The Heller School for Social Policy and Management
Brandeis University

Master of Arts
Sustainable International Development

Academic Policies and Procedures

It is the policy of Brandeis University not to discriminate against any applicant on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual or affectional preference, age, national origin, veteran, or disability status. The University operates under an affirmative action plan and encourages minorities and women to apply, both in terms of employment and to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to its students.
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A Note to the Reader: Corrections and Updates to Policies and Procedures
Every effort is made to regularly update the MA/SID Academic Policies and Procedures. Updates and corrections may be published at any time. It is your responsibility to confirm that you are using the most recent version. The latest version can be found on the Heller website. The Heller School reserves the right to correct or revise any information or policies and procedures that are not consistent or current with Brandeis University policy, regulations, and law.

Mission of the Heller School and Master of Arts Degree Program Goals
Since its founding as Brandeis University’s first professional school in 1959, the Heller School has been committed to developing new knowledge in the field of social welfare and justice. Through research and the education of students, the Heller School has actively engaged in developing, examining, and contributing to policies and programs that respond to the changing needs of vulnerable individuals and social groups.

The degree of Master of Arts in Sustainable International Development (MA/SID) considers the state of development, probes issues and policies that affect future generations, and broadens skills necessary to plan, negotiate, implement, monitor, and evaluate development initiatives throughout the world. MA/SID examines models of development for their sustainability and success in reducing poverty and inequality, raising quality of life, and conserving the environment. MA/SID seeks fresh thinking about complex relationships; bridging areas of concern reserved traditionally to scientists or social scientists, policy makers, human rights activists, and development practitioners.

It is the goal of the Master of Arts in Sustainable International Development program to provide:

- A core curriculum that builds a knowledge and skills foundation within an integrative and interdisciplinary environment;
- Course offerings that foster breadth and depth at a master’s level in development theory, planning, management, and policy influence;
- Varied educational experiences inside and outside the classroom;
- Individual mentoring through the educational and practicum/fieldwork processes;
- A year-in-residence that encourages students’ self-reflection on the purpose and impact of their professional lives and values on development;
- A second year that nurtures new ideas, experiences, self-confidence, and professional growth through a practicum, advanced study, or specialization; and
- A multicultural and multinational environment that transcends divisions of nation-state, religion, race, class, gender, caste, and other particular identities.

MA/SID Program Core Competencies
The Master of Arts Program in Sustainable International Development (MA/SID) prepares development generalists and technical specialists in economic, environmental, and social fields who want to broaden their development perspective. The program provides an integrated approach to development, in keeping with global perspectives on sustainable development.

Sustainable development implies economic growth together with environmental conservation and social and political development, each reinforcing the other. It has been described as the integration of the “3 Es” – environment, economics, and equity – and as linking the 3 pillars of
economic, environmental, and social development. There are many definitions of sustainable
development. SID encourages and helps each student to come to her/his own definition within
the general consensus that sustainable development combines environmental, economic, and
social priorities with fundamentals of intergenerational equity, governance, and global justice.

The Program Competencies describe the overall concepts, skills, and values that each student
should have mastered to earn a master’s degree in Sustainable International Development. In
their first year at SID, students develop these competencies through their studies in the required
academic areas of the Master of Arts program, which include courses in development
management, economic and environmental sustainability, human rights and ethics, and gender.
In their second year, students deepen and expand their knowledge and skills to achieve the
competencies through advanced academic study or a field practicum.

Statement of Program Core Values
Development objectives, and the systems and methods used to achieve them, are influenced by
values that are not always explicit. SID has an explicit set of values and expects its graduates to
articulate the values that underpin their professional work and be conscious of the implications of
values in their assumptions, theories of change, and implementation methods and practices.

The SID Program brings a set of core values rooted in the social justice tradition of the Heller
School and Brandeis University to its teaching and learning. Brandeis University is committed to
preparing students “for full participation in a changing society, capable of promoting their own
welfare, yet remaining deeply concerned about the welfare of others.” It prides itself on being a
“center of open inquiry and teaching, cherishing its independence from any doctrine or
government.” Brandeis seeks “to reflect the heterogeneity of the United States and the world
community whose ideas and concerns it shares.” Brandeis carries the name of a U.S. Supreme
Court Justice who was committed to the rights of individuals, social justice, and an “awareness
of the power and responsibilities that come with knowledge.”

At SID, teaching and learning are imbued with the following principles:

• human rights that extend from political and civil rights to social and economic rights and
  that promote social and environmental justice and inclusion regardless of gender,
  ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, age, or socioeconomic class;
• governance systems based on participation and universal protection of rights;
• the necessity of enhancing the capabilities of all peoples to shape their own development;
• sustainability as an ideal that integrates physical, social, and ethical concerns and that is
  informed by natural and social science; and
• learning as an on-going process that requires continuing reflection on concepts, evidence,
  and values, including one’s own.

Values influence choices made in development work. Graduates of the MA/SID Program need to
be aware of why values are important, of their own value preferences -- particularly around the
roles of the state, the private sector, and civil society and in regard to issues like equity,
efficiency, conservation, power, human rights, gender, race, and class -- and of how value
choices influence planning and implementation of sustainable development strategies, interventions, and initiatives.

Teaching and learning in the MA/SID Program are grounded on capabilities and liberation approaches, which are becoming operational in global initiatives like Agenda 21 and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. SID students are trained to become agents in transforming the conditions that give rise to persistent poverty and in aiming for a global society that is free of poverty, preventable disease, and environmental degradation.

SID graduates will be able to define the goals of sustainable development and to specify key principles that will guide their professional work in designing and implementing sustainable development interventions and initiatives. In doing so, graduates should be able to put into practice the values they bring to sustainable development work.

Graduates will be prepared to engage in life-long learning, having acquired the capacity to reflect on experience, to question their own assumptions, to recognize and analyze new approaches, and to use learning to inform methods and practice. They will be able to reflect on their personal roles and on the roles of their institutions as outsiders or insiders in sustainable development, to confront contradictions inherent in these roles, and to use an awareness of their own values and assumptions to understand how they are contributing to building the capabilities of stakeholders in the development process.

Statement of Program Core Competencies
1. (Literacy) Literacy in the history, concepts, and goals of sustainable development, including theories of what development is, how it occurs, and how it affects economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

2. (Interdependence) Awareness of the interdependence of ecological, social, political, and economic systems and of the mutuality of human and environmental conditions (e.g. health, poverty, hunger, migration, conflict).

3. (Systems, structures, and institutions) Understanding of economic systems (market and non-market), governance institutions, social welfare strategies, and environmental management approaches and their relation to desired development outcomes, including the links among the market system, the role of the state, macroeconomic policies, international financial institutions, and sustainable development.

4. (Contextual analysis and application) Ability to analyze socio-economic, political, institutional, cultural, and environmental contexts at the global and local levels; to examine situations from the perspectives of human rights, gender, and marginalization; and to apply the analysis to the design and implementation of policies and interventions rooted in reality in order to create change.

5. (Problem solving) Ability to use problem-solving methodologies in seeking sustainable development solutions and in assessing the effectiveness of development interventions. This includes the ability to identify problems; to analyze and track causality and consequences; to
distinguish multiple alternatives and competing interests; to plan and implement appropriate and innovative policy, program, and project responses; and to monitor and evaluate implementation strategy and results. Problem-solving approaches imply the ability to consider innovative approaches and to question whether conventional wisdom and existing systems, structures, and models are working.

6. (Evidence) Ability to understand, evaluate, and use quantitative and qualitative evidence including expert and traditional knowledge to support policy, program, and project design, implementation, and evaluation to inform management and to support community capabilities.

7. (Scarcity and distribution) Ability to understand concepts of socio-economic and natural resource scarcity and how to judge the alternatives used to deal with scarcity as well as their impacts on the objectives of sustainable development. This requires an understanding of concepts and methods of distribution and/or redistribution of assets and benefits and their relation to equity, efficiency and significance.

8. (Relativity) Ability to understand the function of time in the dynamics of economic, social, and environmental sustainability: understanding the differences between radical, comprehensive reforms and incremental economic, social, and political changes and recognizing that a precautionary approach may be needed where environmental impacts unfold over a long period or uncertainties exist in scientific knowledge.

9. (Management) Ability to apply conceptual knowledge and skills in management and organizational behavior to analysis of development organizations and to leading, managing, and supporting organizations, implementation processes, and projects that contribute to sustainable change.

10. (Communication) Communication and language skills that allow graduates to function as leaders in organizations, to produce documents, to make persuasive presentations, to engage in advocacy for change, and to work with a range of stakeholders from marginalized communities to global actors.

Summary of Core Competencies
1. (Literacy) Basic literacy in the historical and current debates on the meaning and goals of sustainable development.
2. (Interdependence) Awareness of the interdependence of systems and of the mutuality of human and environmental conditions.
3. (Systems, structures, and institutions) Understanding of the existing systems (status quo) and their relation to achieving the goals of sustainable development.
4. (Contextual analysis and application) Ability to analyze socio-economic, political, institutional and environmental contexts at the global and local levels and to use the analysis to support realistic sustainable change.
5. (Problem solving) Ability to use problem-solving methodologies in seeking innovative and effective sustainable development solutions.
6. (Evidence) Ability to use evidence to support the design, implementation, and evaluation of sustainable development policies, programs, and projects.

7. (Scarcity and distribution) Ability to understand concepts of scarcity and distribution and to make choices among alternative solutions in order to maximize change that fosters sustainable development.

8. (Relativity) Recognition of the function of time and of the need to make appropriate development decisions that suit differing time frames.

9. (Management) Ability to lead, manage, and support sustainable development organizations and interventions in order to maintain operational efficiency as well as to enable innovation and change.

10. (Communication) Communication skills necessary to lead and support organizations and interventions as well as to work with the range of stakeholders outside the organization.

MA/SID Program Directors and Staff

The MA/SID Program has several directors and staff, all of whom are happy to meet and work with students. For the 2014-15 academic year, these are: Joan Dassin, Program Director; Marion Howard, Associate Program Director; Joshua Ellsworth, Assistant Program Director; and Simone Parker, Program Administrator. Gretchen Rowley, Assistant Director of Student Enrollment, serves as the Heller School registrar and works with all students. The Student Services team led by Doris Breay, Senior Assistant Dean of Academic and Student Services, is always available to support SID students. If you are unsure who to approach about a particular concern, check with any director or the program administrator.

Access to the SID Program Directors and Staff

The program directors and staff work with every student individually and are very approachable. The Program Director takes great pleasure in getting to know the students through classroom teaching, lunches, special seminars, and informal discussions in her office. She encourages students to stop by her office during office hours or to make an appointment by contacting her through email.

In addition to meeting with the Program Director, students are encouraged to meet with the Associate Program Director to share any concerns related to their academic training or performance. The Associate Director is happy to discuss and help students solve issues related to academics; including curriculum, courses and instructors, requirements, advisors, academic policy and procedures, etc.

The Assistant Program Director guides students through course selection and development of their Individual Learning Plan while in residence. The Practicum Coordinator is always available to talk about the second year practicum and help with issues that may emerge in the field.

First Year Faculty Advisors

Upon arriving at the Heller School, all MA/SID students will be assigned a faculty advisor who will assist in the selection of courses and provide support, especially during Fall Semester. The first year advisor will help explain the curriculum and clarify any questions students might have about the academic program. Students are encouraged to meet with their first year advisors as often as needed to discuss their progress and career plans.
MA/SID Program Requirements and First Year in Residence
The Master of Arts in SID has three tracks: Practicum, Advanced Study, and Specialization. There are also an accelerated MA/SID degree and several dual and joint degrees. All students in the MA/SID Program must successfully complete a year in residence. For Practicum students, the second year consists of a field practicum in a development organization, while Advanced Study students complete a second year in residence. Specialization students can combine a short practicum with in-depth study in a critical field of development. Accelerated Degree students do the year in residence and use the following summer to write a Master’s Paper. Requirements for dual and joint degrees vary according to the degrees being pursued.

Year in Residence
Academic requirements for the year in residence are the same for all MA/SID students.

Core Curriculum
The MA/SID core curriculum is designed to give students solid grounding in sustainable development. To accomplish this, certain core courses are designated as required and others as electives. The MA/SID curriculum is reviewed and updated annually. The latest information on MA/SID course requirements and core electives is distributed to all students and faculty prior to the start of Fall Semester. Core courses are either full semester (4 credits) or half semester module courses (2 credits). Not all courses are offered each year, so check the latest listing. The Heller School reserves the right to cancel courses if a minimum number of students do not register. Minimum enrollment may differ for specific courses, in accord with Heller policy.

Exemptions from certain required courses may be granted based on previous academic studies, professional training, or work experience. The Associate Program Director will approve exemptions in consultation with relevant faculty. Students who request an exemption from a required course must be evaluated to determine whether their prior educational background, as documented on transcripts, or professional training and experience warrant the exemption. The MA/SID Program will determine the best method to assess this. Usually the course instructor leads the assessment. Students who waive a course requirement must replace the waived course with one or more SID core electives of total credit equal to the waived course.

In addition to regular courses, SID students take non-credit Group Tutorials and Workshops as needed, including training in professional development, team-building, academic integrity, professional writing, and computer, communications, and presentation skills, among other offerings. Non-credit sessions are open to all SID students. Some are optional, while others are required; e.g., all incoming students are required to attend SID’s “Professional Development Fridays” during Fall Semester of their first year in residence.

Non-Core Courses
Electives may be taken outside the core curriculum. Non-core courses may be taken at Brandeis within the Heller School, the Brandeis International Business School (IBS), and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS). Courses may also be taken at the Boston-area Consortium of Universities. Students are responsible for identifying such courses and may receive credit for a maximum of one course (4 credits maximum) each semester at a consortium university.
Pro-Seminars
The SID Program offers a variety of pro-seminars every year. Pro-seminars are led by visiting professionals who are well-known experts in their fields, supported by SID faculty, and normally take place over a weekend. Pro-seminars may be for credit or not for credit. A for-credit pro-seminar is a one credit intense course that requires a minimum of 9 hours of class time, readings to be done prior to the seminar, and a graded assignment to be submitted during or after the seminar. Note that for-credit pro-seminars may not be substituted for SID core electives. Students can audit for-credit pro-seminars if approved by the SID faculty sponsor. A not-for-credit pro-seminar is usually a one-day seminar taught by a renowned expert that takes place on a single day, normally on the weekend, and includes about 5 hours of class time. It does not require an assignment.

Directed Reading/Independent Study
Occasionally students wish to design an independent study that allows a more in-depth approach to a topic than offered by the curriculum or that allows exploration of a topic for which there is no course offering. To pursue such study for credit, students should identify a faculty member willing to supervise a Directed Reading. Normally, a student is not permitted to do independent study until having completed his/her first semester at the Heller School. Students are advised that professors who agree to supervise a Directed Reading are doing so without adjustment to their normal workload. Some faculty will not have the time to supervise Directed Readings.

Credit for a Directed Reading can be equivalent to a full semester or module course, and must include an amount of reading and writing comparable to a regular course. Written work could include a long paper, several shorter papers, critical essays or reflections on the literature, data analysis exercises, etc. After conferring with an interested member of the faculty, students should design their own syllabus covering:

1. The topic and course title of the Directed Reading;
2. The course objective and how it fits with the student’s plan of study (ILP);
3. A weekly schedule including dates, topics, and weekly material the student will read;
4. What written work (assignments) the student will complete with deadlines; and
5. Dates when the student and faculty supervisor will meet (normally the minimum would be every two weeks).

The student and faculty supervisor will review and revise the syllabus. When both are satisfied with it, the student should submit it for approval to the Associate Program Director. After receiving program-level approval from the Associate Director, the student must submit the syllabus to the Assistant Director of Student Enrollment, Gretchen Rowley, who will register the Directed Reading and place it on the student’s record. A student can receive credit for no more than one Directed Reading for the MA/SID degree. A student should consult the Associate Program Director before planning a second Directed Reading.

Individual Learning Plan
As most students are in-residence for only one year, the MA/SID curriculum is designed to provide maximum breadth and choice as well as a moderate amount of depth. Each student will be assigned an advisor for the first semester who, along with the Assistant Program Director, will
work with students to design an Individual Learning Plan (ILP), combining required courses and electives. Students may choose to take diverse electives or to achieve greater depth by taking a cluster of electives within a key field of development study (e.g., economics, conservation, gender, development management, governance, ethics, etc.) and combining SID with other Heller, Brandeis, and Consortium courses. An approved ILP is required for each semester that an SID student is in residence at Brandeis, regardless of whether the student is doing Practicum, Advanced Study, or Specialization.

Course Approval
A student’s course registration (see section on course enrollment and registration) will not be valid unless the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is approved and signed for each semester by the Assistant Program Director prior to registration. Certain courses require permission of the instructor and some courses have prerequisites (i.e., completion of a prior specified course). In the first year, students must take at least 16 credits each semester and may not take more than 20 credits without written permission from the Assistant Program Director.

The Second Year: Practicum, Alternative Practicum, Advanced Study, or Specialization
The second year can be a practicum of professional-level work experience in a development organization throughout the world, alternative practicum at an international partner university, advanced study in sustainable development that includes a second year in residence under the mentorship of a senior professor or researcher at Brandeis University, or a specialization in a key development field that includes additional coursework and an optional short practicum. Second year academic advisors will be assigned in Spring Semester of the first year.

Students who have successfully completed all required courses and 32 credits during their first year in residence can move on to their second year. Students who have not fulfilled all requirements or have pending financial obligations cannot start the second year. Each student will be notified of her/his academic and financial status early in the summer after the first year and if s/he is approved to begin the second year, contingent upon approval of the Second Year Proposal. Proposals must be approved by the SID Program before a student can begin the second year.

The second year is designed to:
- Further a student’s individual career objectives;
- Increase a student’s understanding of the factors that favor and hinder sustainable development in a chosen country, region, or sector;
- Familiarize a student with the procedures, strengths, and limitations of major institutions involved in development in a chosen country, region, or sector;
- Determine how promising approaches to sustainable development might be identified, tried, and evaluated, and disseminated if appropriate;
- Enhance a student’s professional profile and expand professional experience within international development organizations;
- Complement the generalist academic training of the First Year in Residence by examining a case study and developing a field of expertise within sustainable development (in topic, geographic region, or institutional level); and
Contribute to the field of sustainable development through the practicum and/or knowledge and lessons learned shared in the Master’s Paper.

Second Year Practicum
The practicum is a professional level internship or post in a development institution. This may be located at headquarters of major international agencies or national and local development organizations throughout the world. The practicum cannot begin until it is approved by the SID Practicum Coordinator. No Second Year Practicum will be approved without a formal letter of offering stating the Terms of Reference and the assignment of a Field Advisor by the host organization.

Students who do the practicum must register for the SID Field Practicum Course and pay the minimum enrollment fee in Fall and Spring Semesters (12 credits each semester). Students must be actively engaged in a practicum full time (40 hours a week) for a minimum of six months beginning no sooner than September 1. Students are not registered in the practicum course during the summer and can enroll in the summer session only with special permission from the SID Program. During the practicum, students must send monthly updates to their faculty advisor and keep in regular contact with the Practicum Coordinator.

Second Year Alternative Practicum
The alternative practicum combines supervised field research with course work at an SID partner university in Ghana, China, Thailand, or India. This alternative offers students the opportunity to study major development challenges of the 21st century in the classroom and from a field perspective. At the University of Development Studies in Tamale, Ghana, students focus on initiatives to reduce poverty at the village level. At Beijing Normal University in China, students have the opportunity to be involved at the level of policy and governance. At the Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok, Thailand, or at TERI University in New Delhi, India, students learn about and work with cutting-edge climate change adaptation policies and programs.

Second Year Advanced Study
Advanced study is an individualized program of coursework under the mentorship of a professor or senior researcher. Students focus their study on a defined development topic and present their findings in a Master’s Paper. Advanced study cannot begin without a Second Year Proposal approved by the Assistant Program Director. The following guidelines apply:

- Advanced study students must enroll for a minimum of twelve credits of coursework in both Fall and Spring Semesters, including the required Master’s Seminars.
- The courses taken are determined by the student and academic advisor to support the second year development topic and the student’s individual learning plan. Courses may be taken in any graduate school at Brandeis University.
- The student must be registered as a full time student at Brandeis but may take courses with the Boston University Consortium within the maximum permitted.
- The student must pay tuition and other fees at Brandeis during the second year.
- The student may not pursue a second simultaneous degree. In exceptional cases, with approval of the SID Program and the student’s sponsor(s), a student may combine advanced study with a specialization.

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Second Year Specialization
MA/SID students have the option to complete an approved second-year specialization in a significant field of development including gender, development management, or environmental conservation. The specialization requires a three-month practicum in Fall Semester followed by Spring Semester in residence. A specialization cannot be undertaken without a Second Year Proposal approved by the Assistant Program Director. The practicum must be approved by the Practicum Coordinator. The following guidelines apply:

- Students must complete a minimum of 16 credits in the topic of the specialization in the Spring Semester.
- Approved courses for the specialization are identified by the MA/SID Program, with the coursework for each student selected from the annual list of approved courses and agreed upon by the student and Associate Director.
- Students must register for the SID Field Practicum Course in the Fall Semester.
- The SID Program will appoint a faculty academic advisor with expertise in the area of the specialization.
- The student must be registered as a full time student at Brandeis but may take courses with the Boston University Consortium within the maximum permitted.
- The student must pay tuition to Brandeis University for any additional semesters in residence and the minimum enrollment fee during practicum terms.
- Students must produce a Master’s Paper and Capstone presentation, focused on a case study that contributes to the field of their specialization situated within the broader goals of sustainable international development.
- The student may not pursue a second simultaneous degree.

Second Year Proposal
All MA/SID students should refer to the SID Second Year Handbook for specific guidelines on the Second Year Proposal, along with further requirements and deadlines. The Practicum Coordinator manages this process for all practicum students. Faculty experts lead the alternative practicum process (presently Professor Joseph Assan for Ghana, China, and Thailand and Professor Laurence Simon for India). The Associate and Assistant Program Directors manage the process for specialization and advanced study students, respectively.

Withdrawal of Approval of the Second Year Proposal
The SID Program may withdraw approval of a Second Year Proposal if the topic or focus changes without written approval of the SID Program. It is the responsibility of the student, regardless of second year track, to request approval from the SID Program before any change can take place to the proposal.

The SID Program may also withdraw approval of a Second Year Proposal if a practicum student changes his/her involvement with the host organization or fails to fulfill the approved terms of reference for the practicum. The only exception is if an emergency threatens the student’s safety. In these situations, the student should leave the practicum and contact the Program immediately. The Program will support the student in securing a suitable alternative practicum.

The SID Program reserves the right to withdraw approval if the student engaged in the practicum is assessed to be at risk due to conflict, public health threats, or natural disaster. The student must
then leave the area of risk. Students cannot abandon the practicum post for any reason other than factors threatening his/her safety, as mentioned above. Students facing any other reason should consult with the SID Program before leaving the post; otherwise the experience will not count to fulfill the requirements for the second year.

**Final Requirements: Master’s Paper, Presentation, and Capstone Seminar**
The end product of the second year is the Master’s Paper, which must be prepared according to the guidelines presented in the SID Second Year Handbook. The Second Year Handbook is distributed to all students in Spring Semester of their first year in residence. Since the Master’s Paper guidelines and deadlines are updated annually, students are advised to follow the guidelines issued during their year in residence.

Students begin drafting this paper in the fall of their second year and send drafts to their academic advisor for feedback. Practicum students normally return to Brandeis in April to finalize the paper, submit it to their faculty advisors, and then to the SID Program for final approval. Deadlines for submission of the completed Master’s Paper to the academic advisor and SID Program for final review are very strict, and the SID Program reserves the right to defer review of the Master’s Paper of any student who fails to meet the final Spring Semester deadline until the summer term.

**Capstone Week**
In addition to submitting an approved Master’s Paper, each student is required to prepare a presentation to be delivered at the SID Capstone Seminar held in May. Student panels on sustainable development topics are the key unit of the Capstone Seminar. Students are required to attend the entire Capstone Seminar, which generally lasts four to five days. The dates will be announced well in advance.

Students are advised to inform practicum organizations and prospective employers of their obligation to attend the Capstone Seminar as a requirement of the degree. The requirement to attend the full Capstone Seminar cannot be waived. More information on the Capstone Seminar is available in the SID Second Year Handbook and will be sent to students in the months preceding.

All students are cautioned to adhere to the deadlines, procedures, and regulations in regard to their second-year requirements and to follow the highest academic and professional standards in their Master’s Paper and Capstone; otherwise their graduation may be compromised.

**The Accelerated MA/SID Degree**
Accelerated degree students must have at least five years of development management experience and be able to complete the degree program in twelve months. Accelerated degree students must register for three consecutive academic semesters: Fall, Spring, and Summer. These students take courses during the academic year and write the Master’s Paper during the summer. Graduation is at the end of summer term in late August. Very few accelerated degree students are accepted into the SID Program. Students who matriculate in the MA/SID accelerated degree have the option of transferring to any two-year degree track; however, students who enter as two-year MA/SID degree candidates cannot shift to the accelerated degree.
Course Selection and Registration
Students will be assigned to specific sections for certain core required classes. The registration and course enrollment period is long enough to allow students to “shop” for non-assigned courses and to sit in as many as they wish before making a final decision. During Fall Orientation, all incoming students are required to attend the MA/SID curriculum introduction, meet with their academic advisors, and attend a session with the Assistant Program Director to discuss their course selection and Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

All registration for MA/SID courses is done on the Brandeis University website. Prior to the beginning of their first semester in residence at the Heller School, students will receive curriculum materials, instructions on how to use the on-line registration system, a Personal Identification Number (SAGE ID number) needed to access the system, and notification of the deadlines by which all students must register or be administratively withdrawn from the University. **SID students may not register for more than 20 credits per semester without written permission from the Assistant Program Director.**

By enrolling in a course, a student is officially registering with the University for that term. When a student first accesses the Office of the Registrar’s Registration web page, s/he will be notified that enrolling in a course signals acceptance of the rights and responsibilities of being a Brandeis student as contained in the Master of Arts in Sustainable International Development Program Academic Policies and Procedures, Brandeis Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, the University Bulletin, and other University publications. **No student will be allowed to register for classes who has not completed the University’s health requirements or who has outstanding financial or other obligations. “Holds” will be placed on student accounts not cleared of health requirements or financial obligations. If holds are not cleared up by the last day of the course enrollment period, students will be administratively withdrawn from the University. Once a student has been administratively withdrawn from the University, s/he is required to reapply for admission in a subsequent semester if s/he wishes to be reinstated.**

The “Shopping” Period
Brandeis University and the Heller School permit students to "shop" classes in Fall and Spring Semesters before committing to take non-assigned courses. The following rules apply:

- The "shopping" period is the first session of each course.
- If you are considering registering for a course (module or full semester), **you must attend the first session.** You may choose not to take the course after attending that first session; in that case, you do not register for it.
- You **must** prepare any required readings prior to attending the first session of a course. Such readings can be found on the Heller website.
- You may attend the second session of a course only if you attended the first session. **Please do not ask the instructor for an exception.**
- Graduate students must register for courses by the end of the second week of classes. Check the academic calendar for the exact date each year. As of the third session of a course, you may drop the course with reason by petitioning the Assistant Director of
Student Enrollment, Gretchen Rowley, whose signature on the "Drop Slip" is required along with that of the instructor. See the Assistant Director of Student Enrollment for further clarification.

Note that some courses have prerequisites, meaning that a student must have already taken a particular course or equivalent prior to enrolling. Some courses are designated “by permission of the instructor”, in which case students need to seek the professor’s permission to enroll. Some courses, especially seminars, may have enrollment maximums.

Course syllabi are posted on the Heller website. If a syllabus is not available, students should confer directly with the course instructor. Students may want to read student course evaluations from previous years. These can also be found on the website.

Request for Waiver of an Academic Requirement
The Associate Program Director must approve in writing any exception, exemption, or waiver to a policy regarding an academic requirement. Waivers from required courses are dealt with by the course instructor and Associate Program Director. The student must contact the course instructor to request a waiver. It is the student’s responsibility to follow up on his/her special request, including contacting the Associate Program Director if the waiver is granted and ensuring that the waiver is recorded in writing. A written copy of any waiver must be placed in the student’s file and a copy given to the student. If the student does not receive a written copy, s/he is advised not to assume that the waiver was granted. The student must replace any waived course with an approved elective of equal credit from the annual list of SID core electives.

Auditing Courses
Students may audit Heller School classes with the permission of the instructor. To have an audited course noted on his or her permanent record, the student must sign up for it as an audited course at the time of registration and notify the professor, who will be asked at the end of the semester to certify that the student has attended class on a regular basis. A student wishing to audit a course must clarify with the instructor the terms under which s/he is approved to audit.

Graduate Courses in Other Schools at Brandeis
Students may avail themselves of the rich offerings and outstanding faculty in other parts of Brandeis, especially the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS) and the International Business School (IBS). Graduate-level courses in anthropology, sociology, economics, history, and politics may be of particular interest. To sign up for these courses, students note it on the ILP and then sign up for any such courses through the normal registration process for each school.

Graduate Courses Outside of Brandeis at Consortium Universities
Brandeis University is part of a consortium consisting of Boston College, Boston University, Tufts University (excluding the Fletcher School), Bentley College, the Gerontology Department at the University of Massachusetts-Boston, and the School of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT, enabling Heller students to take courses for credit at these schools. Students may take any graduate-level course that fits into their educational goals, with the following provisos:
• Consortium schools do not allow cross-registration in some of their graduate programs, or in particular courses. Students should check with the Assistant Director of Student Enrollment, Gretchen Rowley, on specific courses.
• Students need the permission of the instructor to register.
• Outside courses may not be used to substitute for similar courses offered at the Heller School, unless there are serious and unavoidable extenuating circumstances. If a student believes to have such circumstances, s/he should consult with the Assistant Program Director and, if approved, the student must have a written approval placed in her/his official file.
• Students may take a maximum of one course per semester in consortium universities.
• The consortium schools have a tuition-sharing agreement. Therefore, to register for a course at one of the consortium schools in Fall and Spring Semesters, students do not pay tuition there but must have paid full tuition at Brandeis.

To register for a course at a consortium university, a student must:

1. Obtain a copy of the syllabus of the course you want to take and discuss it with the SID Assistant Program Director.
2. Get a cross-registration form from the Brandeis University Registrar in Kutz Hall and have the SID Assistant Program Director sign it.
3. After the Assistant Program Director has signed the form, take the form to the Registrar of the consortium university where the course is being offered to be signed.
4. Bring the completed signed form and a copy of the syllabus to the Brandeis University Registrar who will register you for the course. Bring a copy of the form to the Assistant Director of Student Enrollment, Gretchen Rowley.
5. At the end of the course, the grade will be sent directly from the consortium university to the Brandeis University Registrar.

Graduate Courses in Accredited Programs at Non-Consortium Schools
If a student wishes to take a graduate-level course outside of Brandeis in an accredited graduate program other than those in the consortium, this must be discussed with the Assistant Program Director and other faculty and staff, as needed. Such courses would be included in the maximum limit of one non-Brandeis course each semester. Please note that there is no guarantee that a student would be able to take a course at a non-consortium university, and such decisions and the appropriate procedures would be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Summer Courses
Brandeis University and the Heller School offer limited summer courses. These courses require separate tuition payments. Consortium privileges do not run in the summer. If a student wishes to take a course at a school other than Brandeis in the summer, s/he will be responsible for paying tuition to that school.

Dropping and Adding Courses
Students are allowed to add or drop courses within the online registration deadlines as stated in the Brandeis University Academic Calendar. It is the student’s responsibility to find out and adhere to these deadlines. In rare cases, students are allowed to add or drop courses after the end of the online registration period. This requires permission and a written signature from the
instructor. Add/drop forms must be obtained from and returned to the Assistant Director of Student Enrollment, Gretchen Rowley. These procedures help assure a smooth registration and continuity within classes. See the Assistant Director of Student Enrollment for clarification.

Late Withdrawal from Courses
Students may withdraw from MA/SID courses only for serious cause and with permission of the instructor and Associate Program Director. If permission is granted, it is the responsibility of the student to adhere to all procedures for course withdrawal and follow up with the Assistant Director of Student Enrollment, Gretchen Rowley, to ensure that the withdrawal appears on his/her record. The withdrawal policy for courses taken outside Brandeis University may not be similar to Brandeis; it is the responsibility of the student to find out and conform to that policy.

Course Attendance and Evaluation
Regular attendance is required in all courses and required non-credit training sessions and workshops. Students must come to class having prepared all readings and assignments and be ready to share their questions and thoughts and to participate in the learning process. Students who miss class sessions may fail or be required to repeat the course at the discretion of the instructor. Students are expected to behave professionally in all Heller School classes. Instructors can establish professional guidelines and attendance policies for their courses and must include this information in the course syllabus.

Course Performance Evaluation
Students have the right to meaningful feedback regarding their performance in a course. This might include written comments on papers and exams, personal meetings, etc. All instructors have office hours listed on their syllabi during which students can freely drop in to talk with the instructor without an appointment. If students cannot make these office hours, students are advised to request an appointment with the instructor. If a student requests to meet with an instructor, the instructor is obligated to respond to this request within reason. If students do not receive feedback they have the right to approach the instructor, the Associate Program Director, the Program Director, and ultimately the Dean of the Heller School.

Students with Disabilities
Students with a disability who have documentation on file at the Heller School should speak with the professor before the course begins to request an accommodation. Questions about the required documentation should be addressed to the Heller School Disabilities Coordinator. The disabilities coordinator is Mary Brooks, Assistant Director, Students and Community Relations.

Laptop Use in Classrooms
Laptops may be used in Heller classrooms at the discretion of the course instructor. The instructor may ban them or restrict their use. In no case shall students use laptops for purposes other than taking notes or other instructor approved tasks. Surfing the web, email, and text messaging are not permitted under any circumstances and are a breach of professional conduct.

Laptops are not permitted to be used during exams unless the instructor deems them integral to the taking of the exam. Cell phones and PDAs must be silenced during all classes and may not be used during exams.
Course Grades
Graduate students are expected to maintain records of distinction in all courses. Letter grades are used for most master’s courses. Course grades can be retrieved by a student via the web site. The student’s SAGE ID number is required.

Any letter grade below B minus (B-) is considered unsatisfactory and will not be counted toward credit for degree requirement. There is one exception to this rule. For master’s programs in which students are in residence for four semesters or more, students may receive a grade of C plus (C+) in two courses throughout their program and still earn graduate degree credit for such courses. Only one may be in a required course, while the other may be in an elective. If students are in residence for two or three semesters, a student may receive only one grade of C plus (C+) throughout their program and still earn graduate degree credit. If a student receives two grades of C plus (C+) in one semester and one of the C plus (C+) grades is not eligible for degree credit (e.g. master’s programs in which students are in residence for two or three semesters or receive a C+ in more than one required course), the Program Director may decide -- or may create an Academic Review Committee (ARC) to decide -- which course will count toward degree requirements.

A student who receives an unsatisfactory grade must discuss it with the Associate Program Director. Students have the option to petition the Associate Program Director to re-take the course for credit the next time it is offered. If approved and should the new grade be satisfactory, it will replace the former unsatisfactory grade on the student’s official transcript. The unsatisfactory grade and any documentation will remain in the student’s file.

Grading Grievance Procedure/Grade Appeal Process
All Heller course instructors will make independent decisions about their grading process and will be supported in these decisions by the Heller School’s program and administrative staffs. However, any student who feels s/he has been graded incorrectly or unfairly in a course taken for credit may take the following steps:

1. The student should contact the instructor to set up a meeting within 10 business days after the grade in question is made available.
2. If such a meeting results in a mutually acceptable solution, the grade will be maintained or adjusted accordingly.
3. If the meeting does not result in a mutually acceptable solution and the student wishes to appeal further, the student should submit a written statement, specifying the nature of the complaint and the remedy desired, to the Program Director within 10 business days of the meeting.
4. Although there will be a presumption in favor of the instructor, the Program Director or his/her designee will take into account all evidence presented by the student and will seek to resolve the matter as soon as possible, normally within 10 business days, from submission of the complaint.
5. Final disposition of the appeal will be in writing to all parties involved. The decision of the Program Director or his/her designee is final.
At each level, the agreed upon resolution or decision should be in writing. Each party should retain a copy and the original decision should be forwarded to the Assistant Director of Student Enrollment, Gretchen Rowley, for placement in the student’s academic record. The Associate Program Director is available to consult with the student at any step of the grievance process.

Incompletes
Students are expected to complete all requirements for a course by the end of the semester in which it is offered. If a student encounters exceptional circumstances during a semester that prevent the completion of coursework, s/he may ask an instructor to give an Excused Incomplete (EI). Instructors are not required to give incompletes, so students should check in advance to determine if their reason for not completing requirements on time is acceptable. If an instructor agrees to give an EI, the student must work out an agreement with the instructor as to when the remaining work needed to pass the course will be submitted. The instructor may also set a date for completion of the work earlier than the maximum time allowed by the University (see below). The incomplete will be changed to a letter grade by the instructor upon satisfactory completion of all requirements.

Students are urged to complete courses on time. Students who fail to submit any course assignment and who do not request and obtain an Excused Incomplete (EI) from the instructor are not automatically entitled to an incomplete and may fail the course. Students should note that having an incomplete may prevent them from starting the Second Year or from graduating.

If a student is granted an incomplete, s/he is subject to the following:

- The Assistant Director of Student Enrollment, Gretchen Rowley, will notify the SID Associate Program Director of all incomplete coursework. The student should see the Associate Program Director to discuss any special circumstances or problems, but it is most important that the student initiate and maintain contact with the instructor(s) about the incomplete(s).
- Students must finish all excused incompletes by the deadlines established by Brandeis University. It is the responsibility of the student to find out these deadlines and confirm them with the course instructor.
- Extensions for incompletes may be granted only for exceptional circumstances, such as serious illness or a documented disability, by the Associate Program Director after discussion with the student, instructor, and Assistant Director of Student Enrollment. The student must bring this request in writing to the Associate Program Director prior to the incomplete deadline.
- If a student has an incomplete after the regular or extended deadline, the excused incomplete (EI) will automatically become a Permanent Incomplete (I).
- A student who takes three or more incompletes and fails to complete them within the deadlines may be asked to leave the program without due process.

Evaluation of Courses by Students
Students evaluate every course taken at Brandeis University by filling out a standard evaluation form with questions about the instructor and the course content. The University takes these evaluations very seriously and considers such student input important. Evaluations are submitted on-line and are anonymous. Instructors are not shown the students' course evaluations until after
all grades have been posted. Course evaluations from previous years are available for review on
the Heller website.

Students are urged to discuss courses with their professors while they are in progress. Students
should not feel they must wait until the end of the course to voice concerns. Instructors may not
take punitive measures in response to students’ observations or criticisms. Student concerns
should be presented respectfully and professionally and be aimed at improving the teaching and
learning experience for all members of the class. Students are also encouraged to talk to the
Associate Program Director about any academic concerns or issues related to course content,
instructors, or their own performance.

Review of Student’s Academic Performance
Brandeis University reserves the right to sever ties with students whose academic performance is
so deficient as to suggest an inability to meet academic requirements. The MA/SID Program
reserves the right to review a student’s academic performance and potential for degree
completion. This review may begin when a student receives one unsatisfactory grade or
when two members of the faculty request that the Program Director initiate such a review
for cause.

To complete this review the Program Director will appoint a faculty Academic Review
Committee (ARC) in writing. Once the ARC has been established, it will review relevant
information, including transcripts and communications with the student’s professors, advisor(s),
and others. The student will be informed in writing that the ARC has been formed and that the
review is taking place. Early in the process, the student will be asked to meet with the committee.
Upon review of information, the ARC will make a written recommendation to the Program
Director for remedial action or withdrawal. If the Program Director accepts an ARC
recommendation for withdrawal from the degree program, the Program Director will forward
that decision to the Dean. The student will be notified of the decision in writing in a timely
manner and will have the opportunity to submit a written appeal within 10 business days. The
student may also request to meet with the Director to present his/her case in person after
submitting the written appeal. The appeal will be reviewed for merit by the Director, Dean, and
others, as appropriate, who will determine if the decision will remain in force or be adjusted.

Academic Integrity
Academic integrity is central to the mission of Brandeis University and the Heller School. Every
member of the University community is expected to maintain the highest standards of academic
honesty. All syllabi have clear Heller template statements of the course’s academic integrity
policy. A student shall not receive credit for work that is not the product of the student’s own
effort. Students should carefully review the proper use of quotations when drafting any paper to
avoid even inadvertent plagiarism, since an unintentional offense is not an excuse for plagiarism
(see http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/srcs/ for more information).

Professors are responsible for managing academic integrity in their classes and with their
advisees. Mary Brooks, Assistant Director, Students and Community Relations, coordinates the
Heller School’s academic integrity practice. Faculty members must inform the Office of Student
Services of infractions of academic integrity in a student’s written work; this office maintains a
central file of reported cases, which is available for review by Heller Deans, Program Directors, and Associate Program Directors.

Generally a first allegation of plagiarism is treated as an educational opportunity. After informing the Assistant Director of Students and Community Relations, the instructor is responsible for meeting with the student to discuss the case and determine steps forward. In the case of an additional allegation, the student will be referred to the Brandeis University Department of Student Rights and Community Standards. Standards for adjudication through the Student Conduct Process can result in the student failing the course or even withdrawal. In cases of plagiarism in Master’s Papers or in courses taken after a student has completed a first year in residence, even a first allegation; the case will be reported to the Department of Student Rights and Community Standards.

As part of their training in the field of development, students are expected to maintain proper professional relationships with faculty, staff, and other students at all times. Unprofessional conduct may result in disciplinary action.

**Course Records and Enrollment**
A complete record of courses taken, evaluations, special arrangements, exceptions, and permissions will be maintained by the Assistant Director of Student Enrollment, Gretchen Rowley. If a student receives any academic exceptions, permissions, or waivers (all of which must be approved by the SID Associate Program Director), it is the student’s responsibility to ensure that a written copy goes into his/her official file. The official file is audited to determine eligibility to move to the Second Year and to graduate. Regardless of informal conversations, if a matter is not formalized in writing and in the official file, it will not be taken into account in the audit. It is recommended that students also keep copies for their own records.

**Brandeis University Records Policy**
Brandeis University informs students annually of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, as amended. This act, with which the University fully complies, was designed to protect the privacy of educational records and provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data through informal and formal hearings. Students have the right to file complaints with the FERPA Office concerning alleged failures by the University to comply with the Act. University policy explains in detail the procedures it uses for compliance with the provisions of the Act. Questions concerning the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act may be referred to the Office of the University Registrar. More information, including the detailed policy, can be found at:
[http://www.brandeis.edu/registrar/bulletin/EducRecordsPolicy.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/registrar/bulletin/EducRecordsPolicy.html)

**Transcripts**
Current and former students who have a valid UNet ID and password can order their official transcript using the transcript ordering page in Sage. Students without an active UNet account should request transcripts through the Office of the University Registrar at:
[http://www.brandeis.edu/registrar](http://www.brandeis.edu/registrar)
Program Time Limit
A student must complete all the requirements for the MA/SID degree in effect at the time of his/her matriculation within five years of matriculation.

Leave of Absence
Students in good academic standing may petition for a leave of absence from their studies. A leave of absence must be approved by the Program Director. If there are outstanding incompletes when a student begins a leave of absence, the student will not be allowed to re-register until they have been completed. Students who take leaves of absence are not guaranteed tuition remission or other forms of financial aid when they return.

Voluntary Withdrawal
An SID student who wishes to withdraw voluntarily from the Heller School during a semester must do so in writing to the Program Director, copied to the Associate Program Director and the Assistant Director of Student Enrollment, Gretchen Rowley, on or before the last day of instruction in the term. Failure to comply may subject the student to involuntary withdrawal, refusal of readmission, cancellation of eligibility to receive an official transcript, and loss of eligibility for refunds. Permission to withdraw voluntarily will not be granted if the student has not discharged all financial obligations to the University or has not made financial arrangements satisfactory to the Office of Student Financial Services.

Administrative Withdrawal
Students who do not comply with registration procedures, medical documentation requirements, and financial obligations are subject to administrative withdrawal from the University. Any SID student receiving notification of impending administrative withdrawal should immediately contact the Associate Program Director and the Assistant Director of Student Enrollment.

Student Judicial System
The University establishes standards of student behavior and reserves the right to suspend or permanently dismiss students whose conduct warrants such action. The University will give due notice and, if requested, a hearing before the appropriate body. The Student Conduct Process is administered by the Department of Student Rights and Community Standards. Standards, policies, and procedures are described in the document on Rights and Responsibilities.

Tuition Bills and Payments
Students who have not paid the semester tuition and fees, whether or not they have been billed, may not register for courses. If a student has not received a bill or has a problem, s/he should speak to the Office of Student Financial Services. It is the student’s responsibility to pay his/her tuition in a timely manner, even if no bill has been received. Students should refer to tuition payment guidelines, deadlines for Fall and Spring Semester payments, and other information as issued by the university’s Office of the Registrar:
http://www.brandeis.edu/registrar/bulletin/provisional/college/tuition.html

If a full-time student is receiving a full or partial Brandeis tuition scholarship, this scholarship will be divided in half and deducted from the tuition and fees for the Fall and Spring Semesters. This will be reflected on the tuition bill. If a student is receiving third party sponsorship (e.g.,
Fulbright or OSF), it is the student’s responsibility to make sure the sponsor will meet the payment deadlines. The student is responsible for any outstanding balances. All stipends are considered to be taxable income under U.S. Internal Revenue Code and it is the obligation of Brandeis University to deduct these taxes from the students’ stipend checks. It is the responsibility of the student to complete a tax treaty form, if applicable, and file U.S. tax forms. Students should check with the Office of Student Financial Services, the International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO), and Heller Student Services for information on tax requirements.

Any student with outstanding financial obligations will be denied the privileges of attending classes and using university facilities. Every student must satisfy his or her financial obligations in full to the university in order to receive certification of graduation. Official transcripts and certifications will be withheld until financial obligations to the university have been discharged. Failure to discharge financial obligations includes, but is not limited to, an overdue balance with the university or the delinquency of a borrower in repaying a loan administered by the Office of Student Financial Services.

A student who defaults in the payment of indebtedness to the university shall be subject to suspension, dismissal, and refusal of a transfer of credits or issuance of an official transcript. In addition, the university may refer the debt to an outside collection agency. The student is responsible for costs associated with the collection of the debt.

Graduation

A student who has completed all requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Sustainable International Development and who has met all other obligations, financial and otherwise, to Brandeis University, is approved by the MA/SID Program Committee and recommended to the Dean and faculty of the Heller School for the award of the degree. Following approval by the Heller School faculty, the recommendation is submitted to the University faculty and to Brandeis University’s Board of Trustees for final approval.

Each year in May, Brandeis University holds its commencement exercises. The May commencement includes all students who were awarded degrees the previous August or February, or who will be awarded their degrees in May. Students who have graduated any of these times are eligible to march in the Heller mini-commencement and the University commencement. Students who have not completed all requirements for the MA/SID degree are welcome to attend commencement but are not permitted to walk in either the Heller or Brandeis commencement ceremonies. The Heller School commencement starts at 8:00 AM and is followed by the Brandeis University commencement at 10:30 AM.

It is University policy that all graduate students participating in commencement exercises must wear regalia (cap and gown), as provided by the University. At the present time, there is no charge for regalia. In February, students intending to graduate in May must submit an “Intent to Graduate” form and will indicate on the form if they are planning to march in the ceremony.

In regard to graduation, students should note the following:

- Students must complete all academic requirements prior to MA/SID Program and University deadlines in order to graduate.
• Students are responsible to discharge all financial obligations to the University. The Assistant Director of Student Enrollment, Gretchen Rowley, will announce the specific date by which this must be done. Financial obligations include: tuition and fees, course materials, library fines, parking fees and fines, and diploma fee.
• Students are not permitted to march in commencement exercises unless they are being awarded their degree.
• Prior to commencement, students must return materials on loan from Goldfarb Library, the Science Library, Heller’s Health Policy Library, the SID Library, faculty, and others.
• Lockers should be cleaned out soon after graduation. Belongings left in lockers will be discarded. Mailboxes should be cleaned out during graduation week.
• Students vacating local apartments or who plan to sub-lease should inform Heller Student Services, as this may help incoming students find living quarters.