

URBAN STUDIES (M.A.)

Overview

The Urban Studies program at Fordham University is a unique, 16-month interdisciplinary M.A. program, which introduces students to post-graduate academic learning about urban history, policy, social issues, minority representation, immigration, economics, transit, and design, while also encouraging them to seek out the urban experience. Located right in the heart of New York City, and serving two campuses (the Bronx and Manhattan), the Urban Studies program represents an exceptional fusion of town & gown. We encourage our students to engage in academic thinking and learning, while also confronting the socioeconomic and political realities of the city and its communities.

During the first year of their studies, our M.A. students complete the core courses, which are intended to lay an interdisciplinary foundation for their own research projects. During the summer, and the last semester of their studies, our students can pursue their own special "menu" of courses while completing their field research and writing their thesis. We accommodate full- and part-time students, and offer a limited amount of merit-based funding for new applicants.

Urban Studies M.A. graduates work in community organizing, education, and local and state politics; they start their own businesses, or pursue urban planning, doctoral, or law degrees. To accommodate part-time students, field research, and internships, all of our core classes are offered after 5 p.m. For their electives, students can create their own schedules, during the day or the evenings, and choose between the Manhattan and the Bronx campuses. They can also take advantage of a broad range of courses from economics, history, political science, sociology, and many more.

CIP Code

45.1201 - Urban Studies/Affairs.

You can use the CIP code to learn more about career paths associated with this field of study and, for international students, possible post-graduation visa extensions. Learn more about CIP codes and other information resources.

Admissions

Admission Requirements

Candidates for the M.A. in Urban Studies are expected to have a minimum GPA of 3.0 from an accredited college or university. Completed applications will include each of the following items:

Resume/CV

Submitted directly via the online application.

Statement of Intent

Up to 500 words, submitted electronically via the online application.

Supplemental Essay (Optional)

You may choose to answer this optional essay question. Your answer will help the admission committee get a better understanding of your unique perspective and potential contributions to our community.

Please discuss how your life experiences, perspective, or worldview have motivated or inspired you, posed challenges, helped you build skills, or taught you valuable lessons. We are eager to learn how these experiences have helped shape who you are and prepared you for graduate study, in keeping with our mission of "graduate education for the global good."

Three Letters of Recommendation (from professors or employers)

Submitted directly via the online application. Enter the following information for each of your recommendation providers: name, address, email address, phone number, and institution. Make sure you enter your recommenders' email addresses correctly so that they each receive an automated email instructing them on how to submit their recommendations online. Mark the waiver statement for each recommender you enter.

Writing Sample

5 - 7 pages maximum, submitted electronically via the online application.

Official Degree Transcripts

Please be sure to order official final transcripts from all previously attended institutions confirming degree conferral (if applicable) at least one month before the posted application deadline. Transcripts should be sent directly from your prior institution(s) via secure electronic delivery to the Office of Admissions at fuga@fordham.edu.

If electronic delivery is not available, please request that your transcripts be submitted by postal service in a sealed envelope from the institution to:

Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
Office of Admissions
Keating Hall Room 216
Fordham University
441 E. Fordham Rd.
Bronx, NY 10458

Please note: We strongly recommend that you upload unofficial copies of your academic transcripts to your application while the Office of Admissions awaits receipt of your official transcripts.

Please ensure that all official transcripts from previously attended post-secondary institutions are submitted in English, or are accompanied by a certified English translation. For academic transcripts from institutions outside the United States, applicants are strongly encouraged to obtain a course-by-course credential evaluation. Transcripts and credentials conversion information is available on the GSAS International Students page.

- English proficiency: International applicants whose native language is not English are required to complete and submit to GSAS prior to matriculation their official scores from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). GSAS will also consider a student's International English Language Testing System (IELTS)—Cambridge English Proficiency Level language testing results.

Official Graduate Record Examination (GRE) Scores

GRE scores are optional for both the Ph.D. and M.A. programs for the 2024 - 2025 admissions cycle. Applicants who wish to submit GRE scores may do so, but scores are not required (scores should be sent directly by the testing service to the Office of Graduate Admissions, Fordham University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences – Code #2259).

English Proficiency Requirements

International applicants whose native language is not English are required to complete and submit to GSAS prior to matriculation their official scores from one of the following accepted English language competency exams:

- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) - GSAS accepts the following TOEFL tests:
 - TOEFL iBT (including the Home Edition and Paper Edition
 - TOEFL Essentials
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS)—Cambridge English Proficiency Level
- Duolingo English Test
- PTE Academic
- Cambridge English Qualifications - We accept the B2 First, C1 Advanced, or C2 Proficiency exams

Official TOEFL, IELTS, DET, PTE Academic, or Cambridge English Qualifications scores should be sent directly by the testing service to the Office of Graduate Admissions, Fordham University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (our ETS TOEFL score code #2259).

Preferred minimum score requirements:

Exam	Score
TOEFL iBT	100
IELTS	7.0 band score
DET	120
PTE Academic	68
Cambridge English Qualifications	185 Overall Score on the B2, C1 Advanced, or C2 Proficiency exam

Exemptions to the English Language Requirement

Exemptions from this requirement can be requested by the applicant in her/his application, or can be made in writing by the applicant to fuga@fordham.edu. Exemptions are generally permitted for international applicants who:

1. are native English speakers from countries where English is an official language; and/or
2. have completed, within the past five years, at least two years of study at an undergraduate or graduate institution in the United States or in a country where English is the official language of instruction.

GSAS retains the right to request language evaluation from any applicant. The Fordham English Language Test (FELT), administered by Fordham’s Institute of American Language and Culture (IALC), may be required for those students whose English proficiency scores do not meet GSAS program requirements. Additional coursework may also be recommended by the IALC.

Students are permitted to register for two GSAS courses during the academic term in which they are completing any IALC-recommended coursework, which generally occurs during their first semester of study.

Please note: Tuition costs associated with the learning of English as a second language are the responsibility of the student and will not be covered by a GSAS tuition scholarship. GSAS merit-based tuition

scholarships are not applicable to the costs of additional coursework recommended by the IALC.

For more information about admissions to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, please visit their page on the Fordham website.

Requirements

Depending on the number of courses taken each semester, the degree is a three- or four-semester program for full-time students (for example, three semesters plus field work in the summer).

The degree requires completion of 36 credits and a formal master’s thesis. Three core courses establish a common base of knowledge and research skills, in addition to field work and a research project. Students then complete seven elective courses across a variety of disciplines depending on their individual interests.

Course	Title	Credits
Core Courses		
URST 5000	Issues in Urban Studies	3
URST 5020	Urban Political Processes	3
URST 6200	Research Skills in Urban Studies	3
Required Fieldwork/Thesis Writing Courses		
URST 6080	Urban Studies Fieldwork ¹	3
URST 6999	Urban Studies Research ¹	3
Seven elective courses ²		21
M.A. Thesis Completion ²		
Total Credits		36

- ¹ Please note:
- At least three credits each of URST 6080 Urban Studies Fieldwork and URST 6999 Urban Studies Research are required. In some exceptional circumstances, additional credits of URST 6080 and/or URST 6999 may be taken towards the elective requirement with special permission of the Urban Studies director.
 - Students do not need to take all three credits of URST 6080 and URST 6999 as three-credit courses, but may complete the three credits of each course in smaller increments, if desired.
 - Urban Studies graduate students must enroll in URST 6080 Urban Studies Fieldwork and URST 6999 Urban Studies Research under the supervision of a thesis adviser.
 - The thesis adviser may be any full-time faculty member affiliated with the Urban Studies program. Students must obtain the permission of their chosen thesis adviser, as well as the program director, before enrolling in these classes.
 - Students complete the field work research for their master’s thesis in New York City or in another large-scale city in the United States or abroad. It may be completed during the academic year or the summer.
 - Before registering for field work, a student must complete the core courses listed above and be in good academic standing. The thesis adviser or the Urban Studies director must approve and monitor all field work research. The field study must be directly related to the student’s master’s thesis.

² Electives can be choose from any graduate-level Urban Studies course or any course with the URSG attribute, listed below.

Urban Studies Electives offered by other departments

Courses in this group have the URSG attribute.

Course	Title	Credits
BISC 5511	Conservation Law and Policy	3
CEED 6010	Research Ethics and Soc Justic	3
ECON 5015	Economic Development Policy	3
ECON 5260	Epidemics and Development Policy	3
HIST 5750	Ethnicity, Race, and Politics in NYC	4
HIST 6531	Bombay–Shanghai–London	4
HUST 5350	Climate Change in the West African Sahel: Impact on Water and Migration	0-3
PMMA 5106	Race, Gender, and Digital Media	3
PMMA 5208	Digital Media and Migration Justice	3
POSC 5140	Themes in Urban Public Policy and Power	3
POSC 5500	Comparative Pol Analysis	3
POSC 6530	Political Economy of Development	3
PSYC 6010	Research Ethics and Social Justice	3
SOCI 6100	Classical Social Theory	3
URST 5091	Art Communities and Urban Aesthetics	4
VART 5234	Ways of Getting Around: Whoosh Whoosh, Zoom Zoom	3
VART 5555	Urban Film Video Production	3