MSc in Development and International Relations (DIR) and European Studies (ES)

### Description of the semester

The 9th semester has three options:

1. An internship at an institution or organisation with activities within development and international relations or European studies. The objective of the internship is to encourage students to gain practical experience with applying knowledge, theories and methods within development and international relations or European studies and in working in an international organisation or institution. In addition to the internship, the students follow a thesis preparation workshop.

2. A study abroad at a university or research institute. Students must apply for preliminary approval at the Faculty before departure. Upon return, students must apply for credit transfer. Students must choose courses/seminars within the fields of development studies and international relations or European studies which are in line with the academic contents of courses/seminars in which they already have participated at Aalborg University.

### Internship (25 ECTS)

Through the internship, you will practice disciplinary and cross-disciplinary cooperation within an organization and manage to cope with situations in international or intercultural environments, which are complex, unpredictable and require new models for problem solving.

Through the internship and the project writing, you will learn to produce independent and focused analyses of issues within one or more of the disciplinary areas of the program through investigations in the internship organization.

If students are within one of the specialisation programs – Chinese Area Studies, Global Gender Studies or Arctic Studies, their internship project must be directly or indirectly related to some aspects of the specializations.

The duration of the internship ranges from 3 to 6 months within the period of 1 of July 1 and 31 of January. During the internship, students will have meetings with internship supervisors, usually online. At the meetings, students will discuss internship project with supervisors and get supervision on their project.

The internship is examined based on the Host Institution Statement (a template is available in Moodle) uploaded to digital exam and an internship project written either in the form a "normal" project or a policy brief. Instructions may be found in the Internship and Study
Abroad Handbook in moodle. The internship is graded according to 7 grade scale. A total of 25 ECTS is awarded.

**Thesis preparation workshop (5 ECTS)**

The objective of the thesis preparation workshop is to enable the students to define and delimit a potential topic and problem field for their MA thesis within the subject area of Development and International Relations or European Studies. In addition, the aim is to enable the students to identify and collect relevant data and literature within this problem field. Students are expected to identify a problem area for their thesis, collect relevant literature related to this area of study and outline key perspectives within that field. The problem area and the relevant literature must be outlined in a synopsis.

The thesis preparation workshop consists of a number of online workshops and lectures providing students with skills for writing the synopsis, and allowing students to work with and receive feedback on their synopsis.

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**Semester coordination and secretariat**

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**Title, ECTS credits**

**Project Oriented Module in an External Organization**

25 ECTS

*Evt. omregnet arbejdsbelastning til antal timer*

**Location**

3rd semester

**Coordinator**
Content, Progress and Pedagogy of the Module

Objectives

- That students gain practical experience through applying knowledge, theories and methods within international relations while working in an international organization.
- That students apply and reflect upon their collaborative PBL competences acquired during previous semesters’ group projects.
- That students are able to reflect critically on their experience during their time at an international organization and on the linkage between their study programs and the Academic Internship, thereby demonstrating their reflexive competencies.

Content

Students must spend a minimum of three months in an international organization working with activities related to the study program. The host organization is chosen by the student and must be approved by the study board/the coordinator. Before the Academic Internship begins, an agreement between the student, the study board and the host organization must be drawn up stating the expectations and responsibilities of the student during the Academic Internship. This agreement must specify which tasks the student is expected to undertake at the host organization as well as the duration of the Academic Internship. Concurrently, the students will write a project report, reflecting on their experience and using their theoretical knowledge about international relations to identify and analyze a problem field of relevance to the host organization.

The report must contain reflections on the linkage between the Academic Internship and the study program as well as an analysis of a topic relevant to the host organization. Additionally, there must be reflections about problem-based learning in relation to Academic Internship experience, drawing on experiences from former semesters at the study program.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

KNOWLEDGE

- specific knowledge of the working environment and internal procedures of the host institution
- in-depth knowledge of the field of the host organization as well as a broad understanding of the context for the host institution’s daily work

SKILLS

- can analyze specific issues of relevance to the host institution within the field of international relations
- can select and apply relevant methods and theories from the study program in a practical context
- can reflect critically on the application of relevant methods and theories from an academic perspective, including PBL
- are able to apply acquired theoretical knowledge related to international relations in a practical context

COMPETENCES

- can analyze specific issues of relevance to the host institution within the field of international relations
- can select and apply relevant methods and theories from the study program in a practical context
can reflect critically on the application of relevant methods and theories from an academic perspective, including PBL
- are able to apply acquired theoretical knowledge related to international relations in a practical context

Type of Examination
Prerequisite for enrollment for the exam
The students must hand in a written statement from the host institution stating that the student has worked in the organization during the time period stipulated.

Written exam - The module is completed by an internally assessed, individual written examination in the form of a project report of 12 to 15 standard pages.

Hand in date 3rd January before 12.00 in Digital Exam

Thesis Preparation
5 ECTS

Location
3rd semester

Coordinators
Jesper Willaing Zeuthen
Malayna Rafiopoulos

Language
Language of instruction: English

Objectives
The objective of this module is to prepare the students for the writing of the master thesis by enabling them to define and delimit a potential topic and problem field within the subject area of the study program. In addition, the aim is to enable the students to identify and collect relevant data and literature within this problem field.

Content
Students are introduced to the requirements for master thesis writing. Students are expected to identify a potential problem area for their thesis, collect relevant literature related to this area of study and outline key perspectives within that field. The problem area and the relevant literature must be outlined in a synopsis.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
KNOWLEDGE
- Key empirical aspects of the selected problem area
- Central academic debates in relation to the chosen topic/problem area
- Fundamental components of the master thesis and requirements for the thesis proposal

SKILLS
- Can identify a relevant problem area within the field of international relations and argue for the relevance of the chosen problem
- Ability to find relevant academic literature on the chosen topic
- Can summarize the major academic debates regarding the selected subject area.
- Can select relevant theories and methods in relation to the chosen problem area and argue for this choice.

**COMPETENCES**

- Can delimit a research area and outline a research project
- Can work independently with academic literature search
- Can apply and explain academic and PBL principles to create a project design, which can form the basis for the MA thesis.

**TYPE OF INSTRUCTION**

- Online seminars and cluster supervision. The students will be expected to identify a problem field within International Relations and work independently with data collection and literature review within the chosen problem area.

**Type of exam**

*Written exam*

The examination for Thesis Preparation is an internally assessed individual or group-based written exam in the form of a synopsis including a literature review. Maximum length 6 standard pages for one person + one additional page per person in the group.

**Hand in date 17th January before 12.00 in Digital Exam**

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