

Study Plan

Joint Master's Degree in Governance and Entrepreneurship in
Northern and Indigenous Areas

120 ECTS/Online

Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education

Centre for Sami Studies

Valid from August 1st 2024



Study Program Name

- Joint Master's Degree in Governance and Entrepreneurship in Northern and Indigenous Areas
- Fellesgrad Master i governance og entreprenørskap i nordlige og urfolksområder /
- Fellesgrad Master i governance og entreprenørskap i nordlege og urfolksområde

Degree obtained

Master in Governance and Entrepreneurship in Northern and Indigenous Areas (GENI).

Program size

120 ECTS or 48 North American Credit Units

Administrative Responsibility

The Joint Master's Degree in Governance and Entrepreneurship in Northern and Indigenous Areas is jointly administered and delivered by the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy at the University of Saskatchewan (USask) and the Centre for Sami Studies at the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education at UiT The Arctic University of Norway (UiT).

Target group

This program intends to attract different groups of students. In order to facilitate the involvement of students with a special interest in the circumpolar north, who are already employed in the public and private sectors and wish to obtain a master's degree as a continuing education, the program is offered in a flexible part-time schedule over the course of eight semesters (4 years). The program is also offered in a full-time schedule over the course of four semesters (2 years) in order to allow more academically focused students to complete the program as a full-time study. The mix of these two student groups throughout the program brings together different points of view for fruitful discussions and cooperation.

An important goal of this program is to use flexible learning and education to reach students who wish to participate in education and continue to live and work in their communities. Despite the flexibility of a program designed for part-time students, all potential candidates should be aware that they must make sufficient time available to complete their work and participate fully in the program. It is difficult to make this level of commitment while undertaking full-time employment.

Admission requirements

All applicants to the GENI program must meet the general admission requirements of both partner institutions: UiT and USask.

If you have questions regarding admission, please contact us at geni-admissions@uit.no

Basic academic requirements

Students must document at least a bachelor's degree (180 ECTS), or an equivalent qualification, with a specialization of 80 ECTS, preferably within social sciences, law or education.

- Applicants with a Norwegian study background need an average minimum grade of C or better from the bachelor's degree to be admitted to the master's program.
- Applicants who hold a bachelor's degree or equivalent issued in Europe, Canada, USA, Australia or New Zealand need an average minimum grade of C or better or the

corresponding numerical mark/percentage score in order to be considered for admission. The Canadian equivalent is 70%.

- Applicants who hold a bachelor's degree or equivalent issued in countries other than the above mentioned must have an average grade of B or better, or the corresponding numerical mark/percentage score, in order to be considered for admission.

Be sure to review each university's admission requirements, listed above, before applying.

Additional requirements

Applicants must provide contact information for three referees. Ideally, two of these should be academic contacts from previous degrees.

Applicants must enclose a statement of purpose that should be no longer than 2 pages and should include the following:

- What has motivated you to pursue an online master's degree focused on northern and indigenous areas?
- How have your personal background, education, and/or professional experience prepared you for the core themes and research methods you will encounter in the program?

Work experience in the public and private sectors in the circumpolar North is welcomed but is not a requirement for admission.

Applicants must be able to provide at least unofficial transcripts for their previous degrees during the application procedure.

Short-listed candidates will be contacted for a brief interview to clarify student and program expectations regarding work-load and progression.

Accepted students will be required to submit official transcripts and degree certificates for all previous education referenced in their applications.

Applying

All applications are handled by USask's online application system.

Language requirement

Applicants to the GENI program who have English as a foreign language must meet one of the following requirements:

- TOEFL with a minimum score of 550 (paper based test), or 213 (computer based test), or 86 (internet based test);
- IELTS Academic test with a minimum score of 6.5;
- Cambridge Certificate of Advanced English or Certificate of Proficiency in English;
- CanTest with an overall score of 4.5;
- Pearson test of English (PTE) with an overall score of 63.

This requirement does not apply to students who qualify for a Norwegian Higher Education Entrance Qualification. The GENI Program Board prioritizes applicants with at least TOEFEL 580 (paper based test) for admission.

Learning outcomes

The GENI program provides students with the opportunity to learn through high-level critical comparisons between northern and Indigenous regions. The primary goal of this program is to build the necessary capacity for relationships between academia, industry, governments, Indigenous peoples and northern communities to create thriving local economies, respecting Indigenous rights and protect sensitive northern environments.

Student acquired knowledge

By the end of the program, students will have:

- advanced knowledge about actors, institutions and processes of vital importance for the development in the circumpolar North, and an understanding how different governance systems may hamper or promote social and economic innovations;
- a solid understanding of the economics underpinning the natural resource industry in northern and Indigenous regions;
- a solid understanding of domestic Indigenous rights in different countries, as well as international Indigenous rights;
- substantial insight into the potential for political, entrepreneurial and social innovations in northern and remote regions, as well as the barriers to positive developments in the circumpolar world;
- an appreciation for the value of applied research and its integration for effective decision-making, policy development, planning and implementation by Indigenous and northern communities, organizations, businesses and governments;
- a unique understanding of the interconnected nature of the issues and challenges in Indigenous and northern areas.

Student acquired skills

By the end of the program, students will be able to:

- analyze academic problems on the basis of the history, traditions, distinctive character and place in society of the academic field;
- critically examine of government policies, plans for business development, and community development related to the use of natural and human resources in the circumpolar North;
- critically evaluate different approaches to communication of complex challenges to societies;
- complete brief public policy proposals and applied research papers;
- conduct an independent, limited research and development project under supervision in the academic field of this program in accordance with ethical guidelines for research and appropriate norms in society, including with Indigenous peoples;
- evaluate the position of different actors and provide relevant advice to promote societal development;
- participate effectively in a formal negotiations process.

Student acquired competence

By the end of the program, students will have the knowledge and skills that will provide them with the requisite competencies to pursue doctoral studies in the areas of public policy, Indigenous studies, and sustainable development. Students will also be qualified for professional positions at different levels of public management and in the private sector - managing and executing reviews, and planning development processes. Students will be able to:

- analyze a given public policy or large development project, regarding its economic and political feasibility, including issues related to domestic government structures, northern climate constraints, and consultations requirements;

- analyze and compare the development of industry and implementation of Indigenous self-determination in different geographic areas of the circumpolar North;
- adapt innovative ideas regarding governance, entrepreneurship and community development in other regions to their own local setting;
- provide a basic assessment of how a proposed development project might contravene or uphold Indigenous rights norms;
- propose suitable ways to undertake meaningful dialogue with community members, government officials, and industry representatives in northern and Indigenous areas.

Academic content and description of the study program

Academic content

As the name of the program suggests, the content provided is multifaceted. Governance and public policy are its academic core, but GENI also aims to investigate how to facilitate entrepreneurship through regional economic development, capacity building and empowerment. GENI provides interdisciplinary approaches to academic content and includes courses delivered by instructors from different departments and faculties at each partner institution. In addition, the program provides practical content, including technical courses. The program affords all students a unique opportunity to conduct applied research with industry, government, and Indigenous peoples and institutions on issues concerning natural resource management, consultations and negotiations, and economic development or other governance issues in the circumpolar North.

Two courses (*Introduction to Graduate Academic Writing* and *Professional Communication*) are largely technical in nature. The *Applied Research Project* and the *Thesis* should both focus on a topic related to the region, but need not always include Indigenous or transnational/comparative content. All other core courses within the program include subject matter related to Indigenous peoples and the circumpolar North, as well as international-comparative or transnational content.

Two international field schools in the first and second semesters are attached to mandatory courses. The first takes place in Canada, the second in Norway. The field schools provide students with:

- direct access to an array of experts in the subjects of the program;
- hands-on experience for a deeper understanding of the social, economic, and physical environments under discussion;
- a rare opportunity to build strong interpersonal connections with both staff, faculty members and peers in an online program;
- the opportunity, when possible, to connect with GENI alumni working in the field.

A *Research Methods and Indigenous Ethics* course serves as preparatory course for the *Applied Research Project* the following semester and must be passed before the student is allowed to continue in the program.

The structure of the program is designed to accommodate both part-time and full-time students, with part-time students progressing through over 8 semesters (4 years) and full-time students completing in 4 semesters (2 years). Normally, all students are expected to have completed the entire program within five (5) years. Students in the 4-year progression begin their thesis seminar in semester 6. Students in the 2-year progression begin their thesis seminar in semester 3. Both continue in the seminars until they have completed the program.

The program includes a mix of web-based courses, on-site group study in the form of field schools, and individual research in the form of applied research projects (often partially on-site) and theses.

Opportunities for mobility includes two short-term exchanges (the international field schools), but it also provides an opportunity for long-term exchanges.

All students will be appointed an academic supervisor for their applied research project and for their thesis. In most cases, the same person will serve as supervisor for both research projects.

Core Courses:

The program includes 11 mandatory core courses:

1. Introduction to Graduate Academic Writing (USask)
2. Professional Communication (USask)
3. Northern Public Policy Analysis (USask)
4. Northern Resource Economics and Policy (USask)
5. Research Methods and Indigenous Ethics (UiT)
6. Northern Governance (UiT)
7. Applied Research Project (UiT/USask)
8. Circumpolar Innovations and Entrepreneurship (USask)
9. Indigenous Peoples Rights to Land, Resources, and Livelihood (UiT)
10. Negotiations and Consultations in Indigenous and Northern Areas (UiT)
11. Thesis (UiT)

A full description for each of the above courses is available online.

Elective

Students must choose one elective course worth at least 5 ECTS. Electives must be chosen with the approval of the program administration.

Additional courses

Students are to attend a monthly *Graduate Studies Seminar* with guest lectures covering the major themes of the program. The Graduate Seminar is organized regularly during the first semester, thereafter only infrequently.

Like all USask graduate students, GENI students are obliged by USask to complete a short (approximately 4-6 hours) self-directed online non-credit course, entitled *Introduction to Ethics and Integrity* during the first semester in the program. The purpose of this course is to discuss ethical issues that graduate students may face during their time at the University. All students will complete four modules on academic integrity, intellectual property, professional relationships, and research integrity as well as a final assessment.

Description of Study Program (Part-time study)

- First semester: a common foundation

Early in the first semester, students take the intensive *Introduction Graduate Academic Writing* course which provides an introduction to writing course papers and assignments on the graduate

level. This course ensures that all students entering the program have comparable writing skills and helps their success in subsequent GENI courses.

Also in the first semester, students take a *Public Policy Analysis* to introduce them all to the standards of public policy, and simultaneously, a small supplementary *Northern Public Policy Analysis* course, designed to link the issue of public policy to the themes of the program. Together, the courses provide students with fundamental practical skills to be used throughout the rest of the program. The first field school, in northern Saskatchewan, also occurs this semester.

- Second and third semesters: exploring the field

The *Resource Economics and Policy* course, taken in the second semester, explores the economic concepts related to the management of renewable and non-renewable resources in the North. Students examine competing theories in resource and environmental economics and learn to apply analytic models to resource problems. This course includes the second field school of the program (in Norway).

During the second semester, students also take the *Professional Communication* course, which helps sharpen their practical skills at writing various documents in a professional setting. The *Northern Governance* course, taken in the third semester, provides a deeper examination of the program's broad themes. This course constitutes a venue for students interested in comparing governance challenges in a circumpolar North context.

During the third semester, students also take the *Research Methods and Indigenous Ethics* course which prepares them, both practically and ethically, to pursue their individual applied research and thesis research later in the program. The course provides a methodological "toolkit" and prepares students for various types of data collection and analysis. It serves as an introduction to the special ethical requirements of work with Indigenous peoples or in Indigenous regions. Students begin some early preparation for their *Applied Research Project* while completing this course.

- Fourth semester: Applying new knowledge

The *Circumpolar Innovations and Entrepreneurship* course in the fourth semester examines recent examples of innovation efforts in northern areas. Students gain a detailed understanding of the challenges and achievements in northern innovation.

During the spring/summer period of the fourth semester, students complete their *Applied Research Project*. They will have already done some preparatory work the previous term, as part of their *Research Methods and Indigenous Ethics* course.

- Fifth and sixth semesters: Becoming experts

In the fifth semester, the *Indigenous Peoples Rights to Land, Resources, and Livelihood* course offers an introduction to the current status of Indigenous peoples' rights in international law. Emphasis is placed on international legal instruments of relevance to Indigenous peoples.

Students are encouraged to complete their elective course requirement in the fifth semester, but depending on the availability of the courses that interest them, they may complete it in the sixth semester instead.

In the sixth semester, the *Negotiations* course provides students with insight into the different state arrangements for consultation and negotiation with Indigenous peoples. Moreover, through role-playing exercises, students gain useful skill and expertise at the negotiating table.

- Part-time: Seventh and eighth semesters: Master's thesis

The seventh and eighth semesters are set aside for Master's thesis work, though students begin this earlier in their sixth semester. It is recommended that students build their thesis topic around the applied research they completed earlier in the program. Primary and secondary supervisors are appointed for the applied research and thesis work.

Table: Program Schedule (Part-time study)

Semester	Course 1	Course 2	ECTS
1 (Fall)	Introduction to Graduate Academic Writing (5 ECTS) Owner: USask	Public Policy Analysis (7.5 ECTS) + Northern Public Policy Analysis (2.5 ECTS) Owner: USask Students have their first field school in SK	15
2 (Spring)	Professional Communication (5 ECTS) Owner: USask	Northern Resource Economics and Policy (10 ECTS) Owner: USask Students have their second field school in Norway	15
3 (Fall)	Research Methods and Indigenous Ethics (5 ECTS) Owner: UiT	Northern Governance (10 ECTS) Owner: UiT	15
4 (Spring)	Applied Research Project (5 ECTS) Owner: Split	Circumpolar Innovations and Entrepreneurship (10 ECTS) Owner: USask	15
5 (Fall)	Indigenous Peoples Rights to Land, Resources, and Livelihood (10 ECTS) Owner: UiT	Elective (5 ECTS) Owner: Varies Students may take the elective in Semester VI or VII instead	15
6 (Spring)	Negotiations and Consultations in Northern and Indigenous Areas (10 ECTS) Owner: UiT	Thesis Seminar Owner: UiT	10
7 (Fall)	Thesis Seminar	Thesis Preparation	
8 (Spring)		Thesis Submission (35 ECTS) Owner: UiT	35

Table: Program Schedule (Full-time study)

Semester	Course 1	Course 2	Course 3	Course 4	ECTS
1 (Fall)	Introduction to Graduate Academic Writing (5 ECTS) Owner: USask	Public Policy Analysis (7.5 ECTS) + Northern Public Policy Analysis (2.5 ECTS) Owner: USask Students have their first field school in SK	Research Methods and Indigenous Ethics (5 ECTS) Owner: UiT	Northern Governance (10 ECTS) Owner: UiT	30
2 (Spring)	Professional Communication (5 ECTS) Owner: USask	Northern Resource Economics and Policy (10 ECTS) Students have their second field school in Norway Owner: USask	Applied Research Project (5 ECTS) Owner: Split	Circumpolar Innovations and Entrepreneurship (10 ECTS) Owner: USask	30
3 (Fall)	Indigenous Peoples Rights to Land, Resources, and Livelihood (10 ECTS) Owner: UiT	Elective (5 ECTS) Owner: Varies Students may take the elective in Semester IV instead	Thesis Seminar	Thesis preparation	15
4 (Spring)	Negotiations and Consultations in Northern and Indigenous Areas (10 ECTS) Owner: UiT	Thesis Seminar	Thesis Submission (35 ECTS) Owner: UiT		45

Learning Activities and Assessment

Core courses are all delivered online and in flexible formats to facilitate the involvement of students currently employed in the field as well as those who wish to continue to live and work in their northern communities.

The two field schools in the first two semesters create a platform for building a student cohort necessary for cooperation throughout the program and after graduation. The program also encourages active student participation in all core courses.

The delivery of course content depends on the character and the content of each course. Each course description specifies the means used to assess its stated learning outcomes.

Examinations and course requirements may come in the following forms:

- learning notes and online discussion pieces;
- research papers and reports;
- literature, book, and article reviews;
- press releases;
- briefing notes;
- field school logs or reports;
- simulated negotiation exercises;
- student presentations with exam panel;
- student presentations, e.g. posters, power points, and video clips.

Applied Research Project

Students completing the *Applied Research Project*, with the assistance of an academic supervisor and a host supervisor, conduct research relevant to the needs of the host, usually a governmental, business, Indigenous, or other community-based organization.

The project is an example of “service learning” that allows student to put their research, writing and policy development skills into practice. It provides a nexus for students, academics, and local institutions to work together for mutual benefit.

For students, the benefits of the project extend beyond the obvious sharpening of their analytical and communication skills. The students are able to get hands-on experience with an organization and establish useful contacts for future work. It also serves as the basis for later thesis work.

The host institutions are the explicit beneficiaries of the project. They help develop a practical research idea and receive a professional-quality.

Curriculum

See the individual course descriptions for required reading lists.

Relevance

Arctic and subarctic communities are facing a profound transformation. Due to interacting forces of climate change and globalization, global actors have a heightened interest in the Arctic motivated by economic opportunities involving commercial shipping, oil and gas development, mining, fishing, and tourism. In order for the communities of the circumpolar North to meet these outside forces, they need to prepare themselves by building capacity in governance,

entrepreneurship, and resource management. If industry and government are to develop positive, lasting relationships in the region, they will also need to increase their understanding of Indigenous rights, sustainable economic development, and the particular needs and challenges of northern communities. The focus of this master's program is to meet this demand and provide education and training in the fields of governance and entrepreneurship for northern and Indigenous communities. The program targets both academically focused students and people who are already employed in the private and public sectors of the North.

Graduates of the GENI program will be prepared for careers in government and with other political bodies; at economic agencies; with industry and in private entrepreneurship; in consulting, and with non-governmental and community-service organizations.

On successful completion of the degree program, students may be qualified for admission to a PhD program in a number of academic areas at UiT, USask, or elsewhere.

Work scope

In order to reach the learning goals, full-time students must expect to work 40 hours a week and part time students must expect to work 20 hours a week on their studies, including lectures, seminars and self-study.

Master's Thesis

The GENI Master's thesis is an individually written research paper with an approximate page count of 40-45 pages or 12,000-14,000 words.

A completed thesis of 35 ECTS must demonstrate that the student has mastered the scientific research frameworks, methods and theories provided by the program and has thus acquired the ability to apply knowledge through ample reflection and with professional maturity.

Students should begin their theses by drafting a thesis proposal, and submitting it for approval to the course instructor as well as their supervisors.

The collection of data is included in the course and can be carried out through fieldwork, or through the collection of archive materials, secondary data or literature studies.

After the main data collection period, students should present an oral progress report to the course instructor and fellow students. The report is expected to give an outline of the studied setting; a discussion of the methodological challenges; and some preliminary findings. This report is normally presented in late August or early September of the 7th and 3rd semesters, respectively.

Throughout the course, the students are obligated to take part in regular seminars, presenting their own texts and giving feedback to their peers.

The thesis must be submitted by May 15th. The oral examination will be held within 6 weeks after submission of the thesis. The grade is based on a grading scale from A to F, where A is the highest grade. Students whose theses have been assessed as failing (F) may resubmit the following semester.

Further details on requirements for the thesis are included in the course description available online.

Program language

The program is delivered in English, including all lectures, and all student assessments and examinations. This is further specified in each course description.

Internationalization

The GENI program is international in its content and structure. All core courses include international/comparative content. Courses are taught by instructors at both partner institutions. When appropriate to the research topic, student theses are supervised by one faculty member from each partner institution. Students interact with peers from a variety of countries and regions. The twin international field schools place students on site with intensive teaching and interaction with faculty members, staff and students from both partner institutions.

Student exchange

It is possible to spend a full semester at the partner institution's campus or at another university that has an exchange agreement with UiT or USask. Student exchange can be completed at any stage in the program but is encouraged in semester five or three, especially if this allows visiting students to take an elective course not available online. For further details on student exchange, contact a program coordinator.

Exchange studies abroad will make you more attractive on the job market. Studies abroad will increase your learning outcomes, improve your language skills, give you unique adventures and international experience.

Quality assurance and program evaluation

The program follows the procedures for quality assurance and program evaluation at both universities.

At the UiT, the program follows the Quality Assurance System for the Educational Activities guidelines. More information about the system is available at the UiT website.

At USask, the program follows the Student Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ). SEEQ is a standardized online course evaluation tool, widely-used and empirically supported. Using SEEQ, students provide feedback on teaching quality and course effectiveness, and faculty gain insight into their instructional methods and practices, providing them with guidance for improvement. For more information, please see the USask website.

Each course in the program will be evaluated at least once during time of a program period (i.e. eight semesters). Newly created courses will be evaluated during the first delivery. Each course will use the quality assurance procedures of the course owner and/or the procedures required by the host institution.

Other regulations

In order to be considered "in good academic standing" by Graduate Studies at USask, students must obtain a grade of at least 60% in each graduate level course offered by USask. In order to graduate from the GENI program, each student's cumulative Grade Point Average (in USask-hosted courses only) must be a minimum of 70%.