Student Guidebook

PENN STATE
World Campus
1855

Intercollege Master of Professional Studies (iMPS) in Homeland Security

- Homeland Security Base Program
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WELCOME

Welcome to the Penn State Intercollege Master of Professional Studies in Homeland Security (*i*MPS-HLS) program! We are pleased that you have chosen to pursue your education through this graduate program. Penn State is a leader in education, in the traditional classroom, as well as via distance education, and offers many resources to aid you in achieving academic success.

The *i*MPS-HLS Program can prepare you for leadership positions in the field of homeland security by providing you with an exceptional graduate education. The distance education format is designed to accommodate the needs of graduate students, many of whom are working professionals, as well as adult learners. As a student in the program, you will be educated by experts in several fields of homeland security. The program faculty strives to challenge you in a distance learning environment while offering support for your personal needs, requirements, and interests. We want you to succeed at Penn State as we prepare you for careers in the field of homeland security.

The purpose of the student guidebook is to assist you in the *i*MPS-HLS Program by providing important information about many aspects of the program. In the following pages, you will be introduced to the program and its several academic specializations, the rules of the program and of the Graduate School, and the many services that Penn State has to offer.

In addition to the academic specialization that you choose, a unified core curriculum provides a consistent umbrella structure; regardless of your chosen field of specialization in the program, you will participate in a unifying core curriculum and affiliate with the *i*MPS-HLS Program as a whole. This will provide you with the broader picture of homeland security and transversal knowledge and skills that you will need as a future leader in the dynamic network of legal foundations, institutions, policies, and strategies that are involved in the evolving efforts to secure our society.

Again, welcome to Penn State. The *i*MPS-HLS faculty joins me in welcoming you and wishes you success in your academic and professional endeavors.

I would like to particularly thank Chrissie Fitzgerald, Alison Shuler, B.S., Lesa Stanford, and Greg Thomas, Ph.D., for their substantial contributions to developing and reviewing this new edition of the *i*MPS-HLS Student Guidebook.

Sincerely,

Alexander Siedschlag, Ph.D.
Professor of Homeland Security
*i*MPS-HLS Program Chair

OVERVIEW

The homeland security discipline is applicable to all aspects of the enterprise—public, private, and nonprofit sectors, all-of-community, as well as working with international partners. While the federal Department of Homeland Security (DHS) may be one of the largest employers of homeland security professionals (now exceeding 240,000), the need for qualified professionals is also expanding at the state and local levels. In addition, the public-private partnership has made homeland security an important focus in the area of critical infrastructure protection for the private sector industries, such as information technology, finance, insurance, transportation, health and medicine, utilities, communications, and more.

The iMPS-HLS Program faculty and staff have designed this guidebook to introduce you to the program and assist you with general information regarding its curricula, graduation requirements, academic advising, etc., and will do everything possible to provide you with a positive educational experience. The policies and procedures in this guide complement those found on the Penn State World Campus website, the Penn State University Graduate Bulletin, the Graduate School, and other applicable resources. This is not a stand-alone document, and you should refer to other resources, especially your academic adviser, when appropriate. The iMPS-HLS Academic Steering Committee reserves the right to make changes to this guidebook as necessary.

Note: **All URLs of websites mentioned in the guidebook are comprehensively listed at the end of this guidebook.**

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Program Description

Penn State's distance education Intercollege Master of Professional Studies in Homeland Security (*i*MPS-HLS) program offers online learners anywhere in the world a unique educational experience. The program is designed for graduate students who can complete their course work entirely via the distance education format. Enrolled students choose from one of five academic specializations within the homeland security discipline. These include Agricultural Biosecurity and Food Defense, Geospatial Intelligence, the Homeland Security Base Program, Information Security and Forensics, and Public Health Preparedness.

Each academic specialization consists of different required course work, which will be presented below, and is sponsored by a different College of Penn State. Penn State Harrisburg serves as the academic and administrative home of the program and hosts the Program Office. Penn State World Campus is the delivery mechanism for the program.

For any academic questions and questions regarding internships and job opportunities, work with your Option Director, your Base Program Director, or—should you require any further help—the Program Office.

Upon completion of all requirements, which includes a non-credit orientation and 33 credits of course work, all students in the *i*MPS-HLS Program receive a Master of Professional Studies (MPS) in Homeland Security degree. You thus are all students in one and the same single-degree program leading to the degree of a Master of Professional Studies (MPS). The difference is that while all graduates will be receiving a Master of Professional Studies (MPS) in Homeland Security diploma, credentials will be added to the diploma if the graduate choses an Option (instead of the Base Program). Those credentials will also appear on the diploma and transcript.

We also offer five graduate certificates that are also offered online. The certificates provide students with additional education in general Homeland Security (12 credits); Agricultural Biosecurity and Food Defense (12 credits); Geospatial Intelligence Analytics (13 credits) or Applications (11 credits); Information Systems Security (15 credits); Public Health Preparedness: Disaster and Bioterrorism (12 credits); and Hospital and Health System Preparedness (15 credits). Please refer to the Penn State World Campus Homeland Security Programs website for more information.

Because the required credits of each certificate make up a portion of the prescribed courses for each *i*MPS-HLS degree academic specialization, eligible students may apply those credits toward the *i*MPS degree in Homeland Security. Certificate students who are interested in applying for the *i*MPS-HLS program are encouraged to do so. Students enrolled in the *i*MPS-HLS program may also apply for a certificate in one of the other academic specializations. However, students must submit a separate application and application fee for that certificate to appear on their graduate transcript.

<u>Academic Specializations: Base Program and Options</u>
<u>(find contact information at the end of this guidebook)</u>

In addition to the common core curriculum (three courses and a non-credit program orientation), iMPS-HLS students must complete the required course work for one of five academic specializations. Each includes four prescribed courses, three approved electives, and a culminating experience (capstone course)—for a total of 33 credits. The following describes each of the academic specializations within the iMPS-HLS program.

Homeland Security Base Program

The Base Program is sponsored by Penn State Harrisburg. It offers students a broad understanding of homeland security issues at different levels of government, as well as in the private sector. The Base Program focuses on homeland security legislation, policies, strategies, planning, organization and administration, and interactions across the homeland security enterprise. In addition to completing the program's core curriculum, iMPS-HLS students in the Base Program also complete prescribed courses, electives, and the culminating experience (capstone course on research topics).

The Base Program also includes an International Track. The ways in which delivery of civil security is planned, executed, and coordinated globally are transforming. Homeland security missions substantially include, and require, working with international partners. The International Track is based on state-of-the-art security research. Here, U.S. students and international students can enhance their education, learning to understand the characteristics of homeland security in a global and all-hazards context that requires working around the world. Students in the International Track choose electives with an international focus, take a dedicated section in the HLS 594 capstone course, and will receive an additional certificate of completion.

Ideal candidates for the Homeland Security Base Program include DHS employees, national and international emergency management officials, first responders, military members (active duty, guard, or reserve), and employees of other federal departments and agencies, as well as those working in related state and local organizations. Individuals in the private sector (e.g., financial institutions, insurance agencies, utilities, transportation, and security consultants) may also acquire valuable and relevant skills through the Base Program.

Agricultural Biosecurity and Food Defense Option

The Agricultural Biosecurity and Food Defense (AGBFD) Option is sponsored by the College of Agricultural Sciences. It focuses on threats to agriculture and food supply chains. Along with completing the program's core curriculum, students in the AGBFD Option also complete prescribed courses, electives, and a capstone experience focused on responding to threats to agricultural and the food supply chains.

The AGBFD Option provides students with the knowledge and skills to protect the food supply chain and agriculture sector from threats that occur naturally or are man-made. Students in the AGBFD Option are introduced to agricultural and food defense issues and interventions,

including plant, animal, and food security issues, surveillance systems for infectious diseases, diagnostic and sensor technologies, disease-predictive models, protection and mitigation approaches, and microbial forensic capabilities.

The AGBFD Option is ideal for public health professionals, food safety engineers, food defense coordinators, food inspectors, food microbiologists, and other individuals interested in working in food safety and biosecurity. It prepares students for careers such as medical and health services manager, agricultural manager, food scientist or technologist, plant manager, agricultural inspector, and many other opportunities.

Geospatial Intelligence Option

The Geospatial Intelligence (GEOINT) Option is sponsored by the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences. It provides analysts with the knowledge and skills to provide accurate intelligence information to decision makers. Along with completing the program's core curriculum, students in the GEOINT Option also complete prescribed courses, electives, and a capstone experience specific to analytic methods and information systems for geospatial intelligence.

With an increase in skills and knowledge, analysts can disseminate accurate intelligence that may save lives, improve governments' ability to prepare for and respond to disasters, and assist businesses. Students completing the GEOINT Option can apply their skill set in law enforcement and homeland security, including disaster response and recovery, emergency preparedness, environmental analysis and protection, and tracking how criminal and terrorist groups act spatially.

Suitable candidates for the GEOINT Option are new or established working professionals, with or without geographic information systems experience, and it is ideal for individuals working in various federal agencies (e.g., National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Geological Survey, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of Homeland Security). Potential careers for *i*MPS-HLS graduates who took the GEOINT Option include geospatial analyst, geospatial intelligence specialist, imagery analyst, intelligence analyst, and several other career opportunities.

Information Security and Forensics Option

The Information Security and Forensics (ISF) Option is sponsored by the College of Information Sciences and Technology. It focuses on cyber and network security and threat defense. Along with completing the program's core curriculum, students in the ISF Option also complete prescribed courses, electives, and a capstone experience specific to cyber and network security, threat defense and assessment, and security development.

The ISF program Option is suited for individuals with a bachelor's degree in a technical or scientific discipline (e.g., applied mathematics, computer information systems, computer science, information science, engineering, or statistics). The ISF Option prepares students for a

number of information security careers, including information assurance engineering, catastrophe risk analysis, computer systems security analysis, intelligence analysis, and information security/digital forensics. It provides students with a core understanding of the detection and prevention of attacks, development of information systems with assurances, analysis of information security systems, and penetration testing to ensure system security.

Public Health Preparedness Option

The Public Health Preparedness (PHP) Option is sponsored by the College of Medicine. It prepares students to plan for and lead effective medical and public health responses to natural and man-made disasters. The PHP Option focuses on the medical and public health sectors in an all-hazards environment. Students in the PHP Option complete prescribed courses, electives, and a capstone experience specific to mitigation of the immediate and long-term health impact from terrorist actions and natural disasters.

In addition to building on their own experience, students in the PHP Option learn to use an evidence-based approach to effective health preparedness and response. Students focus on the principle methods of exposure assessment, epidemiology, vulnerability assessment, and the protection of health care delivery. The PHP Option is the country's first and only online homeland security curriculum offered by a medical school.

The PHP Option is well suited for individuals with a bachelor's degree in a health, scientific, or social sciences discipline. Students in the PHP Option often have experience as public health practitioners, health care providers, hospital administrators, and first responders. Many students have been in the military, law enforcement, or emergency management. Graduates from the *i*MPS-HLS program who have completed the PHP Option seek to advance their careers in health services administration, emergency management, health care, disaster recovery, public health, and homeland security.

Degree Requirements

Each *i*MPS-HLS student is responsible for completing all graduation requirements. Regardless of academic specialization, the program requires students to complete a non-credit orientation and 33 credits, 24 of which must be Penn State acquired credits.

Each student must enroll in and successfully complete 18 credits of 500-level and above courses, of which *6 credits must specifically be in 500-level courses.* The capstone course (594) that provides the culminating experience can account for 3 of the 6 required 500-level credits. To achieve the required program credits, each student must successfully complete 9 credits of the core curriculum, 12 credits in prescribed courses, 9 credits in elective courses, and 3 credits in the capstone course. A course in which a "D" has been obtained cannot be used to meet graduate degree requirements and will not count toward total credits earned.

Students must maintain a "B" (3.00) or above grade point average ("GPA") to remain in the program and to graduate with a Master of Professional Studies (MPS) degree in Homeland Security. Students who receive an F in a core or prescribed course must retake that course, and

the failing grade will remain on their permanent transcript and figure into their overall GPA. Students should refer to Penn State University's policy on "Academic Dismissal" for additional information.

Curriculum

Core Curriculum (9 credits): The core curriculum includes a mandatory non-credit orientation (free of charge) and three credit-earning courses. It provides a foundation in strategic, statutory, organizational, and ethical aspects in all-hazards risk management in homeland security within a global context. It provides the student with an exceptional learning opportunity, since students will interact with individuals from other academic specializations within the program. The non-credit orientation must be completed ahead of or early during the first semester. The core curriculum also provides the unified educational goals and objectives for the program as a whole. Those include:

- Understand major policies and legislation that shape homeland security in a globalized society.
- Become familiar with organizations that play a key role in the implementation of homeland security policies and administration, and recognize the interactions among them.
- Understand the way in which a person or group responds to a set of conditions so as to prevent and respond to incidents and catastrophic events, when needed.
- Recognize the impact that catastrophic events, both natural and man-made, have on society and the domestic and global economy.
- Identify and assess potential threats, vulnerabilities, and consequences.
- Apply leadership skills and principles that are necessary for producing and acting on information of value in a collaborative setting.
- Communicate effectively in the context of particular institutional cultures.
- Use, conduct, and interpret research and data effectively in decision making.
- Practice ethics and integrity as a foundation for analytical debate and conclusion.
- Develop an appreciation of the cultural, social, psychological, political, and legal aspects of terrorism and counterterrorism.

Certificate-only students do not take core curriculum courses but may take the orientation if they wish to do so.

Prescribed Courses for each academic specialization (12 credits): Within each academic specialization (Base Program or Options), students will acquire an understanding of additional issues in homeland security and applicable knowledge of that particular area.

Electives (9 credits): In addition to the *i*MPS-HLS core curriculum and the prescribed courses, students must complete an additional 9 credits in elective courses. The Base Program and each Option have a list of elective choices (that may include courses from other academic specializations within the program). Students must enroll in electives appropriate to their academic specializations (i.e., Base Program or one of the Options). Students should be aware that certain electives are available to them ("horizontally") across academic specializations.

Students may wish to discuss elective choices with their academic adviser, but should be sure to check the most current list of electives on the Penn State World Campus website.

Capstone Course – Research Topics (3 credits): *i*MPS-HLS students must complete a capstone course. The capstone provides the culminating experience in the program. It differs per academic specializations, but each capstone course is listed under "594." The capstone course provides students with the opportunity to apply their acquired knowledge and skills along specific research topics. The culminating experience may be a supervised individual experience, or it may involve work in small groups with classmates. Additionally, these capstone credits may count toward students' required 6 credits in 500-level courses.

Curriculum Roadmap: The *i*MPS-HLS Program's curriculum roadmap (see p. 8) depicts the core, prescribed, and elective courses suitable for the Base Program and each Option. Students should pay particular attention to the required course work of their respective academic specializations. For a current description of each course, including prerequisites, students should visit the *Graduate Degree Programs Bulletin* or the program's website. Also, students should check the Penn State World Campus website or check with their academic adviser for a current list of elective offerings.

Prerequisites: The *i*MPS-HLS Program allows students to schedule courses and their prerequisites simultaneously, but students may not schedule a course without simultaneously scheduling its prerequisite or previously completing a prerequisite. There are exceptions, however. For example, the ISF Option has some courses in which students would not be permitted to simultaneously take the course and its prerequisite. Students should check with their academic adviser before registering for classes.

Course Levels

It is important for students to understand course levels so to appreciate level-specific expectations in scholastic achievement:

A 500-level graduate course deals with the frontiers of knowledge in the field. It is grounded in theories, hypotheses, and methodologies as expounded in current and/or primary literature sources. Synthesis of knowledge and independent analytical work by the student must be demonstrated. Significant and regular instructor-initiated interaction between students and the instructor(s) should occur in all 500-level courses.

An 800-level graduate course pertains to the most recently established knowledge and methodologies in a field of study, as applied to practice. It emphasizes analytical thinking and application of knowledge by the student in the context of providing pragmatic solutions for professionals. Significant and regular instructor-initiated interaction between students and the instructor(s) should occur in all 800-level courses.

Advanced undergraduate courses numbered between 400 and 499 may be used to meet some graduate degree requirements when taken by graduate students. Those provide specific information on particular subject matter areas.

Curriculum Roadmap for the Intercollege MPS in Homeland Security (*i*MPS-HLS)

INTERCOLLEGE MASTER OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES IN HOMELAND SECURITY (*i*MPS-HLS) One single program leading to the same *MPS* degree, with five different areas of academic specialization Total required credits: 33				
Core Curriculum—9 credits (abbreviated: cr)				
Base Program courses are renumbered. Previous courses will count for degree requirements, as per the **following** concordance list: • **PADM/HLS 401 – HLS 811 (SU17 →)** • **PADM 802 – HLS 802 (SP 17 →)** • **PADM 803 – HLS 804 (SP17 →)**	HLS ORIENTATION—General Orientation about the *i*MPS-HLS Program (non-credit) It is strongly recommended that you complete the ORIENTATION before the start of classes, or early during your first semester. If you do not complete the ORIENTATION during your first semester, you may not be allowed to register for your next semester. HLS 801—Homeland Security Administration: Policies and Programs HLS 803—Homeland Security: Social and Ethical Issues HLS 805—Violence, Threats, Terror, and Insurgency			
Homeland Security Base Program	**Agricultural Biosecurity and Food Defense Option**	**Geospatial Intelligence Option**	**Information Security & Forensics Option**	**Public Health Preparedness Option**
Prescribed Courses —12 cr	**Prescribed Courses —12 cr**	**Prescribed Courses —12 cr**	**Prescribed courses —12 cr**	**Prescribed courses —12 cr**
HLS 811 HLS 404 HLS 802 HLS 804	AGBIO 520 AGBIO 521 AGBIO 801 AGBIO 802	GEOG 882 GEOG 483 GEOG 480 GEOG 885	IST 454 IST 456 IST 554 IST 815	PHP 410 PHP 510 PHP 527 PHP 530
Electives—9 cr At least one elective course must be at 500 level	**Electives—9 cr**	**Electives—9 cr** At least one elective course must be at 500 level	**Electives—9 cr**	**Electives—9 cr**
The following listing of elective courses is indicative and non-exhaustive Other courses may be recognized as electives by the respective Option or the Base Program				
AGBIO 520, CAS 553, GEOG 480, GEOG 571, GEOSC 402Y, IST 564, IST 815, PADM 500, PADM 507, PADM 557, PHP 527, PLSC 418W, PLSC 439, PLSC 442, PLSC 836, PSY 532, PSY 539, PSY 811, PUBPL 475, PUBPL 483, LEAD 555, HLS 540, HLS 558, HLS 595A, HLS 597, HLS 832, HLS 875	CAS 553, GEOG 480, GEOG 571, GEOSC 402Y, IST 564, IST 885, IST 868, MANGT 510, PHP 527, HLS 540, HLS 558, HLS 595A, HLS 811, HLS 832, HLS 875)	AGBIO 520, CAS 553, GEOG 479, GEOG 481, GEOG 482, GEOG 484, GEOG 485, GEOG 486, GEOG 487, GEOG 489, GEOG 497B, GEOG 497I, GEOG 571, GEOG 583, GEOG 584, GEOG 585, GEOG 586, GEOG 587, GEOG 588, GEOG 591, GEOG 596I, GEOG 597G, GEOG 597I, GEOG 862, GEOG 863, GEOG 864, GEOG 865, GEOG 883, GEOG 884, GEOG 892, GEOG 897D, GEOG 897K, GEOSC 402Y, IST 564, IST 815, IST 885, HLS 811, PHP 527, PLSC 439	CAS 553, GEOG 571, IST 451, INSC 561, IST 564, IST 865, IST 868, IST 885, HLS 558	AGBIO 520, AGBIO 801, CAS 553, GEOG 571, GEOSC 402Y, IST 564, IST 815 IST 868, MANGT 510, PHP 596, PHP 831, PHP 832, PL SC 836, HLS 558
Capstone course: Research Topics —3 cr **HLS 594**	**Capstone course: Research Topics —3 cr** **AGBIO 594**	**Capstone course: Research Topics —3 cr** **GEOG 594A (1 cr)** **GEOG 594B (2 cr)**	**Capstone course: Research Topics —3 cr** **IST 594A (2 cr)** **IST 594B (1 cr)**	**Capstone course: Research Topics —3 cr** **PHP 594**

Course Descriptions are available on the University Bulletin. For course start and end periods, registration deadlines, and semesters offered, see the **course schedule** for the Base Program or Option on the Penn State World Campus website (URLs are listed in the end of this guidebook). Also, in most cases, if you go to the course schedule and click on the schedule number for your course in the respective semester, you will see the **instructor** listed on top.

Note: There is no definite listing of elective courses, and not all courses are offered in each semester. Students should check the course schedule for current course offerings.

Note regarding taking ISF 454, 456, 554, or 815 as electives: Due to the technical nature and heavy demand, non-ISF Option students are encouraged to contact the ISF Option office before registering. This will reduce the likelihood of cancellation of registration due to inappropriate background to successfully complete the course.

RECOMMENDED PLANS OF STUDY*
*Assuming a fall start, two courses per semester, and a two-year goal to completion

> It is strongly recommended that you complete the ORIENTATION before or early during your first semester. **If you do not complete the ORIENTATION during your first semester, you may not be allowed to register for your next semester.**

*i*MPS-HLS Homeland Security Base Program

	Fall	Spring	Summer
Year 1	ORIENTATION Core #1 & 2 (HLS 801, HLS 805)	Core #3 (HLS 803) HLS 811	HLS 404 HLS 802 or HLS 804
Year 2	HLS 802 or HLS 804 Elective #1	Elective #2 Elective #3	HLS 594

*i*MPS-HLS Agricultural Biosecurity and Food Defense Option

	Fall	Spring	Summer
Year 1	ORIENTATION Core #1 (HLS 801) AGBIO 520	AGBIO 801 AGBIO 802	Core #2 (HLS 803 or HLS 805) Elective #1
Year 2	AGBIO 521 Elective #2	Core #3 (HLS 803 or HLS 805) Elective #3	AGBIO 594

*i*MPS-HLS Geospatial Intelligence Option

	Fall	Spring	Summer
Year 1	ORIENTATION Core #1 (HLS 801) GEOG 882	GEOG 483 GEOG 480	Core #2 (HLS 803 or HLS 805) GEOG 885
Year 2	GEOG 594A (1 cr) Elective #1 Elective #2	Core #3 (HLS 803 or HLS 805) Elective #3	GEOG 594B (2 cr)

*i*MPS-HLS Information Security and Forensics Option

*Each *i*MPS-HLS student in the Information Security and Forensic Option is provided a suggested individualized curriculum; a model is available here: https://online.ist.psu.edu/sites/gettingstarted/files/HLSSampleCurriculumPlan.docx

	Fall	Spring	Summer
Year 1	ORIENTATION, IST 815 (See suggested individualized curriculum*)	(See suggested individualized curriculum*)	(See suggested individualized curriculum*)
Year 2	(See suggested individualized curriculum*)	(See suggested individualized curriculum*) IST 594A (2 cr)	IST 594B (1 cr) Elective #3

*i*MPS-HLS Public Health Preparedness Option

	Fall	Spring	Summer
Year 1	ORIENTATION Core #1 (HLS 801), PHP 410	PHP 510, PHP 530	Core #2 (HLS 803 or HLS 805) Elective #1
Year 2	PHP 527 Elective #2	Core #3 (HLS 803 or HLS 805) Elective #3	PHP 594

Note: These recommended plans of study assume that you have achieved course grades above "D," which is only counted towards graduation requirements.

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PLANNING

Academic Advisers

Academic advisers are standing faculty members of certain rank who will be assigned to students as academic advisers as they are admitted to the program. The assigned academic adviser(s) will be listed in LionPATH in the student center. They will support and assist you in achieving academic success in the *i*MPS-HLS program. They will help you with questions such as class choices, study plans, or academic improvement plans, if necessary. However, students are expected to use this guidebook and other resources regarding scheduling courses, transferring credits, navigating Canvas, University policies, and information regarding other University departments (e.g., financial aid, admissions, the Graduate School, etc.).

Scheduling Courses and Registration Deadlines

Students will use LionPATH to register for classes. Section numbers, schedule numbers, number of credits, and tuition for each course can be found by searching the *LionPATH schedule of courses.* Students need complete the "Consent to do Business Electronically" (annually) and complete their Pre-Registration Activity Guide (each semester), prior to enrolling via LionPATH.

Students will see their schedule after they enroll from the shopping cart. From the **My Class Schedule** tab, then students can select the section number highlighted in blue to find out more information about the course materials, etc.

Payment is <u>not</u> due at the time of registration for courses. Students will be sent an electronic bill in LionPATH. Students are <u>strongly encouraged to register early</u> since late registrants cannot expect accommodation. Further, students should be aware of Penn State registration deadlines. Students can find registration deadlines and add/drop periods on LionPATH and the *Academic Calendar*.

Students should make every effort to register for classes and submit payment by the respective deadlines. If registration is done during the late registration period, a $50 late payment fee and a $250 late registration fee will be assessed by Penn State. Students should recognize the difference between late registration and late addition of a course to their schedule. Students who completed their registration for at least one course and add an additional course during or after the add period are not considered late registrants. Instead, Penn State currently charges previously registered students a fee for the late addition of a course. Students should pay particular attention to registration deadlines on *LionPATH* or the Registrar's *Academic Calendar* to avoid paying an additional fee of currently $300.

Please see the listing of websites at the end of the guidebook for accessing LionPATH and related guides, as well as other useful online information.

ACADEMIC POLICIES, RULES, AND PROCEDURES

Graduate School Policies and Procedures

Penn State graduate students are strongly encouraged to visit the *Graduate Degree Programs Bulletin* and familiarize themselves with the policies and expectations of the Graduate School. Many questions can be answered through the bulletin.

Grading System

The *i*MPS-HLS program follows Penn State's general grading system. Accordingly, grades shall be assigned to individual students on the basis of the instructor's judgment of the student's scholastic achievement. Grades shall be reported by the following letters: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, D, or F, indicating a gradation in quality from Excellent to Failure. They are assigned the following grade-point equivalents:

Grade	Grade-Point Equivalent	Quality of Performance
A	4.00	**Excellent**—Exceptional achievement
A-	3.67	
B+	3.33	**Good**—Substantial achievement
B	3.00	
B-	2.67	
C+	2.33	**Satisfactory**—Acceptable but substandard achievement
C	2.00	
D*	1.00	**Poor**—Inadequate achievement. This is a failing grade for a graduate student
F*	0	**Failure**—Work unworthy of any credit. This suggests that the student may not be capable of succeeding in graduate study

* *Courses where "D" or "F" grades were received do <u>not</u> count towards graduate degree requirements but may be repeated.*

Note that the Penn State grading system does not foresee a 1:1 ratio between total percentage of assignment scores and final course letter grade. Final course grades are not assigned based on computation but on academic assessment by the instructor.

Students dissatisfied with their course grade should first discuss with their instructor and in case no resolution is achieved contact their Option Director/Base Program Director. Any grade adjudication is administered by the college sponsoring the respective course. The Program Office can provide you with the appropriate point of contact.

Deferred Grade (DF) and No Grade (NG)

Students should make sure they understand the meaning and requirements related to "deferred grades" (DF) and "no grades" (NG). They should check their transcript after each semester for those designations to appear and work with their respective instructors to have

any deferred and no grades resolved towards letter grades within the given deadline, as described in the following Penn State University Policy. Students should contact their Option Director or the Program Chair ahead of time with any questions or problems.

> "If work is incomplete at the end of a semester **because of extenuating circumstances**, the instructor may report *DF* in place of a grade, which will appear temporarily on the student's record. *It is not appropriate to use the DF either casually or routinely to extend a course beyond the end of the semester or to extend a course for a student who has failed so that the individual can do extra work to improve the grade.* Required work should be completed and the DF resolved as soon as possible once assigned, but *must be resolved (i.e., the course must be completed) no later **than 12 weeks after the course end date as noted on the Registrar's Schedule of Courses,*** unless an extension of a specific duration to a specified date is agreed upon by the instructor and student and approved by the Graduate School that allows for a completion deadline longer than 12 weeks. A memo with a justifying statement and the agreed-upon date must be submitted by the instructor to the Office of Graduate Enrollment Services in order to request an extension. ***A deferred grade that is not resolved before the end of this period automatically converts to an F and cannot be changed without approval by the Graduate Schoo****l*. A memo with a justifying statement for changing the F grade must be submitted by the instructor to the Office of Graduate Enrollment Services in order to request a DF that has defaulted to an F grade be changed.
>
> If an instructor does not submit a grade for a graduate student by the grade-reporting deadline, the designation *NG* (no grade) appears on the transcript. *An NG that is not reconciled within 12 weeks following the posting of the NG automatically becomes an F.*
>
> *A DF or NG that has converted to an F may not be changed without approval from the Graduate School. Requests for approval must be submitted by the instructor to the Office of Graduate Enrollment Services and include a justification for the change.*"
>
> (See: http://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/academicprocedures/procedures6, emphases added.)

In addition, processing of a student's application for graduation cannot be finalized as long as any DF of NG appears on the transcript.

Transferring Credits

Transfer credits for all parts of the program are overseen by the Program Chair and reviewed on a case-by-case basis. You should discuss transfer credits with your academic adviser and your Base Program or Option Director, who then will submit the appropriate form to the Program Office for processing, since the Graduate School must approve transfer credits.

The specific rules for transfer credits in part differ based on whether credits are transferred from an external institution or from within Penn State (non-degree graduate work), as described below. However, credits earned to complete a previous master's degree, whether at Penn State or elsewhere, may not be applied to the *i*MPS-HLS program. Moreover, students enrolled in the *i*MPS-HLS program should remain cognizant of the program requirements when transferring credits. Remember, 24 of the 33 required credits must be earned at Penn State.

Transfer of Credit from an External Institution:

- A maximum of 10 credits of high-quality graduate work done at a regionally accredited U.S. institution or an officially recognized degree-granting international institution may be applied toward the degree requirements of the *i*MPS-HLS program.
- Approval to apply any transferred credits toward a degree program must be granted by the student's academic adviser, the Program Chair, and the Graduate School.
- Transfer credits must meet the following criteria:
  - Must have been earned at a regionally accredited U.S. institution or an officially recognized degree-granting international institution;
  - Must be of "A" or "B" grade value ("B-" grades are not acceptable; pass-fail grades are not transferable unless substantiated by the former institution as having at least "B" quality);
  - Must appear on an official graduate transcript;
  - Must be earned within five years prior to the date of registration to a degree program at Penn State.

Transfer of Non-degree Graduate Credits from Penn State

A maximum of 15 credits earned as a non-degree student may be applied to a degree program, including the *i*MPS-HLS degree program.

- The credits must have been earned within five years preceding entry into the degree program. Requests to transfer graduate work taken more than five years prior to admission into a graduate degree program must be accompanied by a letter justifying the validity of the course work.
- Only 400, 500 and 800-level graduate courses may be transferred.
- Any courses taken by a graduate student in non-degree status that are not transferred into the degree program will not count in the total credits earned towards the degree and the degree grade-point average.

For more information on external institution transfer credits, please refer to the Transfer Credits section of the Graduate School website.

Academic Integrity

It is expected that students submit high-quality work and respect the University's policy on academic integrity. Examples of academic dishonesty include cheating, plagiarism, fabrication of information or citations, and submitting work of another person or previously used work without permission of the instructor. The *i*MPS-HLS program encourages its students to speak to their faculty, academic adviser, or visit Penn State's policy on academic integrity if they are uncertain or have questions regarding academic dishonesty before submitting the work in question. Academic dishonesty can lead to a failing grade, referral to the Office of Student Conduct, or academic dismissal.

If an instructor believes you committed an Academic Integrity violation, you will be asked to sign a form in which the violation is explained to you and a sanction is proposed. By signing this form, you admit the violation and consent to the sanction. If you believe you did not commit an Academic Integrity violation and/or do not agree to the sanction, do not sign the form but talk to your academic adviser and to your Option or Base Program Director. In any case, when confronted with an Academic Integrity issue, it will be good idea to consult with your academic adviser.

Please also carefully review the information provided on Academic Integrity on the Penn State website and in the Plagiarism Tutorial (see URL listing at the end of this guidebook).

Academic Deficiency Letters (Warning Letters)

As previously stated under the "Degree Requirements" section, students must maintain a 3.00 grade-point average (GPA) to remain in the program and to graduate. The *i*MPS-HLS Program Chair will send a Notice of Academic Deficiency (Warning Letter) to any student in the program whose GPA falls below 3.00. The letter will reiterate the Graduate School's policy and recommend that the student contact their faculty adviser as soon as possible to develop a course of action to resolve the academic deficiency.

A student whose GPA falls below a 3.00 will likely have to take an extra course or courses, depending on the individual circumstances, to get his/her GPA above a 3.00. Students should be aware that, mathematically, this becomes more difficult the further along one is in the curriculum.

Upon the third letter received, a student will be required to discuss with their academic adviser and submit to their Option Director and then the Program Chair a plan for GPA improvement. The Program Chair may terminate the student from the *i*MPS-HLS program if no plan is presented, if the plan is not accepted, or if progress is insufficient. Bearing this in mind, it is important for students to seek early advice and guidance in case they have GPA issues. All are ready and happy to help.

Academic Dismissal (Termination from the Program)

Graduate students must maintain ethical and professional standards of the Graduate School. Failure to uphold these standards may result in suspension or academic dismissal. These responsibilities include promoting honesty in academic work and research, maintaining the minimum required grade-point average, or GPA, of 3.00, and receiving acceptable grades in core and prescribed courses. Students who receive "D" or "F" grades in core or prescribed courses must retake that course, and the failing grade will remain on their permanent transcript and figure into their overall GPA.

The *i*MPS-HLS Program Chair shall send written notice of termination to students who have demonstrated unsatisfactory scholarship. Some examples of unsatisfactory scholarship include failure to uphold the aforementioned ethical and professional standards of the Graduate School, failure to maintain adequate grade-point average, and failure to obtain satisfactory grades in core and prescribed courses. Such written notice of termination will address specific reasons as to why the *i*MPS-HLS program has recommended academic dismissal.

It is expected that all students keep their mailing address information up to date in all Penn State systems. The University is not responsible for communication delays in cases where students do not keep their contact information current.

Following a written notice of termination, a student has the opportunity to seek review of the decision. A student wishing a review of such a decision must submit a written appeal to the *i*MPS-HLS Program Chair within 10 days of receipt of the notice. If a student's written appeal does not contain any allegation of discrimination or harassment, the Program Chair will provide the student with the opportunity to speak with the faculty member(s) who participated in the decision to dismiss the student. If the student's academic adviser was not already invited to such a discussion (e.g., not involved in the termination decision), he/she may also participate. Following this appeal discussion, the Program Chair is required to notify the student in writing within five days about whether the decision to terminate has been upheld or reversed. There are separate steps for students who submit a termination appeal with an allegation of discrimination or harassment. Those students are encouraged to thoroughly read the *Procedures for Termination* on the Penn State Graduate Degree Programs Bulletin.

Resuming Studies

Penn State considers degree-seeking students as maintaining a normal continuity of registration if they register for each fall and spring semester during enrollment without interruption. Students who disrupt this normal sequence of study (i.e., taking off a fall and/or spring semester) are required to submit a request to resume study. This must be done online through the Graduate School's website. If a student doesn't satisfy any required verification category, in particular a GPA of at least 3.0, contact the Program Office to resolve the issue.

Repeating Courses

Students should discuss the usefulness of repeating courses they are not required to repeat because of graduation requirements with their academic adviser.

Courses that are required for graduation and where a minimum final grade of "C" was not reached need to be repeated and passed with a grade higher than "D" in order to satisfy graduation requirements.

When a course has been repeated, all of the credits and grades earned are included when calculating the student's grade-point average. However, the course counts only once as a graduation requirement.

Erroneously repeated courses should be dropped during the regular drop/add period.

Dropping Courses and Withdrawal

The Graduate School allows students to drop any course from their schedule during the "drop period," without penalty. However, students who wish to drop their last/only course from their schedule should go through the withdrawal process. The drop period is typically the first six calendar days of a given semester. Courses dropped during the drop period do not appear on students' graduate transcripts. Following the drop period, students may drop courses during the "late drop period." This period starts the day after the drop period ends and lasts until 80 percent of the course is completed. Penn State charges a fee for each course dropped during the late drop period, and these courses remain on students' academic records.

Add and drop periods can be found on the *Academic Calendar* or on *LionPATH*. Dropping a course during the drop period can been done using LionPATH. Students should be sure to contact their instructor and adviser before dropping a class. Students should contact the registrar office if the course still appears on their LionPATH schedule or if they receive an "error" message.

Dropping a course or withdrawing could negatively affect students' financial aid. Students should speak to a financial aid representative before dropping a course from their schedule. Students should also consult their academic adviser before dropping a course, especially a required course for graduation.

Completely dropping all courses for a semester is considered a withdrawal from the University. Students who choose to withdraw for a semester are required to re-enroll in the University if they would like to resume studies later. Additionally, withdrawing during a semester may affect students' financial aid. Students may be held responsible to pay back financial aid that was intended for the semester they withdrew from before resuming studies. The *i*MPS-HLS Program Office encourages students to speak to a financial aid representative to discuss how their financial aid would be affected prior to withdrawing.

Military students who are called to active duty or deployed unexpectedly during a semester should complete a "military withdrawal" request. This process is different from withdrawing from the University. Students called to active duty will not be charged tuition for the semester of withdrawal, and they can re-enroll when they choose to resume studies. Graduate students may complete a military withdrawal request by sending a signed, written request for military withdrawal and a copy of military orders to the *Penn State World Campus Registrar.* The Registrar will notify the Office of Student Aid and the Office of the Bursar immediately after the request has been processed.

Concurrent Degrees

Students are encouraged to focus on one degree at a time. However, a student in the Homeland Security program may petition to begin work on another master's degree or a doctoral degree while concurrently completing the program. As per University policy, the student must first of all meet some general requirements, including a GPA of at least 3.50. Then, the respective *i*MPS-HLS Option (or Base Program) Director, the *i*MPS-HLS Program Chair, the School Director/Department Head/Program Coordinator (of the other academic discipline), and the Director of Graduate Enrollment Services must approve such a petition. Students who are interested in petitioning for concurrent degree candidacy should contact the *i*MPS-HLS Program Office for the required form.

If all administrators concerned approve, the student and advisers are responsible for constructing a plan of study to meet the requirements of both degrees. The total required credits for the two degree programs may not be reduced by more than 20%. Additionally, the student must complete the capstone course for each degree program. The plan acts as verification that each program agrees to the petition and the requirements.

Concurrent degrees are typically conferred simultaneously. However, if a student completes the degree requirements of one program before the second program, then that degree may be conferred prior to the second. For more information, students should consult the Graduate School's website or their academic adviser.

Double Option Degree

Homeland Security students are also permitted to complete a "double option" within the program (but cannot double count courses). The double option degree only applies between two academic specialization areas that in fact are Options. The Base Program is not eligible for a Double Option degree. A student who desires to complete a "double option" would complete the three core courses, two sets of prescribed courses (eight courses total), one set of electives (three courses total), and two capstone courses (one for each Option). That is, students on a Double Option plan must complete all requirements for both Options along with all degree requirements in order to graduate and receive their diploma. Students who complete these required credits for a double option will have both Options listed on their diploma and graduate transcript.

Requests for Double Option Degrees are reviewed and approved by the Program Chair. Please contact the Program Office for the appropriate form.

Alternatively, a student can complete one academic specialization (e.g., three core courses, four prescribed courses, three electives, and one capstone course) and an additional four prescribed courses from another academic specialization. This would result in the student obtaining an *i*MPS-HLS degree and an additional graduate certificate. However, students must submit an application to the graduate certificate program for it to appear on their graduate transcript. This possibility is also available to students in the Base Program.

Time Limitation for Degree Completion

It is understood that students are often employed and have additional priorities. Graduates of the program typically complete degree requirements in two to four years. The program must be completed within five years of admission to degree status. Extensions may be granted under certain extraordinary extenuating circumstances.

Graduation Deadlines

It is the responsibility of each student to apply for graduation. Students must check the *Academic Calendar* for applicable deadlines. Active and eligible students apply for graduation on the "My Academics" tab in their "Student Center" on *LionPATH*. After the application period expires, students must contact the *i*MPS-HLS Program Office to activate or remove their intent to graduate. Graduating students must then fill out the necessary forms for attending commencement. Students can select the campus where they wish to attend commencement. Please contact the *i*MPS-HLS Program Office for more information.

ACADEMIC RESOURCES

Students will receive important information to help them achieve their academic and professional goals. For instance, students will be alerted about career fairs, webinars, and workshops that prepare them for interviews and assist them in constructing résumés. Students will receive this information via their Penn State email account.

Student ID Cards

Students should receive from Penn State World Campus a specially designed Penn State student identification card within six weeks after they are accepted into the Program or an Option. Students should contact the *Student ID Office* if they do not receive one. Student ID cards can be used wherever student discounts are offered (e.g., movie theatres, bookstores, performing arts centers, Penn State's Computer Store, etc.). Please refer to the *Student ID Discounts* website for specific discount locations.

Program Study Resources

The program makes various resources available to students, such as Penn State's Homeland Security Newsletter *Homeland Security News and Views,* conference proceedings, orientation and conference videos, etc. These documents are available via the *iMPS-HLS Program Study Resources* website. Please refer to the websites listing at the end of this guidebook. Also consider join us on social media, links at the end of this guidebook.

Penn State University Libraries, Homeland Security Research Guide, and Digital Library

Homeland Security students have a vast amount of resources available to them to succeed in their distance education learning experience. One of those resources is the Penn State University Libraries system, with a wealth of academic resources. It provides access to more than 600 research databases and more than 150,000 scholarly journals, 386,000 electronic books, and other academic resources to aid in research and academic assignments.

Homeland Security Research Guide

Within the University's library system, *i*MPS-HLS students may access the *Homeland Security Research Guide*. This contains core documents, journal articles, statistics, and more for students to easily access information they are looking for, rather than searching for it through the University's library system. Furthermore, the Homeland Security Research Guide provides links to students for help with citations.

Homeland Security Digital Library

Students are encouraged to create an account with the *Homeland Security Digital Library* (HSDL). The HSDL provides members with thousands of documents pertaining to homeland security policy, strategy, and organization.

Online Learning Tutorials for Essential College Skills

Penn State offers a wealth of online learning tutorials for essential college skills, covering learning online, active reading, paper and report writing, and much more. Please refer to the link listed at the end of this guidebook.

Canvas Learning Management System

The Canvas learning management system is the Penn State World Campus' primary educational delivery system. Students use Canvas to access their courses and course materials, submit assignments, and interact with instructors and colleagues. Penn State offers an online orientation on how to navigate Canvas, and a complete Canvas Student Guide is also available. Please refer to the websites listing at the end of this guidebook.

ACCOMMODATION

Students with Disabilities

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs and will do everything possible to make the necessary accommodation (academic adjustment, such as for example assignment submission deadline extensions). The *i*MPS- HLS is supported by the Penn State World Campus *Disability Contact Liaison* (DCL). The appropriate accommodation will depend on what the student receives from the DCL and then what is discussed with the instructor.

Please be aware that Penn State uses a broad concept of disability under which also temporary medical conditions, such as following an accident, fall. If you believe you have a condition that may entitle you to general accommodation (as opposed to course-specific accommodation that you may negotiate with your respective instructor), you must file for disability to claim your right. It is not sufficient to present any eternal letters to your instructor(s).

To receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must contact Student Disability Resources (SDR), participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, SDR will provide you with an accommodation letter. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. You must follow this process *for every semester* that you request accommodations.

For further information, please visit the Students with Disabilities website of Penn State World Campus and the *Student Disability Resources* (SDR) website.

Military Personnel

Currently serving military personnel and/or spouses with unique circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployments, drill/duty requirements, etc.) are welcome and encouraged to communicate these in advance, if possible, to their instructors. In the case that special arrangements need to be made, the *i*MPS-HLS program faculty will do its best to accommodate the needs of military personnel.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Financial Aid Deadlines and Information

Students who are registered for at least 5 credits per semester may be eligible for graduate financial aid. Graduate federal aid includes Stafford loans and the Graduate PLUS loan program. Additionally, students are encouraged to seek outside scholarships or tuition assistance through their employer. Because the University considers students enrolled in a

graduate certificate program as "non-degree," those students are unable to receive federal financial aid.

Students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each year that they would like to receive graduate financial aid. For adequate time to prepare students' aid, Penn State recommends that students complete their FAFSA by March 1 for the following fall and spring semesters. Each financial aid year runs from July 1 to June 30. Penn State's federal school code for the FAFSA is 003329.

Veterans' Financial Aid

Penn State is a proud supporter of our active duty, guard, and reserve military members and veteran students. Additionally, the Penn State World Campus participates in several financial aid programs to help currently serving military members and veterans. First, it honors the GI Bill, Post-9/11 GI Bill, and it is a Yellow Ribbon Program participant. Penn State also accepts several types of military tuition assistance benefits. To receive all of the financial aid that you have earned, the *i*MPS-HLS Program Office encourages military members and veterans to contact a *Veterans Financial Aid Counselor* to explore all possible options.

Although the graduate certificates offered through the *i*MPS-HLS program are not eligible for federal financial aid, the GI Bill and other military financial aid programs are accepted as payment for these programs. Certificate students are also encouraged to speak with a *Veterans Financial Aid Counselor* to explore options. For additional information on *military education benefits*, students should refer to the Penn State World Campus website.

Payment Plans

The LionPATH billing process includes an option for payment plans. Please refer to the information provided on LionPATH.

YOUR STUDENT COMMUNITY

Although you are an online student, the *i*MPS-HLS Program offers you several opportunities to interact live with your fellow students and your professors. This includes optional residential seminars and conferences, as well as a *Facebook page* and a *Facebook group* (see URL listing in the end of this guidebook)*.* Some courses also foresee live online sessions and student working groups, as well as live chats or live office hours. The Program Office or your faculty member for a specific course will notify you of those opportunities.

YOUR ROLE AS AN *i*MPS-HLS GRADUATE

The *i*MPS- HLS Program would like to stay in contact with its graduates to gain feedback and to receive information about graduates' current career endeavors. It is hoped

that students will provide up-to-date contact information to the *i*MPS- HLS Program Office to receive a newsletter and to interact with current students, other alumni, and faculty.

After you graduate, you have the opportunity to become a Penn State *World Campus Ambassador*. As a Penn State World Campus alum and ambassador, graduates can help others achieve their academic goals. Students interested in the Penn State *World Campus Ambassador* program may refer to the contact information at the end of the guidebook. Thank you, in advance, for your consideration.

Moreover, we offer continuing education and professional development activities, in which *i*MPS-HLS alumni can enroll at a discounted rate. Contact the Program Office for details.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Where can I find additional information on terms, policies, and processes?
The Penn State World Campus A-Z Index (see URL listing in the end of this guidebook) that provides a long list of Penn State University-related information that may be helpful to students.

What is World Campus?
Penn State World Campus is the delivery mechanism for Penn State's online programs, including the *i*MPS-HLS Program. For any academic questions and questions regarding internships and job opportunities, work with your Option Director or the Base Program Director, respectively, or contact the Program Chair.

What are the degree requirements?
- Earn a minimum of 33 credits
  - 24 of which must be earned at Penn State
  - Up to 10 graduate credits may be transferred in from a regionally accredited institution, pending a recommendation from your respective Option (or Base Program) Director and Program Chair and Graduate School approval
- Complete the non-credit Orientation before or during your first semester in the program
- Take the three core curriculum courses, 9 credits (HLS 801, HLS 803, and HLS 805)
- At least 18 credits must be courses at the 500-level and above
  - 6 credits must specifically be in 500-level courses
    - The capstone course for your selected academic specialization counts towards this requirement
    - This means: If your four prescribed courses already include a 500-level course, you will automatically satisfy this requirement. Otherwise, you will need to choose a 500-level course as at least one of your three electives
- Take four courses, 12 credits, of prescribed courses for the Base Program or Option
- Take 9 elective credits chosen from an approved list in consultation with your academic adviser
  - The list of electives is maintained by your selected Option or Base Program Director
- Complete the Capstone course (594) for your selected academic specialization
- Maintain a 3.00 or better GPA to be retained in the program
- Have 3.00 or better GPA to graduate

Whose student am I?
It may sometimes seem confusing to understand if you are a student of Penn State University, Penn State World Campus, the *i*MPS-HLS program, your academic specializations, a certain Penn State College, or even the Penn State Graduate School. All of this is true. Technically, you are being admitted via Penn State Harrisburg, which is the academic and administrative home of the program. Here, the *i*MPS-HLS Program Chair and Program Office reside. Penn State Harrisburg's Admissions Office will send you your letter of admission. However, you will also receive a welcome letter from the Base Program or one of the Options. Because the program is

delivered exclusively online by Penn State World Campus, you are moreover going to receive a congratulatory letter from Penn State World Campus (PENN STATE | ONLINE), confirming you have been approved for course enrollment. Penn State World Campus is not a college or academic unit, but a delivery mechanism and support of online programs, including the *i*MPS-HLS Program. Since there is only one Penn State and one inter-college Master of Professional Studies in Homeland Security, it is most appropriate to consider yourself an *i*MPS-HLS student at Penn State.

Who is teaching my class?
In most cases, if you go to the course schedule (see Chapter: CURRICULUM MAP) and click on the schedule number for your course in the respective semester, instructor information will appear on top. Otherwise, simply ask the Program Office.

What is the average time required to complete the *i*MPS-HLS Program?
The program typically takes students two to four years to complete.

Can I simultaneously apply for two *i*MPS-HLS program academic specializations?
No. The Graduate School will allow you to apply for only one degree program at a time. Graduate students are advised to focus on one degree at a time. However, once enrolled in the program, you can petition for a concurrent degree or the double option degree. These processes are described in more detail in the guidebook under "Concurrent Degrees" and "Double Option."

Can I obtain more than one graduate certificate?
Yes, you can receive more than one graduate certificate. You will need to apply for each certificate program that you plan to enroll in, and you will be required to pay additional application fees.

Can I obtain a graduate certificate in a different academic specialization while enrolled in the *i*MPS-HLS Program?
Yes, you can receive both; however, you will be required to complete two graduate school applications (i.e., one for the *i*MPS Program and one for the Certificate Program) and will be required to pay the application fee associated with both. Please note, you must complete the application for the graduate certificate program for it to be noted on your graduate transcript.

What is the average time required to complete a graduate certificate program?
Depending on the college offering the certificate, students can typically complete the 11 to 15 credits required for a graduate certificate in one year.

Why do I have to complete and pay for two separate applications if I want to enroll in both a graduate certificate program and the *i*MPS-HLS Program?
The *i*MPS-HLS program is a degree-seeking program, whereas the graduate certificate programs are not. The University processes these applications differently, and therefore, the two processes require a separate fee.

How do I schedule courses? Can I register for my classes through LionPATH?
Yes. Beginning Fall 2016 and into the future you will register for classes using LionPATH.

Can I repeat a course? You should discuss with your academic adviser the usefulness of repeating courses that you are not required to repeat due to graduation requirements. You need to repeat courses that are required for graduation and where you did not reach a minimum final grade of "C" until you have passed them with a grade higher than "D" in order to satisfy graduation requirements. When a course has been repeated, all of the credits and grades earned are included when calculating your grade-point average. However, the course counts only once as a graduation requirement. You should drop any erroneously repeated courses during the regular drop/add period.

How can I find out which materials and software I will need?
You can see a list of required materials for each course in the LionPATH schedule of courses. Under your class details select the view the World Campus catalog page… contains the title, edition, author, ISBN, and source information for your course materials. For most courses, the cost of most of your course materials is available through MBS Direct. You can usually order your books and materials through MBS Direct—either by renting or purchasing, three weeks before your course starts. Using MBS Direct will provide you with more control over your textbook order, more options on the method of delivery, and a textbook buyback or rental return option. However, if you do not wish to go through MBS Direct, you can acquire textbooks from other booksellers. Just be sure the ISBN and edition are the same as the one listed in the LionPATH schedule of courses.

What is the average time I am expected to invest in the program?
This may vary depending on which part of the program you are in. Each course typically requires a commitment of approximately 10 to 15 hours per week.

How many classes should I schedule in each semester?
This depends greatly on your personal circumstances, e.g., family commitments, work obligations, military deployment, etc. Students typically schedule two courses per semester, but you may schedule one per semester as well. The program does not recommend scheduling more than two courses per semester. Taking three graduate courses in one semester is a demanding and challenging proposition. Please discuss this thoroughly with your academic adviser if you are contemplating taking more than two courses in one semester.

Can I schedule one course and its prerequisite simultaneously?
Yes. The program allows, and sometimes recommends, that students schedule courses and their prerequisites simultaneously. There are exceptions, however. The ISF Option for example has some courses in which students would not be permitted to simultaneously take a particular course and its prerequisite.

Where can I find all of the costs associated with a course for my employer?
Students can access this information from the LionPATH schedule of courses. You can find specific information regarding any course (e.g., tuition, fees, course materials, etc.) on the View the World Campus course catalog by entering the intended semester, the course abbreviation and number, and searching for the particular course of interest.

How do I get a receipt for my tuition or application fee?

You should be able to obtain a tuition fee receipt in LionPATH. For an application fee receipt, please contact the Graduate School.

Is there a residency component to the degree?

No, the *i*MPS-HLS program does not require a residency component for online courses. However, for those interested, optional residency components are offered from time to time. This includes residential short courses and internships, though neither of them are required to graduate. Please contact the Program Office for details.

I am interested in an internship. Can you help me?

Yes. Some Options offer internship opportunities tailored to their respective academic specializations. Please inquire with your Option Director. The Program Office offers internship support for select opportunities with a comprehensive focus on the Homeland Security Enterprise. The Program Office has an Internship Coordinator, whose contact information can be found in the next section of this guidebook.

Can I attend Commencement at the campus of my choice?

Yes, *i*MPS-HLS students may attend Commencement at any Penn State campus that holds graduate-level commencements (not all campuses have a graduate commencement). There are a number of administrative items that have to be taken care of well in advance of Commencement. After you submit your "Application to Graduate" on LionPATH you will receive information about graduation from Graduate School, *et al.*

What is an Access Account and how do I get one?

Every Penn State student who is registered for at least one credit course is assigned a Penn State Access Account. This account is your unique digital identity, consisting of a username and password, to access many of the available Penn State online services (e.g., electronic mail, Canvas, Penn State library materials, etc.).

Most new students will receive an Access Account following their acceptance to Graduate School. You will receive an Access Account activation email to your personal email address. Go to the activation link in this email and complete all of the steps to activate your account.

Who is my single point of contact?

This is your academic adviser. Upon enrolling in the program, you should receive a welcome package from your Base Program or Option Office, including assignment of your adviser. Please contact that office if you have any questions about the assignment of your adviser. Your adviser will be listed in LionPATH under Student Center. We encourage you to work closely with your adviser as you progress through your curriculum.

Who else will I interact with besides my faculty instructors and my adviser?

Each of the six University colleges that make up the *i*MPS-HLS Program contributes and is responsible for its curriculum and delivery of education. At the same time, *i*MPS-HLS is one single degree and follows unified educational objectives. Directors at the respective college level manage academic specializations, the Program Coordinator manages functional areas (other

than academics) across contributing colleges, and the Program Chair is in charge of the program as a whole and reaching of its objectives. Program-level management is done at the Program Office. The Chair and Coordinator also work with Penn State World Campus to ensure best delivery of the program as a whole.

I feel I need support for my writing assignments. Whom should I contact?
For help with course-specific assignments, you should work with your instructor. For general discussion of graduate writing aspects, you should work with your assigned academic adviser.

I still have a problem. Who can help me?
That depends on the character of the problem. Typically, you would work with your assigned academic adviser, and then, if necessary, with your Option Director.

If you are not sure how to proceed, please contact the *i*MPS-HLS Program Office.

If you have a technical problem with Canvas, you should contact the Penn State World Campus Technical Support via chat, phone, or an email web form. Please see the link for Penn State World Campus Technical Support in the following contact information section of this guidebook.

If you have a problem in a course, you should discuss this with your instructor, and then, if necessary, with your academic adviser.

If you still do not think you are achieving resolution, feel free to contact the *i*MPS-HLS Program Chair, who has the ultimate academic responsibility for the program and its students.

CONTACT INFORMATION, WEBSITES, AND FORMS

Contact Information

iMPS-HLS Program Office and Office of the Program Chair ....
    717-948-6050 .... iMPS-HLS@psu.edu
    .... https://harrisburg.psu.edu/public-affairs/homeland-security/master-homeland-security
    .... Penn State Harrisburg, School of Public Affairs, Olmsted W-160,
    .... 777 W. Harrisburg Pike, 17057 Middletown, PA

Agricultural Biosecurity and Food Defense Option Office.............................. 814-865-7069
Career Counseling.. careercounseling@outreach.psu.edu
Geospatial Intelligence Option Office 814-865-1951
Graduate Enrollment Services
    814-865-1795 .... gswww@psu.edu
Homeland Security Base Program Office... 717-948-6050
iMPS-HLS Program Administrative Support Assistant 717-948-6050
Information Security and Forensics Option Office 814-863-9461
iMPS-HLS Program and Internship Coordinator
    717-948-6388 .... ajs28@psu.edu
Office of the Bursar
814-863-1386 .... bfo@outreach.psu.edu
Public Health Preparedness Option Office .... 717-531-0003 (ext. 285655)
Student Aid
    814-863-2633 .... studentaid@outreach.psu.edu
Student Disability Resources Contact Information ....
    .... http://equity.psu.edu/student-disability-resources
Student ID Office 814-865-7590
Technical Support
    800-252-3592 ....http://student.worldcampus.psu.edu/technical-support/contact-us
Veterans Financial Aid Counselor 814-863-0465

Websites

Penn State World Campus *My Student Portal*............... http://student.worldcampus.psu.edu

Academic Calendar...
    .... http://www.registrar.psu.edu/academic_calendar/calendar_index.cfm
Academic Integrity...
    ....http://tlt.psu.edu/plagiarism/student-tutorial/defining-plagiarism-and-academic-integrity
Academic Integrity Violation Form ....
https://harrisburg.psu.edu/sites/default/files/chancellor039s-office/aiform-revised6-2014.pdf
Canvas Learning Management System .... https://canvas.psu.edu/students
Canvas student tour ....
    .... http://resources.instructure.com/courses/32/pages/canvas-student-tour-videos
Canvas Orientation... https://psu.instructure.com/courses/1772057

If you click on the schedule number for your course in the respective semester, you will see the instructor's name listed on top, as well as links to an abbreviated version of the syllabus and to a sample lesson, as well as a list of required material.

Some course and course schedule information may only be available on LionPATH to registered students.

Forms