

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES, ARTS, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

MIT's mission of meeting the world's great challenges requires not only superb technical and scientific creativity, but also a deep understanding of the human complexities—cultural, political, and economic—in which the world's challenges are embedded.

The disciplines taught in MIT's School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (SHASS) empower young students, thinkers, and citizens with historical and cultural perspectives, as well as language, critical thinking, and communication skills—capacities that enable projects rich in meaning and wisdom.

The school is made up of 11 units: Anthropology; Comparative Media Studies/Writing; Economics; Global Languages; History; Linguistics and Philosophy; Literature; Music and Theater Arts; Political Science; Science, Technology, and Society; and Women's and Gender Studies.

Each year hundreds of MIT students graduate with majors and minors in over 30 SHASS fields. In addition, the school provides the majority of subjects used to fulfill the Institute's Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences Requirement. The object of the requirement, broadly stated, is to ensure that every undergraduate at MIT is exposed to a wide range of interpretive and analytic approaches in the humanities, arts, and social sciences.

Research and Innovation

SHASS is home to research that has a global impact. The school offers five doctoral programs: Economics; History, Anthropology, and Science, Technology and Society (HASTS); Linguistics; Philosophy; and Political Science. These are among the leading graduate programs of their kind in the world. They prepare students for teaching and research careers in universities and colleges, but also for government service, industry, and finance. The school offers master's degrees in Comparative Media Studies, Economics, Political Science, and Science Writing.

Interdisciplinary Programs

Providing opportunities for interdisciplinary study is a priority at SHASS. Students can choose from among a number of interdisciplinary fields, including: Ancient and Medieval Studies, Applied International Studies, Public Policy, and five Regional Studies areas (African and African Diaspora Studies; Asian and Asian Diaspora Studies; Latin American and Latino/a Studies; Middle Eastern Studies; Russian and Eurasian Studies). In addition to more traditional departments, the school houses the multifaceted programs in Comparative Media Studies/Writing; Science, Technology and Society; and Women's and Gender Studies. The school offers two additional interdisciplinary degree programs: course 21E combines humanities and engineering; course 21S combines humanities and science. These unique

degree programs allow students to explore emerging fields at the intersection of humanities and STEM. Some of the many SHASS programs and projects that combine humanities with the sciences include the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Laboratory, the Center for International Studies, the Hyperstudio, the Knight Science Journalism Program, and the MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI), the school's flagship international education program. See the Research and Study section for further information on opportunities to engage in interdisciplinary research (<https://catalog.mit.edu/mit/research>).

Global Citizens

The school has a central role in international education at MIT, and in preparing students to be leaders and good global citizens. MISTI, located in the Center for International Studies, supports student internship, research, and teaching opportunities in Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, China, Denmark, France, Germany, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Korea, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Russia, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and various African countries. Through MISTI, MIT students develop practical intercultural skills via hands-on experience working beside international colleagues.

More locally, the Global Languages Section offers language and culture programs in Chinese, English Language Studies, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Global Languages also offers subjects taught in English on cultural globalization, transnational media, arts, and literature, global migration, global ecology and social justice, and other contemporary and historical global phenomena. These subjects help prepare students to be engaged global citizens and leaders.

A Brief History of SHASS

The school was founded in 1950 as a response to the challenges that followed the Second World War. The 1960s was a period of rapid growth, in which the school was reorganized into most of its current departments and sections, and began to grant full-scale degrees. In the 1970s and 1980s, the school continued to define separate programs and rearrange sections. In 1990, the school replaced the generic SB degree in Humanities with SB degrees in specified areas of humanistic study: Anthropology, History, Literature, Foreign Languages and Literatures, Music, and Writing.