



Joint Master of Arts Program in
**Comparative & Middle East
Politics and Society**
(CMEPS)



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Message from the CMEPS Team

Whether you are just beginning your search for graduate studies or are entering the program as a new student, we wish to extend our sincere thanks for your interest. We are excited about this unique program and those it attracts, for many reasons.

CMEPS aims to equip students with the necessary skills to develop an understanding of the contemporary world and an appreciation of the complex processes, institutions and value-allocation systems that characterize human communities. Through the program, students will be able to analyze and compare between political processes and phenomena in Middle Eastern countries. By being part of a group of students with diverse backgrounds, lively discussions are not limited to classroom debates, but extend into an overall atmosphere of critical thinking and engagement with the material. Whether student interests lay in theory, policy, practice or a combination of all, the common notion that politics matter prevails in the classroom.

The program is characterized by broad academic discourse. A unique theme of exchange is evident in the design and implementation of the MA degree program, which aims to challenge perspectives, encourage analytical engagement and foster critical thinking about the world. A joint venture between schools that value American liberal arts education and continental European traditions, the program comprises faculty members and students from various countries around the globe. Due to its multicultural dimension, the program also inspires vibrant debate among students.

It is not merely the constitution of the CMEPS cohort that makes it special. students have the opportunity to take their academic pursuits across borders to exchange ideas with counterparts overseas, both on the doorstep of change in Cairo and in the heart of academic history in Tübingen.

CMEPS Academic Coordinators
Cairo and Tübingen



About CMEPS

AUC's Department of Political Science and the Institute of Political Science at the University of Tübingen are offering a two-year joint Master of Arts MA program in comparative and Middle East politics and society. Upon the successful completion of this program, students will receive a full degree from their home university, as well as an additional certificate from the partner university, testifying to the international aspect of the program. As of Fall 2013, 10 students from each university will be admitted into the program every year. Research stipends will be available, and the third semester of studies will be conducted at the partner institution.

Focusing on comparative politics, the degree provides in-depth knowledge and tools for analyzing the relationship between societies and states in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, as well as the dynamics, processes and contexts for social and political transformation. Required course topics include comparative politics of the Middle East, development politics and international cooperation, as well as issues of regime change and democratization. In addition to these core requirements, students will be able to choose from a wide range of elective courses on the international political economy, identity and norms in world politics, and special topics that are related to Middle East politics and civil society. By the end of their studies, CMEPS students will have a unique profile that combines an advanced analytical knowledge of comparative politics with a strong specialization in the politics, societies and cultures of the broader MENA region.

At AUC, the MA in CMEPS is one possible specialization among other long-standing political science master's degrees. However, the exchange semester in Germany is a unique and integral feature of the program. At the University of Tübingen, CMEPS is the first joint master's program with an integrated study-abroad component in Cairo. All core courses have been jointly developed by faculty members from AUC and the University of Tübingen.

Program Timeline

	Year 1	Year 2
First Semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Required Course work- Language Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Semester Abroad at Partner University- Elective Course work- Language Training- Thesis Preparation- Joint Seminar
Second Semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Required Course work- Language Training- Thesis Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Joint Workshop- Thesis Drafting and Submission- Oral Examination





Program Structure

At both universities, the MA program follows a globally competitive structure of core courses and elective options, including a jointly taught course on development politics and cooperation, as well as a mutual research colloquium for the preparation of each student's thesis.

Required Course work

During their first year of study, students at each university will attend courses on the foundations of political science. They will simultaneously develop their language skills in preparation for their semesters abroad. In Tübingen, course structure depends on the students' first degree, enabling them to complement prior knowledge with more focused courses on comparative politics or Arabic-language training. All students, whether at AUC or Tübingen, will take the following core courses:

Middle East Politics and Societies

This course provides an in-depth examination of the nature and dynamics of Middle East politics. It explores some of the region's key political and social structural traits, as it aims to generate an understanding of the fundamentals of the modern Middle East. The course will focus on state formation, national identities, leadership, elites and the impact of the West.

Regime Change and Democratization

The course addresses the academic debate on authoritarianism, regime change and democratization from theoretical and empirical perspectives, comparing developments in different regions around the world. It provides knowledge about key concepts and theoretical approaches to examine processes of systemic political change, such as political regime analysis, theories of democratic transition and consolidation, as well as hybrid regimes. While the focus of this module is on concepts and explanatory approaches (including the examination of structural long-term factors, political actors within and outside of political regimes, as well as international factors in regime change), empirical cases chosen from different continents allow students to apply concepts to real-world contexts.





Comparative Politics of the Middle East

Polity, economy and society are considered as interconnected areas for research in comparative politics. In this course, the debate on theory in Middle Eastern politics is explored in relation to comparative work in other areas. Key concepts and questions about comparative politics are examined with the help of cases taken from the MENA region.

Questions of state-society relations, political regimes, civil society, statehood and political economy are covered. The course provides an overview of the region's key characteristics on an advanced level of study.

Development Politics and International Cooperation

The course examines the main features of the politics of development and international development cooperation, including, but not limited to, conceptual issues such as changing understandings of development, as well as theoretical approaches to explain development or its absence. Topics covered include bilateral and multilateral actors, and state and non-state players in development cooperation; prominent challenges for development cooperation actors (including climate change, poverty and good governance); as well as key trends of practical development cooperation. The course is offered to all CMEPS students and is conducted in the form of a joint seminar.

Elective Course work

In addition to the required courses listed above, students are able to choose from a series of elective courses that are available at the University in a given term. Courses will be chosen based on consultation with academic coordinators and faculty advisers. Since the program culminates in the drafting and defense of a thesis project, courses should be selected with thesis topics and research in mind. Courses offered in recent years include:

The American University in Cairo

- Identity, Cultures and Norms in World Politics
- International Political Economy
- Global Governance and World Order(s)
- Protracted Social Conflicts
- The Political Economy of Regionalism
- Middle East Conflicts
- Politics of Modern Egypt
- European Politics
- Politics in Asia
- African Politics
- Arab-American Relations
- Comparative Foreign Policy: Theories and Applications
- Conflict and Security in Global Politics
- Public Policy and Development
- International Development Organizations

University of Tübingen

- Identity, Cultures and Norms in World Politics
- International Political Economy
- Authoritarianism, Revolutions and State Fragility
- International Relations and Regional Order of the MENA Area
- Contemporary Issues in Political Islam
- The Political System of the European Union
- The European Union in International Relations
- Integration Theory and Democratic Deficit of the European Union
- Global Environmental Change
- Discourses of Security

Language Training

Due to the collaborative nature of the program, the concept of exchange is embedded into the fabric of the CMEPS experience. Students and faculty members have the opportunity to meet on a number of occasions, such as in the third semester abroad and during joint seminars and workshops. Students will also be able develop their language skills throughout the program by receiving language training so as to facilitate daily life abroad and develop a foundation for research capacity in another language. By the end of their degree, it is expected that AUC students will have gained proficiency in German. Likewise, students admitted through the University of Tübingen will have attained an equivalent level of expertise in Arabic.

About the CMEPS Thesis

To complete their degree, students are required to research, write and present a thesis. Through this component of the program, students are able to build on knowledge acquired from coursework, employ research and writing skills, as well as use the creative and critical thinking skills they developed to contribute to their field. Presenting a thesis is a major step toward becoming a professional.

CMEPS master's theses are supervised by experts from both universities. An exchange component is also offered through a joint workshop held in Germany's Black Forest area, where students from both universities meet to discuss and refine their thesis projects.



Studying in Cairo and Tübingen

Political Science at AUC

At AUC, political science is taught as a humanistic discipline, incorporating the values of American liberal arts education and lifelong learning. The discipline seeks to prepare students for good citizenship in democratic polity. Because freedom of academic expression is critical to the success of this endeavor, political science students are encouraged to freely exchange ideas and promote open and ongoing interaction with scholarly institutions throughout Egypt and other parts of the world. Students are also urged to seek self-development and participation in local and global contexts.

Situated within the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, the political science department has the largest number of enrolled students and faculty members. In 2010, the department published six books, five edited books and 19 book chapters. In addition to publications, the location of the department in Cairo also serves as a veritable hub for research on political change. As more public opinion surveys become available in the wake of newfound freedoms, the department will be acquiring greater capacities to analyze data and train them in analytical techniques, thereby enabling students to become better equipped for their professional or academic careers.

Political Science at the University of Tübingen

Founded in 1477, the University of Tübingen is one of the oldest academic institutions in Germany. The university stands for excellence and innovation in research and teaching, and provides an outstanding environment for academic studies. With its problem-oriented and theory-based approaches to studying political systems, state-society relations, democratization and development, the university's graduate program builds on its long-standing research expertise in the MENA region. Most modules will be taught by the university's Institute of Political Science, one of Germany's top-ranked institutions. The institute excels in comparative and international political science research on non-member states of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, with a special focus on MENA countries.





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