

I was accepted to the Master's program at the Institute of Iranian Studies at Georg-August-Universität Göttingen after completing my bachelor's degree in history (Persian) at the Institute of Asian and African Studies at Lomonosov Moscow State University and receiving a bachelor's degree in Asian and African Studies.

I don't regret choosing the Master's program at the Institute of Iranian Studies in Göttingen to continue my education. First of all, it offers a completely different approach to education, offering freedom of educational and academic choice. You're not forced into a set list of academic subjects; rather, figuratively speaking, instead of a "set menu" you're offered a "buffet." You are free to choose the courses that is interesting to you. that interest you (except for mandatory ones, such as German for international students and "Scientific Work" for everyone). The range of topics is initially overwhelming: from the analysis of Sufi texts to "Persian Poetic Cinema," from "Dynamics of Change in the Arab World and in Iran" to the poetry of Amīr Khusraw Dehlawī, from "Planes, Trains, and Automobiles – Communication and Traffic in Modern Iran" to "Horses in the Persian and Indo-Persian Tradition," from "Iran in the Aryan Discours" to "Food, Eating, and Culinary Culture in Iranian History", from the history of medieval Persian medicine to "Folkart within the Folklore Stories in the Persianate."

This wide selection allows students who have not yet fully decided on their academic interests to find their bearings and expands their horizons for those for whom Iranian studies was limited to the pages of works on Iranian history. Furthermore, this structure of classes provides time and ample opportunities for self-study. However, this system also requires careful planning of one's personal study plan. Throughout the entire master's program, students are required to submit a wide variety of written assignments—Reviews, Abstracts, Essays, and Papers. An important element of the curriculum is presentations, which students give in seminars across all subjects and which are then discussed with colleagues. In this way, students acquire very useful skills for their future careers, especially those related to teaching or research. This skill involves expressing one's thoughts orally and defending one's opinions, as well as the ability to not only express one's thoughts in writing but to do so in a structured manner in accordance with the requirements for a particular type of research paper. In this regard, I would like to specifically highlight the "Scientific Work" course, which I believe is useful. This course provides (or supplements) knowledge about how a research paper should be formatted, its components, how to compile a bibliography, format references, and citations, and how to create a research plan. In other words, students acquire the skills necessary for writing research papers in the future, when applying to PhD programs, when applying for grants, and so on.

I would also like to draw special attention to the master's colloquium. This is where master's students present their master's dissertation proposals for the first time to their professors and colleagues for review. I believe that such a public pre-defense allows the candidate to understand the shortcomings of their work and what needs to be improved and revised, and it is also useful for the other seminar participants.

What do I miss about studying in the master's program at the Institute of Iranian Studies? I would be glad if there were courses not only in Kurdish but also advanced courses for Persian. Of course, students entering the master's program must already have a good command of Persian, so the classes are designed for BA students. Moreover, there are many native speakers among the students, making it sometimes challenging to practice reading and translation skills. However, in my opinion, more courses in Persian with analysis of historical texts, where reading and translation skills would be practiced, would be useful. As a historian,

I think courses in historiography, perhaps the principles of archaeology, as well as auxiliary historical disciplines such as paleography, archaeography, archival science, source studies, and historical geography would also be good to have.

What, in my opinion, are the shortcomings of the educational system at the Institute of Iranian Studies? I personally was not interested in the selection of modules that students at the Institute of Iranian Studies must choose from courses in neighboring departments. I furthermore regret that German language instruction is limited to two mandatory semesters. Three hours a week for a year in a classroom filled with people of various specialties from all over the world is clearly not enough even for the initial mastery of such a rich and complex language at a more or less decent level.