

UiT

THE ARCTIC
UNIVERSITY
OF NORWAY



International Master of Philosophy in Indigenous Studies





Master of Philosophy in Indigenous Studies MIS

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Programme aim

The programme provides students with a thorough understanding of:

- the main dimensions of life in indigenous societies in the past and today; the challenges of their future, including culture and ethnicity; colonialism and the history of indigenous peoples; and indigenous resource management and environmental change;
- the emergence of indigenous civic organisations, their present operation as formal and informal systems, including their strategies for self-representation in political processes at different levels—from the local community to the global level;
- the relationship between nation-state and indigenous minorities, including the role of international organisations (UN, ILO); the formulation of legal, land, and resource claims with reference to customary international law; and international recognition human rights, such as the right to self-determination pertaining to indigenous peoples, their interpretation and implementation.





Photo M. Ahmad

Located in the Arctic, globally concerned and rooted in communities

Language of instruction: English

Duration: 2 years (120 ECTS credits), full-time study

UiT The Arctic University of Norway is one of very few in the world which offers an international Master's degree programme in com-

parative indigenous studies. The programme is based on research in social sciences, humanities and law and other knowledge accumu-

lated at UiT The Arctic University of Tromsø regarding Sami and other indigenous peoples.



Photo: Rachel Issa Djesa

Programme description

Language of instruction: English

Duration: 2 years (120 ECTS credits), full-time study

Degree

The Master's programme in Indigenous Studies (MIS) leads to a Master of Philosophy in Indigenous Studies. The duration of the programme is two years (120 ECTS)

Rationale

The UN Decade for Indigenous Peoples brought indigenous peoples on to the world map as never before. Globally, indigenous peo-

ples' voices are gaining strength and an international movement of indigenous peoples is gathering momentum. The Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2007 strongly supports this cause. Despite such positive developments, many indigenous peoples are still marginalized minorities in need of political recognition and empowerment. Com-

munities suffer from lack of social and economic progress. Moreover, the natural resources on which indigenous peoples base their livelihoods are threatened. These developments, historical experience, and the contemporary context that indigenous people experience across the globe are the thematic focus of this master's programme.

The programme aims to recruit

Sami and Nordic students, as well as students from other countries. A mixed group of students will strengthen the comparative aspects of the programme and will contribute to international network building. Selection from among applicants who meet the entry qualifications, aims to ensure a varied, gender-balanced student group which represents different countries and regions.

Supervision

All students will be allocated an academic supervisor for their individual Master’s thesies.

Course description and outline

Students will take courses totalling 120 study points (ECTS-credits) over two years. In the first year, students take six courses. The Master’s thesis amounts to 60 credits. The topic of the thesis is chosen

on the basis of the interests of the student and within the framework of the topics taught in the first year, or they can choose the topic from a list of suggested projects.

Students will develop their project proposal during the first and sec-

ond semester and will write the thesis during the third and fourth semesters.

The Master’s thesis provides an opportunity for in-depth studies within a chosen field of interest.



John Ssenkaaba
Uganda, MIS 2015

“I have graduated from a programme that has prepared me for working with minority-issues anywhere in the world. I am looking forward to engaging with people, preferably back home in Uganda.”

Summarised plan of study

Year 1: IND-3025, HIS-3005, HIF-3620, IND-3026, SOA-3006, STV-3013

Year 2: IND-3904 (Master’s thesis)

Code	Course name	Credits	Type of exam/Grading system	Semester
IND-3025	Introduction to Indigenous Studies	10	Home exam, grades A-F	1
HIS-3005	History of Indigenous peoples: Colonization and Revival	10	Two essays, grades A-F	1
HIF-3620	Indigenous Revitalization – Languages, Literature and Arts	10	School exam, grades A-F	1
IND-3026	Methodology and Methods in Indigenous Studies	10	Portfolio: Term paper and project description for the Master’s thesis, grades A-F	2
SOA-3006	Indigenous Culture, Resource Management and Human Rights	10	Home exam + oral exam, grades A-F	2
STV-3013	Indigenous Rights, Politics and Institution Building	10	School exam + home exam, grades A-F	2
IND-3904	Master’s Thesis in Indigenous Studies	60	Thesis + oral exam, grades A-F	3 and 4

What makes MIS such an interesting and exciting programme?

MIS is multidisciplinary and gives high quality education with good career opportunities. Students come from all parts of the world and create an exciting and dynamic study environment.

Photo: MIS 14 students





Photo: Rachel Issa Djesa

Thinking outside of the box

The MIS-programme comprises the advanced academic study of a wide range of issues pertinent to the theory and practice of indigenous issues in the fields of History, Social Anthropology, Political Sci-

ence, Law, Literature and Culture. The programme is relevant for students interested in marginalization, socio-economic development, cultural revitalization and empowerment, sustainable resource management, as they pertain to ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples globally.

Inspiring environment for your studies

Reasons that make students choose MIS for their master's studies, are its high level of teaching and research as well as its good reputation.



Mira Sivtseva, Russia, MIS 2015:

“The MIS program played a big role in the development of my indigenous identity. Studying at the MIS programme was one of the most important and unforgettable journeys in my life!”

Photo: Yoko Tanabe



Be curious and engaged

MIS provides excellent course, and friendly, yet challenging classroom debates with teachers and fellow students

The programme is designed to give students expertise in both understanding and critically analyzing the situation of indigenous peoples in terms of legal rights, political situations, economic adaptations, contextual representations and individual and collective identification with cultural heritage. The challenges of modernity and globalization are dealt with specifically.

Photo: MIS



Learning outcome

Knowledge

The students will have:

- thorough knowledge of the history of the global indigenous movement and the situation of indigenous peoples in the Arctic;
- advanced knowledge of indigenous issues including similarities and differences based on the different cultural contexts;
- thorough knowledge of different scholarly theories and methods in indigenous studies, including the challenges posed by indigenous methodologies;
- advanced knowledge of the concepts of indigenous peoples used in research and politics at global and local level, and the scholarly and political debate on these issues;
- competence in analysis in academic indigenous research;
- knowledge of research ethics and the responsibility of the researcher.

Skills

The students will be able to:

- compare the situation of indigenous peoples in different historical and contemporary contexts;
- critically analyse the situation of indigenous peoples based on an interdisciplinary approach to indigenous studies;
- and apply, conduct theoretical analysis of aspects of humani-



Photo:
Mary Mansa

- ties and social science theory;
- find and use relevant research methods to produce the data for an independently designed project;
- carry out an independent, research project under supervision.

General competence

The students will be able to:

- analyse professional and research ethical challenges related to indigenous issues;
- apply knowledge and skills on indigenous issues in order to carry out advanced assignments and projects in similar areas;
- use the terminology of indigenous studies and communicate academic work both to specialists and to the general public;
- combine different scholarly approaches to produce new knowledge;

- contribute to new thinking and innovation processes regarding indigenous peoples and minorities.

The MIS programme prepares the students to:

- apply analytical skills to understand the social and cultural contexts of indigenous peoples, their organisations and their rights;
- apply analytical skills to empirical study of indigenous issues cross-culturally and within the frameworks established by nation-states;
- design and carry out independent research project involving data collection through the use of fieldwork methods and/or written sources;
- qualify for work within teaching and education; promotion and implementation of indigenous issues internationally; civil society organization; government and the public sector; project management; and further research and studies in indigenous issues.

Photo Jørn Weines



Career opportunities

Work cross culturally

Being a graduate of MIS the programme gives you numerous opportunities for your professional life.

MIS-graduates have been successful in finding jobs that enable them to use the skills and knowledge acquired during their studies. Study-related work experience and the ability to work cross-culturally, as well as the multidisciplinary character of the programme, have been important factors for our graduates in finding employment.

MIS-graduates are qualified to seek employment both in the public and private sector and at all levels of governmental administration as well as in various types of organizations. A further goal of MIS is to give its students a solid foundation from which to advance to a doctoral degree.

Great research, better future

Our programme provides students with a solid foundation for doctoral studies around the world – several of our graduates have taken that challenge! Having first experienced

what it means to do academic research, many have included it as part of their plan for the future.

All over the world, dealing with issues related to the field of ethnic relations constitutes one of the most essential institutional challenges at the beginning of the 21st century. Consequently, there is an increasing demand for professionals who are trained in this field. MIS provides high level academic and professional expertise needed for dealing with challenges that culturally diverse societies and their institutions are facing.

Photo M. Ahmad



Socializing

Feel at home

Student mentors help new students feel at home. Student societies and organizations, as well as the university's Student Welfare Organisation, are welcoming and embracing and increase internationalization at the University. They all contribute to ensuring that new students are taken well care of and introduced to the multifaceted student life of Tromsø.

DebutUKA

The students run an introductory week (DebutUKA) that takes place

each autumn and spring before the classes begin. It is an arctic adventure with the purpose of creating a sense of belonging, engagement and magical memories for both new and senior students at the UiT. A great variety of events take place on and outside the campus including concerts, seminars, orientation about/by the student organizations, a welcome fair and much more. This is an opportunity not to be missed if you are new at UiT and in Tromsø. It gives you an excellent opportunity to get a lot of information which makes the start of your studies and life in Tromsø as smooth and pleasant as possible.

Find a student mentor

Students who are already familiar with UiT and Tromsø volunteer as student mentors ("fadder" in Norwegian). Both Norwegian and international students meet the new students and create a safe, yet intense semester start at UiT. They want to show you the best of Tromsø and UiT and make your start in the Arctic positive and smooth. Student mentors are knowledgeable, available and sociable. They are people who are there for you!

About UiT The Arctic University of Norway

UiT The Arctic University of Norway is located in Northern Norway and has about 12000 students, 10 % of them international. Foreign applicants can take advantage of an increasing number of exchange agreements with universities worldwide. We offer studies in the framework of international exchange programmes such as ERASMUS, North2North, Nordplus, Barentsplus and others. We also welcome free-movers and degree students.

Founded in 1968, UiT is a young, but well established university. The University merged with the University College of Finnmark on 01.08.2013. All campuses in Tromsø and Finnmark are mod-

ern, technically advanced and well equipped. 25% of the academic staff is international. The advantage of an 8:1 student-teacher ratio guarantees close guidance and a good learning environment. A team of international student advisers provides services regarding all aspects of your stay at UiT.

No tuition fees are charged at UiT. The Student Welfare Organisations at both Campuses offer modern accommodation, kindergartens, cafeterias and sports facilities. International students can apply for housing in one of the many student hostels. The Student Counselling Centre organizes special social events and gatherings for international students including ice-skat-

ing. An Introductory programme for new students is arranged each semester, providing assistance on technical and administrative matters and offering opportunities to meet other students.

Most of UiT's English taught Master's degree programmes reflect the specific character of the University's location in the far North. An increasing number of our traditional Norwegian study programmes offer courses of international interest in English. You will find attractive subjects at both Bachelor's and Master's level in all of UiT's six faculties. A one-semester study programme on Arctic Norway, tailor-made for international students, is offered each autumn.

