, the Pardee School graduate program revisions, including the revised MAIR program,
are consistent with several commitments and goals identified in the University Strategic Plan. These revisions reflect BU’s commitment “To increase our emphasis on interdisciplinary graduate education, in order to expand our leadership in important fields” and “to continue to foster the engagement of Boston University in the city and the world through public service and by extending the reach of our educations programs... [and creating] new opportunities for students from around the world to experience a BU education.”

5. Please list all the program requirements for the current and revised programs so that review committees can easily see the changes: (expand the table as needed and denote new courses in bold print)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current program</th>
<th>Revised program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A two-semester, 32 credit program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students complete at least one course in three of four core areas (12 credits): Theory &amp; Policy; Political Economy; Security Studies; and Regional Studies.</td>
<td>Students take a common core of three courses (12 credits): 1. GRS IR 601 Fundamentals of International Relations 2. GRS IR 604 International Diplomacy and Negotiations 3. Either GRS IR 602 Quantitative Analysis for Global Affairs or GRS IR 603 Economics for Global Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students choose five elective courses (20 credits).</td>
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<td>Students must demonstrate graduate-level reading proficiency in a foreign language. This can be demonstrated either through a language examination or completion of a non-credit graduate-level foreign language reading course. For non-native English speakers who were required to submit a TOEFL score report as part of their application for admission, knowledge of English fulfills this requirement.</td>
<td>Same as the current program.</td>
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<td>Students must fulfill a statistics requirement in one of several ways: A two-credit (or more) college level course in statistics, which will not be applied toward the IR MA degree (with the exception of MA 614). Or take IR 702 Research Methods for IR Practitioners or MA 614 Statistical Methods. These two classes will also count as electives toward the MA degree.</td>
<td>Students do not have to fulfill a formal statistics requirement.</td>
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Students must write and defend an individual MA paper, which can be either a research paper or a policy paper.

Students do not write an individual MA paper.

6. Is this change a result of program learning outcomes assessment and/or academic program review? If yes, please describe:

Yes. The revised MAIR program is the result of extensive faculty discussions that were carried out as part of the process of developing and now implementing the Pardee School’s 2015 Strategic Plan. In addition, over the summer of 2015, we engaged a consultant to survey current students, recent alumni, and students who declined our offer of admission regarding strengths and weaknesses of existing programs.

7. Please list learning outcomes for the revised program:

When graduating, students are expected to meet the following Learning Outcomes:

1. Posses a broad mastery of international relations in the 21 century
2. Demonstrate in-depth empirical expertise in their concentration
3. Master analytical skills aiding further career development

8. How does the change place your program in the context of programs at peer institutions?

There is no common “industry standard” among our peer professional affairs schools that are members of APSIA (Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs) with respect to the number of separate graduate programs that each school offers. Some schools have a very large number of individual programs while other schools only offer a small number of programs. The Pardee School faculty believes that at this point in time, and consistent with goal #5 of the Strategic Plan, it is beneficial to both our students and the School to streamline our graduate program offerings.

There is also no “industry standard” with regard to specific curricular requirements, beyond the nearly universal requirement of basic economic and quantitative coursework. Mid-career MA programs in international affairs vary considerably with regard to flexibility, the range of functional and/or regional specializations offered, the extent of quantitative and economic course requirements, etc. However, it can generally be observed they are shorter (typically 2-semester or 12-month) and more flexible than APSIA schools’ flagship MA programs. In general, they do not require theses. Thus, the proposed MAIR mirrors the general parameters of mid-
career programs of our competitors, although it does not seek to copy any one particular model. Fundamentally, it reflects our assessment of the needs of our student body, our faculty strengths, and our mission statement. The Pardee School faculty anticipates that the combination of foundational skills; curricular flexibility; and the notable strengths of our offerings in areas such as sustainable development, non-traditional security, religion and international relations, intelligence, and regional studies will position the School well to attract high-quality mid-career students from both the United States and countries all over the world.

9. How does the change affect other academic units and existing programs at the University?

No implications for other academic units or other existing programs.

10. How will you notify current students of the proposed changes and implement the requirements? How will you assure that current students are able to complete their programs under the requirements that were in place at the time of their matriculation?

Once the full suite of graduate program revisions has been approved, the Pardee School through the Director of Graduate Studies and the graduate program advisor will reach out to all students that applied and were admitted into the existing MAIR program to inform them of all relevant changes and offer them the opportunity to switch into the revised program.

11. Please document any implications that the change has on professional accreditation or licensure at the program or school/college level:

One of the Pardee School’s main short-term goals, as discussed in the Strategic Plan, is to become a Full Member of APSIA (the School is currently an Affiliate Member). Offering state-of-art graduate programs and housing a diverse and global student body is critical to achieving the goal of APSIA membership. The revised MAIR program, which improves our mid-career program, supports our application to go from affiliate to full membership. Requiring two basic courses in international relations (GRS IR 601) and diplomacy and negotiations (GRS IR 604) as well as strengthening our methods (GRS IR 602) and economics (GRS IR 603) courses will enhance the case for full APSIA membership as the emphasis on developing foundational skills and knowledge better aligns us with other APSIA members than the current “core” (which is actually a distributional requirement).
12. If the change includes a new course or courses, please indicate who will teach the course and how the rest of that faculty member’s course load will be affected (courses(s) redistributed to other faculty, taught less frequently, no longer taught, etc.). Please be specific about affected courses. This information should be reflected in the budget form that accompanies the proposal, e.g. the cost for a new faculty member to teach the new course or a redistributed course:

The foundation of the revised MAIR program will draw on four core courses, two of which are new, one significantly revised, and one somewhat revised. These courses are also required for the MAIA program. The current core courses are numbered consecutively at the bottom of the 700-range (GRS IR 701-704) to make clear that they are seen as introductory to the graduate program. Due to rules put in place by the University Registrar, we are unable to repurpose existing numbers in that range for new courses. Thus, we have chosen to number them as IR 601-604:

1. GRS IR 601: Fundamentals of International Relations is a renumbering of the existing course of GRS IR 701: Fundamentals of International Relations and will be taught by various faculty members. It introduces students to problems and concepts in the study of international relations and provides a building block for subsequent classes in the MA program. The course is updated annually to address changing scholarship and issues in international relations.

2. GRS IR 602: Quantitative Analysis for Global Affairs is a revised version of GRS IR 702: Research Methods for International Relations Practitioners and will be taught by various faculty members. It will focus on practical applications of statistical methods (from descriptive statistics through multiple regression), focusing on applications relevant to issues in international relations. We consider basic knowledge of statistics to be an essential skill in the policy world, a position that is nearly universal among IR Master’s programs at APSIA schools.

3. GRS IR 603: Economics for Global Policy is a new course. It provides an overview of key micro and macroeconomic concepts that students will encounter in their careers as international relations professionals, as well as in many of the classes they may choose to take in order to complete their MA degree. We consider basic knowledge of economics to be an essential skill in the policy world, a position that is nearly universal among IR Master’s programs at APSIA schools.

4. GRS IR 604: Negotiation and Diplomacy is a new course, to be taught initially by Ambassador Robert Loftis. One outcome of our review of the skills and knowledge necessary for a successful career in international relations was the realization that negotiation skills are essential to nearly all of the careers that our graduates may follow. The study of diplomacy was also determined to be important—although not all of our graduates will end up formally as diplomats in either
national or UN service, nearly all will need to interact with national governments and international organizations. Thus, understanding the diplomatic ecosystem and its rules and norms will make them much more effective in their chosen careers.

No additional courses will need to be developed as part of the launch of the revised MAIR program.

13. Please list other resources needed including new staff, IT, technology enhanced classrooms, office space, and other facilities. This information should be reflected in the budget:

No additional resources are needed.

14. Please describe the budgetary impact that the proposed change will have:

There are no budgetary implications.

15. Please provide the bulletin copy (exactly as it should appear) related to the proposed change, including all text connected to the program (requirements, description, learning outcomes)[NOTE: this bulletin copy is in a final form and cannot be changed]:

Mid-Career MA in International Relations

The mid-career Master of Arts in International Relations (IREL) is designed to address the needs of mid-career students who wish to increase their knowledge and understanding of international relations. The IREL is an intensive two-semester program that builds on the knowledge and skills students have accumulated through practical experience. Students complete three core courses that cover international relations scholarship, the practice of diplomacy and negotiation, and quantitative methods or economics. Because the program is targeted toward students who already have clear career objectives and a strong basis of knowledge of international relations, they choose the remainder of their courses independently, according to their own needs and interests. If they choose, students can also demonstrate expertise in a region by earning a graduate certificate through one of the Pardee School’s regional centers and programs.

While students in IREL may hold a bachelor’s degree in any field, they must have significant work experience relevant to international relations or have already completed a master’s degree in a related discipline in order to enter the program. The program is especially well suited to students who are
working or have worked in government, inter-governmental, or non-governmental organizations, and intend to continue in the international relations arena. It is also ideal for US Army officers who are required to complete a master's degree as part of their training in the Foreign Area Officer (FAO) program, and there is a long history of FAO students in the program.

Prospective students with little or no work experience in the field should apply for one of the School’s other degree programs, such as the MA in International Affairs (MAIA).

Course Requirements

The IREL program requires a total of 8 courses (32 credits), consisting of 3 core courses from the following list. Beyond the core courses, remaining credits must be fulfilled through approved elective courses.

Required Core Courses

- GRS IR 601 Fundamentals of International Relations
- GRS IR 604 International Diplomacy and Negotiations
- Either GRS IR 602 Quantitative Analysis for Global Affairs or GRS IR 603 Economics for Global Policy

Language Requirement

All students pursuing the Mid-Career MA in International Relations are required to demonstrate graduate-level reading proficiency in a foreign language prior to completion of the degree. Language proficiency can be demonstrated through either a language examination or successful completion of a non-credit graduate-level foreign language reading course offered by Boston University. In the case of non-native English speakers who were required to submit a TOEFL score report as part of their application for admission, knowledge of English fulfills this requirement.

Graduate Certificates (Optional)

Graduate certificates in regional studies are currently offered by several of the Pardee School’s regional studies centers and programs. Students with an interest in a particular region are encouraged to complete a graduate certificate as a means of developing and demonstrating their regional expertise, including language capability. Specific requirements for each graduate certificate are listed on the relevant center and program websites.