INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAMS

MASTER OF ARTS IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZING AND SOCIAL ACTIVISM (COSA) REQUIREMENTS

Faculty

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To meet today's growing demand for diverse perspectives and leaders who can navigate complex partnerships, the Master of Arts in Community Organizing and Social Activism (COSA) graduate program is interdisciplinary and requires both significant hands-on service-learning and international study activities. Drawing from the fields of international development, nonprofit leadership, global health, international education, human rights/social justice, sustainability, and global studies, this degree educates leaders for professional careers in the governmental, non-profit and community organization sectors.

COSA is a 16-month graduate degree programs that directly engage students with partner institutes in countries across Europe, Africa, SE Asia and Latin America. Flexible, individualized programming allows students to design their own graduate degree experience. The program combines rigorous interdisciplinary graduate-level study with hands-on volunteer service. This theory-to-practice, experiential learning graduate program is designed to prepare leaders who serve others through careers with government and policy making organizations, global nonprofits, educational institutions, social enterprises, and community development organizations.

Through study and professional development as well as service-learning placements with community organizations around the world, IPSL graduate students build a global, professional network during their program, helping them to secure career-track positions within their field following graduation.

This practical, social justice focused degree program offers:

- Individual Attention: Program is oriented toward quality rather than quantity.
- Theory-to-Practice: Students apply their learning immediately and directly in the field internationally.
- Global Exposure: Multinational programs in Europe, SE Asia, Africa, and Latin America.
- Transferable Skills: Students build tangible and transferable skill sets that prepare them to master problems from theory to practice.
- International Networks: Students build a global professional network from their direct experience across different locations. A global network is invaluable for launching an international career.

Service-learning lies at the heart of IPSL degree programs where we practice a model of ethical, reciprocal service and community engagement in primarily resource-scare, grassroots organizations serving marginalized communities across the globe. Students engage in 10-15 hours per week of service in the field during terms abroad. IPSL students serve with a variety of organizations based on their specific interests and the needs of our community partners. Global Participatory Action Research (research in support of communities) is part of the culminating project work and is supported through IRB review, individual advising, and practical in-country support. Cultural and linguistic immersion opportunities place students inside communities to encourage cultural humility, ethical action, and personal growth.

Program Goals

The program is designed to help students develop these five main competencies:

1. A Global Perspective
2. Social Development
3. Nonprofit, NGO and Social Entrepreneurship Management
4. Service as a Professional Ethic
5. Distinction: Individual Expertise and Distinction in the Field

Program Design

The COSA program is approximately sixteen months long, consisting of four semester terms. The program is delivered in a hybrid online/onsite format that provides maximum flexibility. To increase access students can start the program in Spring semester (January), Summer semester (May), or Fall semester (August). Program content is organized into required classes, elective classes, and a Culminating Thesis or Culminating Applied Project. The Culminating Project experience integrates knowledge and skills students have learned throughout the program and enables students to apply that knowledge and skill in an individualized way to solve an identified challenge, improve an existing situation, create a novel and unique program solution and/or serve a community organization.

Students must complete at least two of the four semesters abroad and are encouraged to maximize their in-country experiences with three semesters abroad. Students begin the program with a two-week online Residency with two required accelerated online seminar courses during their first semester, followed by hybrid online or travel/onsite format classes during the rest of the first semester and the second and third semesters. The fourth semester is a required online semester and provides the time and focus to finalize the Culminating Project. The fourth term is online (students can choose to be anywhere in the world) and is integrated into the program so students can complete their Culminating Project and present their defense to their Graduate Committee.

The IPSL abroad semesters are designed to be nearly all-inclusive and you do not have to plan your own logistics or budget for major program elements yourself. You can focus on your graduate degree experience.

What's included:

- 5 international flights
- All Accommodations
- Partial Board
- Partial Local Transportation
- 24/7 in-country IPSL team support
- Full medical, dental and evacuation insurance
- Enrichment field excursions
- Full research support for culminating project
- IRB review for research

Program Requirements

All undergraduate degree fields are welcome to apply, there are no course pre-requisites for admission, and the GRE is not required.

Students must complete a 33-36 semester credits for the Master of Arts degree and a total of 36 credits are included in the comprehensive degree cost. Courses include initial residency, Community Organizing and Social Activism, electives which can be chosen from both the in-country and online offerings, and culminating project thesis and re-entry seminars. A maximum of six credit hours of graduate-level credit may be accepted from another accredited college or university. The accepted coursework must fall within the guidelines of Westminster University's graduate programs. Courses completed at other graduate institutions must carry a grade of B or better to be eligible for transfer credit.

Additionally, a maximum of three credit hours of elective credit may be awarded upon presentation of an official certificate of successful completion of an AmeriCorps or Peace Corps placement.

Students must complete two semesters of coursework abroad and are encouraged to complete three semesters abroad, with the fourth semester of the degree completed on-line. Costs for the program vary with the number of semesters abroad; program staff should be consulted as students plan their degree program.

Students engage in 10-15 hours per week of service in the field during terms abroad.

Although a minimum of 33 credit hours is required, students may complete additional hours to enhance their graduate degree. Planning of these unique graduate degree programs is the shared responsibility of students in collaboration with their advisors.

Retention in the Program

The student must:

Design and file an acceptable program plan with the Program Director.

Maintain a grade point average of 3.0. Courses in which a grade of C- or lower is awarded do not count toward graduation requirements. A grade of C- or lower in two courses will result in dismissal from the program. IPSL courses may only be repeated once; a grade of C- or lower on the retake will result in dismissal from the program. All courses must be taken for a letter grade.

Complete the program within six years or begin to lose credit for courses older than six years.

Graduation Requirements

To be eligible for a master's degree, students must satisfy the following conditions:

1. Meet all credit hour and other course requirements.
2. Maintain an overall grade point average of 3.0 or above.
3. Be enrolled at Westminster University during the semester in which they wish to graduate.
4. Maintain good academic standing.
5. Earn a grade of C or higher in all graduate courses.
6. Complete a comprehensive Culminating Project and successfully defend to their graduate committee.

Note: Only graduate-level coursework may be applied toward requirements. The final responsibility for being informed about, and adhering to, graduation requirements rest with the student.

Master of Arts in Community Organizing and Social Activism

Requirement Description	Credit Hours	Prerequisites
I. Initial Residency	**2**	
IPSL 680 History/Ethics of Intl Devt & Service	1	
IPSL 681 Global Participatory Action Research	1	
II. Community Organizing and Social Activism	**9**	
This course is taken three times in either three different countries or two countries and once on-line in a third country.		
IPSL 602 Community Organizing and Social Activism	3	

Requirement Description	Credit Hours	Prerequisites
III. Electives	**18**	
IPSL 601 Independent/Directed Study	1-3	
IPSL 602 Community Organizing & Social Activism	3	
IPSL 603 Language Across the Curriculum (repeatable)	3	
IPSL 604 Sponsored Research	3	
IPSL 608 Special Topics	1-3	
IPSL 620 Afro-Colombian History & Culture	3	
IPSL 621 Conflict, Peace & Reconciliation Colombia	3	
IPSL 622 From Escobar to Santos: Modern Colombia	3	
IPSL 630 Sustainable Micro-Enterprise/Field Work	3	
IPSL 631 Greek History, Culture & Language	3	
IPSL 632 The Rise of Social Solidarity in Greece	3	
IPSL 633 Creative Thinking & Entrepreneurship	3	
IPSL 634 Mediterranean Diet & Lifestyle	3	
IPSL 635 Mediterranean Outdoor Exploration	3	
IPSL 640 Guatemala One Health: Ecology, Culture & Justice	3	
IPSL 641 Maya Cosmovision & Health Systems	3	
IPSL 650 Enviro Justice Social Movement Peru	3	
IPSL 651 Incan Architecture Urban Devt in Andes	3	
IPSL 652 Indigenous Knowledge/Traditional Healing	3	
IPSL 660 Ethics/Community Health in South Africa	3	
IPSL 670 Environmental Science/Sustainable Devt	3	
IPSL 671 Global Health & Environment: Vietnam	3	
IPSL 672 Public Space in Urban Planning	3	
IPSL 673 Sustainable Tourism	3	
IV. Capstone Courses	**4-7**	
IPSL 682 Study Abroad Re-entry	1	
IPSL 690 Culminating Project/Thesis	3-6	
Total Hours for the Master of Arts in Community Organizing and Social Activism	**33-36**	

Certificate in Community Organizing and Social Activism

The Certificate in Community Organizing and Social Activism provides students with the foundational knowledge and practical skills needed to engage in grassroots movements, advocate for social change, and build sustainable community initiatives. This program leverages existing courses offered through IPSL Global Engagement at Westminster University, ensuring an academically rigorous yet action-oriented approach to social justice work.

By integrating coursework that explores social movements, ethical leadership, and global engagement, this certificate prepares students for roles in nonprofit organizations, advocacy groups, and community-based initiatives. The selected courses provide a balance of theoretical understanding and hands-on experience, equipping students with the tools to analyze systemic inequities, develop strategic organizing efforts, and implement effective activism practices.

This certificate is ideal for students seeking to deepen their impact in social justice work, whether as community leaders, nonprofit professionals, or engaged citizens. It also enhances career opportunities by providing specialized training in organizing strategies, participatory action research, and advocacy skills, all of which are increasingly valuable in today's civic and nonprofit sectors. Additionally, the certificate serves as a steppingstone toward completing the full

Community Organizing and Social Activism (COSA) graduate program at Westminster University, offering students a pathway to further their education and expand their expertise in social justice leadership.

Certificate Requirements

Requirement Description	Credit Hours	Prerequisites
I. Initial Residency	**2**	
IPSL 680 History/Ethics of Intl Devt & Service	1	
IPSL 681 Global Participatory Action Research	1	
II. Community Organizing and Social Activism	**3**	
IPSL 602 Community Organizing and Social Activism	3	
III. Electives	**3**	
IPSL 601 Independent/Directed Study	1-3	
IPSL 602 Community Organizing & Social Activism	3	
IPSL 603 Language Across the Curriculum (repeatable)	3	
IPSL 604 Sponsored Research	3	
IPSL 608 Special Topics	1-3	
IPSL 620 Afro-Colombian History & Culture	3	
IPSL 621 Conflict, Peace & Reconciliation Colombia	3	
IPSL 622 From Escobar to Santos: Modern Colombia	3	
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IPSL 631 Greek History, Culture & Language	3	
IPSL 632 The Rise of Social Solidarity in Greece	3	
IPSL 633 Creative Thinking & Entrepreneurship	3	
IPSL 634 Mediterranean Diet & Lifestyle	3	
IPSL 635 Mediterranean Outdoor Exploration	3	
IPSL 640 Guatemala One Health: Ecology, Culture & Justice	3	
IPSL 641 Maya Cosmovision & Health Systems	3	
IPSL 650 Enviro Justice Social Movement Peru	3	
IPSL 651 Incan Architecture Urban Devt in Andes	3	
IPSL 652 Indigenous Knowledge/Traditional Healing	3	
IPSL 660 Ethics/Community Health in South Africa	3	
IPSL 670 Environmental Science/Sustainable Devt	3	
IPSL 671 Global Health & Environment: Vietnam	3	
IPSL 672 Public Space in Urban Planning	3	
IPSL 673 Sustainable Tourism	3	
Total Hours for the Certificate in Community Organizing and Social Activism	**8**	

MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICE (IDS) REQUIREMENTS

Faculty:

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- **Thomas Morgan**
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To meet today's growing demand for diverse perspectives and leaders who can navigate complex partnerships, the Master of Arts in International Development and Service (IDS) graduate program is interdisciplinary and requires both significant hands-on service-learning and international study activities. Drawing from the fields of international development, nonprofit leadership, global health, international education, human rights/social justice, sustainability, and global studies, this degree educates leaders for professional careers in the governmental, non-profit and community organization sectors.

IDS is a 16-month graduate degree programs that directly engage students with partner institutes in countries across Europe, Africa, SE Asia and Latin America. Flexible, individualized programming allows students to design their own graduate degree experience. The program combines rigorous interdisciplinary graduate-level study with hands-on volunteer service. This theory-to-practice, experiential learning graduate program is designed to prepare leaders who serve others through careers with government and policy making organizations, global nonprofits, educational institutions, social enterprises, and community development organizations.

Through study and professional development as well as service-learning placements with community organizations around the world, IPSL graduate students build a global, professional network during their program, helping them to secure career-track positions within their field following graduation.

This practical, social justice focused degree program offers:

- Individual Attention: Program is oriented toward quality rather than quantity.
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- Global Exposure: Multinational programs in Europe, SE Asia, Africa, and Latin America.
- Transferable Skills: Students build tangible and transferable skill sets that prepare them to master problems from theory to practice.
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Service-learning lies at the heart of IPSL degree programs where we practice a model of ethical, reciprocal service and community engagement in primarily resource-scare, grassroots organizations serving marginalized communities across the globe. Students engage in 10-15 hours per week of service in the field during terms abroad. IPSL students serve with a variety of organizations based on their specific interests and the needs of our community partners. Global Participatory Action Research (research in support of communities) is part of the culminating project work and is supported through IRB review, individual advising, and practical in-country support. Cultural and linguistic immersion opportunities place students inside communities to encourage cultural humility, ethical action, and personal growth.

Program Goals

The program is designed to help students develop these five main competencies:

1. A Global Perspective
2. Social Development
3. Nonprofit, NGO and Social Entrepreneurship Management
4. Service as a Professional Ethic
5. Distinction: Individual Expertise and Distinction in the Field

Program Design

The IDS program is approximately sixteen months long, consisting of four semester terms. The program is delivered in a hybrid online/onsite format that provides maximum flexibility. To increase access students can start the program in Spring semester (January), Summer semester (May), or Fall semester (August). Program content is organized into required classes, elective classes, and a Culminating Thesis or Culminating Applied Project. The Culminating Project experience integrates knowledge and skills students have learned throughout the program and enables students to apply that knowledge and skill in an individualized way to solve an identified challenge, improve an existing situation, create a novel and unique program solution and/or serve a community organization.

Students must complete at least two of the four semesters abroad and are encouraged to maximize their in-country experiences with three semesters abroad. Students begin the program with a two-week ONLINE Residency with two required accelerated online seminar courses during their first semester, followed by hybrid online or travel/onsite format classes during the rest of the first semester and the second and third semesters. The fourth semester is a required online semester and provides the time and focus to finalize the Culminating Project. The fourth term is online (students can choose to be anywhere in the world) and is integrated into the program so students can complete their Culminating Project and present their defense to their Graduate Committee.

Program Requirements

All undergraduate degree fields are welcome to apply, there are no course pre-requisites for admission, and the GRE is not required.

Students must complete 33-36 semester credits for the Master of Arts degree and a total of 36 credits are included in the comprehensive degree cost. Courses include initial residency, Community Organizing and Social Activism, three required development-focused courses, electives which can be chosen from both the in-country and online offerings, and culminating project thesis and re-entry seminars. A maximum of six credit hours of graduate-level credit may be accepted from another accredited college or university. The accepted coursework must fall within the guidelines of Westminster University's graduate programs. Courses completed at other graduate institutions must carry a grade of B or better to be eligible for transfer credit.

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IPSL 681 Global Participatory Action Research	1	
II. Community Organizing and Social Activism	**9**	
This course is taken three times in either three different countries or two countries and once on-line in a third country.		
IPSL 602 Community Organizing and Social Activism	3	
III. Development Specific Courses	**9**	
Students must complete three courses from this list, taking one per semester in the first three semesters in the program.		
IPSL 620 Afro-Colombian History & Culture	3	
IPSL 621 Conflict, Peace & Reconciliation Colombia	3	
IPSL 622 From Escobar to Santos: Modern Colombia	3	
IPSL 630 Sustainable Micro-Enterprise/Field Work	3	
IPSL 632 The Rise of Social Solidarity in Greece	3	
IPSL 640 Guatemala One Health: Ecology, Culture & Justice	3	
IPSL 641 Maya Cosmovision & Health Systems	3	
IPSL 660 Ethics & Community Health in South Africa	3	

Requirement Description	Credit Hours	Prerequisites
IPSL 670 Environmental Science/Sustainable Devt	3	
IPSL 671 Global Health & Environment: Vietnam	3	
IPSL 673 Sustainable Tourism	3	
IV. Electives	**9**	
IPSL 601 Independent/Directed Study	1-3	
IPSL 602 Community Organizing & Social Activism	3	
IPSL 603 Language Across the Curriculum (repeatable)	3	
IPSL 604 Sponsored Research	3	
IPSL 608 Special Topics	1-3	
IPSL 620 Afro-Colombian History & Culture	3	
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IPSL 630 Sustainable Micro-Enterprise/Field Work	3	
IPSL 631 Greek History, Culture & Language	3	
IPSL 632 The Rise of Social Solidarity in Greece	3	
IPSL 633 Creative Thinking & Entrepreneurship	3	
IPSL 634 Mediterranean Diet & Lifestyle	3	
IPSL 635 Mediterranean Outdoor Exploration	3	
IPSL 640 Guatemala One Health: Ecology, Culture & Justice	3	
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IPSL 650 Enviro Justice Social Movement Peru	3	
IPSL 651 Incan Architecture Urban Devt in Andes	3	
IPSL 652 Indigenous Knowledge/Traditional Healing	3	
IPSL 660 Ethics/Community Health in South Africa	3	
IPSL 670 Environmental Science/Sustainable Devt	3	
IPSL 671 Global Health & Environment: Vietnam	3	
IPSL 672 Public Space in Urban Planning	3	
IPSL 673 Sustainable Tourism	3	
V. Capstone Courses	**4-7**	
IPSL 682 Study Abroad Re-entry	1	
IPSL 690 Culminating Project/Thesis	3-6	
Total Hours for the Master of Arts in International Development and Service	**33-36**	