



The Paul H. Nitze
School of Advanced
International Studies

JOHNS HOPKINS
UNIVERSITY

International Development Program | M.A. Academic Requirements

AY 2009-2010

Field Description

The SAIS International Development (IDEV) Program provides an interdisciplinary approach to the study of developing countries, with the aim of preparing students for careers in development. IDEV students can choose one of four tracks: Finance and Development, Politics and Governance, Human Development, and Global Health and Development. In addition, they can opt for (1) a specialization in Development Economics, offered through the SAIS International Economics Program, or (2) a specialization in Emerging Markets, administered through the IDEV Program.

Washington, DC is in many ways the center of the development world. It is home to multilateral institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Inter-American Development Bank; US government agencies or affiliates like the Agency for International Development, the Treasury Department, and the National Endowment for Democracy; research centers like the Center for Global Development or the Brookings Institution; non-governmental organizations like Freedom House, the Eurasia Foundation, FINCA, Accion, and InterAction; and many for-profit service providers like Chronics International or Development Alternatives International. Students in the IDEV program receive rigorous academic training that helps them better conceptualize the development process in its economic, political, and social dimensions. Many students combine this program with practical policy and field experience through an internship between their first and second years. Students can also expand their contacts with development practitioners through the networking that is possible in the Washington area.

Program Description

Given its interdisciplinary approach to development, the SAIS International Development Program (IDEV) draws upon development courses offered by other SAIS programs, especially in regional studies, and also offers its own courses on key development topics not covered elsewhere at SAIS.

Admission to IDEV

Only a limited number of students admitted to SAIS will be accepted into the IDEV program, although IDEV courses are open to all SAIS students on a space-available basis. Students are admitted directly to the IDEV Program as part of the SAIS application process. Strong preference will be given to students with prior experience living in developing countries, or with prior work or volunteer experience relevant to a career in development, although consideration will be given to students demonstrating a strong motivation to make a career change into development work. To enter IDEV, students must also have completed the SAIS Intermediate Microeconomics requirement prior to entering SAIS. This can be done through SAIS summer school, Pre-Term courses offered annually by SAIS in August, or by demonstrating proficiency with passing the SAIS Microeconomics placement exam. Students who feel their background is strong enough to take the placement exam are highly advised to do so when it is offered in June; failure to pass this exam or a SAIS microeconomics course will disqualify candidates from entering the IDEV Program.

Academic Requirements

IDEV students can select one of four tracks:

- **Finance and Development** encompasses emerging market finance, microfinance, and public finance. Students will typically emphasize one of these three areas, though it is strongly recommended that all students in this track take the SAIS International Economics Program's course in corporate finance. Microfinance has become a major growth area within development in recent years, but one that requires knowledge of conventional finance as it becomes integrated with the latter. Students in this track can look to careers ranging from working in the field on a microfinance project, analyzing proposals for funding of development projects by national or international aid agencies, to participating in decisions on direct foreign investment by private-sector institutions such as banks, corporations, and venture-capital funds.
- **Politics and Governance** focuses on issues related to institutions, governance, rule of law, public administration, accountability, anti-corruption, civil society, and democratic development. Institutions are important in their own right, and in recent years have been recognized as being critical to economic development. Students in this track can look to careers either making policy in national agencies or multilateral organizations, or working in organizations promoting democracy, human rights, or rule of law.
- **Human Development** focuses on the change that effective development requires at all levels, from the village up to the national political and economic elites, and in various social sectors such as the urban, rural, informal and labor areas. Students analyze the sociopolitical process through which such changes occur and the institutionalization needed to make the changes sustainable. Human Development students also can focus on such crucial aspects of development as provision of credit to microenterprises, environmental protection and strengthening education and health system, combining Human Development courses with courses offered in the other two IDEV tracks and by the SAIS regional studies and Energy, Resources and Environment (formerly International Policy) Programs.
- **Global Health and Development** examines the role of public health in advancing development, and focuses on the relationship between health and development at the community, national, and global levels. Scientific, economic, and political studies are used to understand and advance solutions in this complex arena. Students in this track can look forward to careers ranging from working in the field building health systems or scaling up HIV/AIDS treatment for example, to creating, managing and evaluating global health interventions with foundations, government aid agencies, international and non-governmental organizations.

ALL IDEV students take the IDEV gateway course, Introduction to Development, during their first semester. Students then take a minimum of 3 courses in their selected track, plus one course either in one of the other two tracks or from a list of tools courses. In addition, students are required to choose two IDEV-approved regional courses on development. A comprehensive list of such approved regional courses can be found on the IDEV website by [clicking here](#).

As one of their SAIS core courses, IDEV students must choose Comparative National Systems.

For their two SAIS elective economics courses (in addition to Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, International Trade Theory and International Monetary Theory), IDEV students must take one of the courses listed by the International Economics Program in either the Development Economics or Finance categories. For their second elective, IDEV students must take either a Statistics course or one of the full Econometrics courses. Students should arrange to take an appropriate preparatory course so that they can qualify to take the SATs/econometrics courses.

Related Specializations

In addition to satisfying the above IDEV academic requirements, IDEV students can opt for a specialization in Emerging Markets, which is administered through the IDEV Program, and /or one of the specializations offered through the SAIS International Economics Program, either Development Economics or International Finance, as appropriate for their IDEV track.

[Click here for a chart outlining 2009-2010 academic requirements.](#)

[Click here for a chart outlining 2008-2009 academic requirements.](#)

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