

## **Concordia University Irvine to Offer New Master of Arts International Studies Africa Program**

Concordia University Irvine's School of Professional Studies will expand the university's international programs with the newly established Master of Arts in International Studies (MAIS) Africa program, which begins in the Fall 2015 semester. The one-year curriculum provides a unique educational experience that combines a fall semester of coursework at the Irvine campus with the spring and summer semesters spent in Accra, the capital of Ghana and one the largest metropolitan areas in Africa.

The MAIS Africa program builds on Concordia's founding principle to encourage students to understand and engage in diverse, international environments in order to make a positive impact on a global scale. Concordia has offered a highly successful MAIS China program for over a decade. With recent reports showing Africa as home to seven of the world's fastest growing economies ("Africa Is Poised To Power the Next Phase of Global Economic Growth," *Forbes Magazine*, September 19, 2014), the MAIS Africa program will prepare candidates for the next decade of global business and industry.

The MAIS Africa program was developed with the distinct needs of Ghana and other African nations in mind – specifically entrepreneurial leadership, global health education and international development. The program's comprehensive coursework explores cultural, social, political and economic aspects of African nations and will be taught by Concordia faculty, adjunct professors and professors from universities in Ghana. Dr. Salim Faraji, author of multiple books on African culture and associate professor of Africana Studies at California State University, Dominguez Hills, served as an academic advisor to build out Concordia's MAIS Africa curriculum and is the consulting program director.

### **Foreign Internship Element Provides Full Immersion, Unique Perspective**

The MAIS Africa program is designed to provide a rich experience that goes beyond academics because it embraces true interaction and immersion. For the portion of the program that takes place in Ghana, candidates will complete coursework – either taught online or by local or visiting professors – and will be placed in jobs or internships with Ghanaian businesses or non-profits to assist in strengthening organizational core competencies as capacity-building consultants or similar roles.

"From inception, Concordia University has placed a priority on preparing students to be wise, honorable and cultivated citizens who possess a coherent and comprehensive view of the world, and we view having practical foreign experience as extremely valuable to students as they seek to begin or advance in their careers," said Timothy Peters, PhD., Dean, School of Professional Studies at Concordia University Irvine.

“We are proud to expand our international programs through the Master of Arts, International Studies Africa program, which will give candidates the comprehensive experience of learning, living and working in Africa and position them for exemplary lives of learning, service and leadership in today’s complex global economy.”

Information sessions will be held on March 18, April 23, May 26 and June 23 on Concordia’s campus in the Dahlgren Boardroom in Grimm Hall. More information and applications for the 2015-2016 program are available on the MAIS Africa homepage. Prerequisites include a bachelor’s degree and a minimum 2.75 GPA and a desire to work in a new culture and environment. For more information, contact the Graduate Admissions office (888) 796-5969.

## **About Concordia University Irvine**

Concordia University Irvine prepares students for their vocations—their calling in life. Concordia University Irvine offers undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, and adult degree programs in a beautiful southern California location in the City of Irvine, with online and regional cohort options. Concordia’s undergraduate program is distinctive among universities in California because of its nationally recognized Core Curriculum, and its Lutheran heritage that provides a thoughtful and caring Christian community that lives out the theology of "Grace Alone. Faith Alone." Concordia is a *U.S. News* Top Tier Regional University and has been named by *The Chronicle of Higher Education* as one of the fastest growing private nonprofit master's institutions. Concordia University Irvine enrolls over 4,000 students.

The School of Professional Studies at Concordia serves and cultivates the curious, through transformational learning communities for adults, graduates and professional learners. The school strives to provide learning opportunities and degrees for adults who seek Associate and Bachelor’s degrees, a nursing degree (ABSN, RN-BSN, and MSN) or a Master’s Degree in International Studies (MAIS).

## **M.A. International Studies: Africa**

With six of the world’s ten fastest growing economies over the next five years, Africa provides the perfect landscape for your pursuit of international studies. Concordia University Irvine’s MAIS Africa graduate program will allow students to experience and study firsthand the economic, social, cultural, and educational forces that are shaping our world.

- **Yearlong, full immersion program.** Concordia University Irvine is one of the only American universities to offer a field-based Master of Arts in International Studies (MAIS) degree in Africa. The first semester will begin in the fall in California, which will prepare one for leaving for Africa for your spring and summer semesters.

- **Individualized studies and experiences.** Students can choose to study and focus experiences in one of the following concentrations: International Development, International Business, Global Public Health, or International Education. The program is four semesters in length, comprised of 38 units, and culminates in a master's thesis, which students can choose to complete in Africa or the US.
- **Internships to match goals.** Based on a chosen area of emphasis, students will be able to select the type of internship that will match their professional goals. The internship program is flexible and open-ended, with numerous opportunities to work with NGOs, business, international aid agencies, and other community service providers.
- **Faculty who have firsthand experience in Africa.** Students will learn from professors who are not only qualified with deep experience in the content area related to Africa, but who have lived in Africa and understand the continent's cultural complexity. Student-to-faculty ratio never exceeds 20:1, ensuring that students will receive the attention necessary for an academically strong experience in Africa.
- **Preparation for a globally-focused job market.** This program will provide the foundation needed to become part of productive solutions to challenges in our culturally diverse world, at home or abroad. Options for occupational fields and career destinations with a Master's in International Studies are limitless.
- **Accredited university with an international community.** Concordia University is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). Preparing students to be global citizens through our academic offerings is a fulfillment of university identity as a Lutheran, Christian liberal arts university.

For more information about the MAIS Africa program at Concordia University Irvine, please contact admissions counselor Taylor Sirna, at (949) 214-3615 or [taylor.sirna@cui.edu](mailto:taylor.sirna@cui.edu).