

Academic Assessment Report

B.A. Program in International Studies

Academic Year 2016-2017

Below are the learning outcomes and assessment materials for the International Studies program for the 2016-2017 academic year. The program underwent a state-mandated seven-year program review that was completed in spring 2017. At the same time, a determination was made to merge the European Studies Program with International Studies. With these developments in mind, and based on feedback from external reviewers, the program anticipates making significant changes to its assessment plan during the 2017-2018 academic year.

Learning Outcomes

International Studies students will:

1. Cultivate broad, interdisciplinary understanding of international cultures, economics, geographies, histories, politics, and societies through coursework in the International Studies core and through advanced courses in multiple humanities and social science programs, including but not limited to Economics, Geography, History, and Political Science;
2. Develop deeper understanding of a chosen world area through participation in an area studies program (i.e. African and African-American Studies, Asian Studies, European Studies, Latin American and Latino Studies, and Middle East Studies);
3. Learn to think, research, and analyze critically through engagement with area studies, international affairs, and global issues;
4. Develop effective written and oral communications skills;
5. Engage with the world and build intercultural competencies through such high-impact practices as research, study abroad, internships, and service-learning;
6. Become functionally competent in at least one modern world language other than English.

Assessment of Student Learning

Direct Methods

- **Gateway Course, INST 2013 Introduction to International Studies:** every International Studies major must take the introductory course, which is designed to provide a fundamental understanding of international affairs, disciplinary approaches to global issues, and the contours of contemporary area studies.
 - **Results:** The program was able to offer two sections of INST 2013, one in the Fall 2016 semester with an undergraduate enrollment of 45 students and another in the spring with an undergraduate enrollment of 35 students. Due to limited labor resources, the program was obliged to restrict access to the course to INST majors at the freshmen and sophomore levels. This is a problem, first because it denies upperclassmen a chance to take a course required in their program (we had to create substitutions for those students) and second because it precludes students from taking the course who are considering a major in International Studies.

- **Capstone Course, INST 4003 International Studies Seminar:** every International Studies major must take the International Studies Seminar to meet the Fulbright College Writing Requirement for graduation. Because the course includes a topical research component, it provides the ideal opportunity to assess the skills and knowledge base students have attained as they come to the close of their undergraduate degree.
 - **Results:** The program was able to offer six sections of INST 4003 in 2016-2017, including three sections in Fall 2016, two of which were combined with other courses. Total fall enrollment was 32 students. In the spring 2017 semester, the program offered three sections, including one at the U of A Rome Center. Spring enrollment was 43 students.

- **Gateway Survey (attached):** this will serve as an entry survey to be collected from all students in the INST 2013 introductory course to assess the expectations and plans for new International Studies majors and to gauge their readiness for meeting the desired learning outcomes. The results will then be compiled and reviewed by the Director of International Studies and by the International Studies Steering Committee.
 - **Results:** The program collected surveys in all gateway sections, with the exception of the spring 2017 INST 4003 section at the U of A Rome Center. The program received 61 total responses from an enrollment of 78 (78%)
 - **Anticipated Area Studies Selection (55 responded to this question):** Knowing how students plan to construct their curricula helps shapes collaborations with partner programs. This is the first year we have this information, but we see a fairly even distribution of interest with less involvement in African and African-American Studies.

African and African-American Studies	Asian Studies	European Studies	Latin American and Latino Studies	Middle East Studies
4 (7%)	8 (14%)	18 (33%)	13 (24%)	13 (24%)

- **Anticipated Language Selection:** As seen in our capstone data below, French and Spanish seem to be the most popular languages for INST majors, most likely the result of high school experience with the languages. Encouraging students to attempt new languages might thus be a challenge area for the program.

Arabic	French	German	Italian	Japanese	Mandarin	Spanish	Other
9	25	6	2	5	1	22	2 (Hebrew and Russian)

- **Anticipated High Impact Participation:** The numbers for anticipated study abroad participation match the actual experiences of INST majors, but there is a notable discrepancy between the numbers of students interested in an internship and the number who actually complete one. This reinforces the program's wish to emphasize the development of more internship opportunities.

Plans to Study Abroad			Plans to Complete Internship			Plans to Participate in Service		
Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
51	5	5	47	7	6	60	0	1

- **Capstone Survey (attached):** this will serve as an exit survey to be collected from all students in the INST 4003 International Studies Seminars. The results will then be compiled and reviewed by the Director of the International Studies Program and by the International Studies Steering Committee.
 - **Results:** The program collected surveys in all capstone sections, with the exception of the spring 2017 INST 4003 section at the U of A Rome Center. 49 students responded to the surveys.
 - 92% (45 of 49) reported that they “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the INST major had increased their general understanding of international affairs and global issues
 - 94% (46 of 49) “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the major has increased their appreciation of global cultures
 - 69% (34 of 49) reported that they “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the INST major had increased their understanding of global economics. This identifies an area in need of some improvement. Specifically, a number of students have anecdotally reported feeling less prepared by taking ECON 2143 Basic Economics as opposed to the macro-micro sequence.
 - 94% (46 of 49) “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the major has increased their understanding of global politics.
 - **Area Studies Selection:** The capstone survey did not follow-up with students on their preferred area studies choice. Future surveys should assess this information.
 - **Language Selection:** The results below suggest that the student majors had strong preferences for Arabic, French, and Spanish.

Arabic	French	German	Italian	Japanese	Mandarin	Spanish	Other
11	11	0	1	4	1	20	1 (Russian)

- **Perception of Language Skill:** Respondents to the capstone surveys were gloomy about their perceived level of skill in their chosen foreign language. Despite completing two or more courses at the 3000-level or higher, 20% (10 of 49) of students reported their spoken proficiency as “beginner,” while another 53% (26 of 49) rated themselves as “intermediate.” This suggests an area of concern for the program.
- **High Impact Participation:** The capstone survey did not follow-up with students on their service participation. Future surveys should assess this information. With respect to study abroad and internship participation, a majority of students in INST 4003 had studied abroad, while a number indicated that they still had plans to do so.

Study Abroad		Completed Internship	
Yes	No	Yes	No
26 (53%)	22 (44%)	10 (20%)	39 (80%)

- **Advanced Language Courses:** students will demonstrate fundamental language competency by successfully passing at least two advanced (3000-level or above) courses in a single world language other than English.
 - **Results:** All students graduating with an INST major completed the prescribed language requirements.

Indirect Methods

- **Course Grades and Student GPA:** information on grades from INST 2013 and INST 4003 allows the program to measure the quality of student learning in the International Studies core.
 - **Results:** The program ran its INST 2013 course for the first time in Fall 2016, and noted a significant increase between student grades in the fall and spring semesters. The range of grades in the seminars (2.62-3.43) were slightly lower and more variable than the range of scores seen in 2015-2016 (3.12-3.33). We suspect this reflects the new addition of topical seminars designed more specifically for upper-level learning.

Semester	Course/Section	Instructor	Enrollment	Course Grade Avg.
Fall 2016	INST 2013-001	Jared Phillips	44	2.91
Fall 2016	INST 4003-002	Jared Phillips	19	3.00
Fall 2016	INST 4003-003	Rocio Gomez	9	N/A
Fall 2016	INST 4003-004	Ram Natarajan	4	N/A
Spring 2016	INST 2013-001	Jared Phillips	34	3.63
Spring 2016	INST 4003-001	Jared Phillips	23	3.43
Spring 2016	INST 4003-002	Jared Phillips	14	2.62

- **Honors Research Participation:** the program will collect information on graduating Honors students, including their research focus, topics, and honors level, to assess the depth and breadth of work completed by our top students.
 - **Results:** Five students chose to complete honors theses in International Studies. A number of other majors chose to complete their thesis in another major. This is most likely due to the limited number of faculty in INST. The scores, however, were

demonstrably higher than in the past, which may reflect the improvements the program has been making in methodological training in the International Studies seminars.

Name	Thesis Title	Faculty Supervisor	Honors Level
Emily Barber	Hashtagging Africa: Short-Term Missions, Social Media, and the Representation of Self and Other	Stephanie Schulte	Summa Cum Laude
Christopher Cowan	Whither, Iron Brothers: Under-acknowledged Threats to the Sino-Pak Relationship and International Relations Ramifications	Kelly A. Hammond	Summa Cum Laude
Brittany Jacobson	Russian Policy towards Non-Russian Minorities in the Former Soviet Union	Donald R. Kelly	Magna Cum Laude
Kosuke Morikawa	The Impact of Tensions on Trade between China and Japan	Ka Zeng	Magna Cum Laude
Peyton Watts	The Responsibility to Protect of a Truly United Nations through the Support of Grassroots Efforts and Civil Resistance in Syria	Mohja Kahf	Cum Laude

- Internship Participation: the program will track the number of International Studies students who complete an internship each academic year in order to determine the engagement our majors have with relevant work experience.
 - **Results:** Approximately 11 students notified us that they were participating in internships during the 2016-2017 academic year. We count below the seven students who enrolled for INST 300V credit. The program is pleased to see that this has grown since last year, when no students enrolled in INST 300V and only two students reported participation in internships. However, this remains an area that we would like to see grow dramatically.

Name	Internship Provider	Internship Period
Emily Miser	ISSO Outreach Program	Fall 2016
Morgan Woelke	Canopy, Fayetteville, AR	Spring 2017
Katie Bacon	Canopy, Fayetteville, AR	Summer 2017
Austin Jackson	Feed Communities, Fayetteville, AR	Summer 2017
Phillip Oravec	Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies	Summer 2017

Camille Smith	Operation Underground Railroad, Dallas, TX	Summer 2017
Elizabeth Wrablica	World Relief, Fort Worth, TX	Summer 2017