

International Studies Department
2022-2023 Assessment Report for the Bachelor of Arts in International Studies Program
December 16, 2023

1. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

(a) Name of Program: Bachelor of Arts in International Studies Program (*hereinafter* BAIS)

(b) Type of Program: Undergraduate Major Program

(c) CAS Division: Social Sciences

(d) Submitters & Points of Contact:

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2. MISSION STATEMENT

The International Studies Department is a scholarly community that applies global perspectives to foster a more sustainable, humane, and just world. Our mission is to inspire and prepare engaged citizens to have a critical, interdisciplinary understanding of global dynamics. The undergraduate program in International Studies provides our students with the skills to not merely examine the world, but also make it better. To achieve this aim, we integrate theory and practice in order to prepare students for further studies and careers in such fields as government, education, human rights, development, technology, international business, international media and communication, social advocacy, and the law.

This statement was written in Fall 2015 after the new International Studies Department was created. The statement was written collaboratively by the interdisciplinary Faculty Advisory Board.

3. PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

The current BAIS PLOs were adopted during the 2015-2016 academic year. These PLOs (below) provide updates to the previous PLOs which were drafted in 2013 to facilitate more accurate assessment of the interdisciplinary BAIS program.

Assessment of an interdisciplinary program like International Studies is difficult. While the number of BAIS “owned” courses has increased, our majors still take at least half of their courses in the major in other departments (usually one required functional track course, 4 functional track electives, and 3 courses for the regional concentration). This makes assessment difficult since faculty of these courses conform their courses to their own department’s PLOs, not those of International Studies. This creates particular difficulties for the higher levels of acquisition of the skills outlined in PLOs. Currently, we are primarily assessing PLOs through the BASIC course sequence in the major but this year we have added an assessment of PLO5 through BAIS 399: BAIS Internship Course (SL).

The BAIS PLOs are:

Upon completion of the undergraduate major in International Studies, students will:

(1) Be able to analyze complex international issues using the theories and methodologies of multiple disciplines so as to better respond to the transnational problems of the 21st century.

(2) Gain the conceptual and analytical tools to synthesize information from the domains of politics, economics, history, culture, and the environment to understand and elucidate global interactions and international relations in the contemporary world.

(3) Be able to assess global issues with an interdisciplinary research practice that promotes deeper understanding of the global-local connection through robust research design skills, understanding of mixed research methods, and strong written and oral skills across a variety of platforms.

(4) Demonstrate an understanding of the language, history, dynamics, and problems facing at least one region (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, or the Middle East) and be able to relate this knowledge to the broader global context.

(5) Gain the knowledge, skills, cultural competence, and service ethic to function successfully and ethically in the workplace or in pursuit of further education after graduation.

4. SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT PLAN FOR 2022-2023 ACADEMIC YEAR

Direct Assessment of PLO1 and PLO2 in BAIS 397 International Studies Capstone Class

This course was taught by the same faculty member (Jennifer Murphy) in both the Fall of 2022 and the Spring of 2023, but this was the first time this faculty member had taught the course. in person in Spring 2021 and online in Summer 2021. The goal of this assessment is to provide a baseline to understand whether and how the capstone class is successfully achieving its linked Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). Professor Murphy taught the capstone course with the goal of boosting “an ecology of knowledges rather than a monoculture of scientific knowledge.” In this spirit Professor Murphy assigned a final “Author’s Perspective” reflection of a final project chosen by each student. This “Author’s Perspective” will be the chosen work to be evaluated, and will be evaluation for both sections of the course. Therefore, the same rubric is going to be used to evaluate students’ perspectives present in this work in both courses.

5. ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

The Bachelor of Arts in International Studies program went through a Program Review during the 2016-2017 academic year. There were many issues raised by the department in its self-study, and a number of these were reflected by the external reviewers in their report. The BAIS program overall was rated ‘Very Good’ and there was nothing specific said about our PLOs, but there was recognition of some of the difficulties we have with classes since our students take many classes we do not control. As a result of the program review, as well as our own assessment of our undergraduate program, the department changed its undergraduate curriculum in the 2019-20 academic year. One of the major changes was the inclusion of a capstone class, a course that has yet to be assessed since its inclusion in the curriculum

6. METHODS

As described above in Section 4, we opted for direct assessment of PLO1 and PLO2 through *BAIS 397 the International Studies Capstone Course*. As this course is the final course in our major, we anticipate that students will acquire an ‘M or ‘Mastery Level’ of understanding of the skills and knowledge outlined in PLO 1 and PLO 2. We maintained a focus on PLOs 1 and 2 given that they have been assessed previously for our introductory and research methods course. An assessment of the same PLOs in the Capstone course allows for a view of whether students are achieving mastery of our program learning outcomes as they continue through our curriculum. The assignments collected were reviewed and summarized by Professor Brian Dowd-Urbe.

7. RESULTS

PLO1/PLO2 for Introduction to International Studies

Program Learning Outcome 1/2

Upon completion of the undergraduate major in International Studies, students will:

- Be able to analyze complex international issues using the theories and methodologies of multiple disciplines within the social sciences, humanities, and sciences so as to better respond to the transnational problems of the 21st century.
- Gain the conceptual and analytical tools to synthesize information from the domains of politics, economics, history, culture, and the environment to understand and elucidate global interactions and international relations in the contemporary world.

Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 (Professor Murphy)

Direct Method:

As noted above, Dr. Murphy structured the course in a way that embodies the values of social justice and decolonizing knowledge. This created challenges for a traditional assessment perspective given that, this tends to . Therefore, we adopted an assessment framework that met the aspirations of Dr. Murphy in bringing in to being a more socially justice pedagogy with the needs of University assessment protocols. In so doing, we chose an assignment “Author’s Perspective” which was a reflection assignment based on both their final project, but also on their time here at USF. This perspective was the only assignment that could realistically be used to assess PLOs 1 and 2 given that the final projects were not retained by the faculty member. Rather they were retained by individual students.

The rubric for the author’s perspective assignment was assessed as follows:

Rubric

Expectations of the Final Project	A = Above Standard	B = At Standard	C = Below Standard
	<p>You designed and executed your final project. Most importantly, you were creative, enjoyed what you were doing and were extremely passionate about your creation.</p> <p>You included a written piece to accompany your creation in a clear, thoughtful and profound way.</p>	<p>You completed your final project. You possibly didn't leave much time for it, so you just got it done. And it's pretty good in your own estimation.</p> <p>You included a very brief written explanation.</p>	<p>You didn't really put much time or effort into your final project.</p> <p>You did not include a written explanation.</p>

Assessment Rubric

	Exceeds expectations	Meets expectations	Needs improvement	Not Applicable
Be able to analyze complex international issues using the theories and methodologies of multiple disciplines within the social sciences, humanities, and sciences so as to better respond to the transnational problems of the 21st century _____				20
Gain the conceptual and analytical tools to synthesize information from the domains of politics, economics, history, culture, and the environment to understand and elucidate global interactions and international relations in the contemporary world.	5	12	3	
TOTALS				

Results:

The results from these two classes producing a total of 20 final projects and authors perspectives. The final projects were not available for assessment since they were retained by individual students. The author's perspectives were therefore used to assess PLOs 1 and 2. It quickly became clear through the assessment process that this assignment was not appropriate to assess PLO 1 given that the perspectives of authors did not include issue analysis. The authors perspectives were, however, useful to assess PLO 2. Eighty-five percent (17 out of 20) of these assignments demonstrated that either met or exceeded expectations for mastery of PLO 2. A

total of three, or 15% of this needed improvement in order to meet expectations for PLO 2. It should be noted that though these three assignments demonstrated that they did not meet expectations, this assignment may not have been the best choice to assess the student's achievement. In other words, the students who did not meet expectations for PLO 2 may have met or exceeded expectations for PLO 2 via a different assignment. This signals that it will be important to either add additional assignment for a more comprehensive assessment and / or include the final project as a key metric for assessment. This could be accomplished via more advanced notification to the professor to know that their course will be targeted for assessment and therefore certain records should be kept vis a vis the final assignment.

There are other limitations to our work. This assignment was only reviewed by one person, so there may be biases in the direct assessment. It would be better if a committee of professors reviewed these as opposed to only one. Further limitations are in the fact that the chosen course rotates from different professors. Each professor uses a different syllabus, and different teaching and assessment methods. This complicates the ability to say anything definitively regarding whether the capstone class is achieving the department's curricular goals. One professor may meet them, but the following semester a different professor may not. This presents a challenge to the department to focus curricular attention on the Capstone class to clarify what, at a minimum, should be achieved irrespective of professor, or a chosen pedagogical or assessment method.

BAIS Curriculum Map:

	PLO1	PLO2	PLO3	PLO4	PLO5
Upon completion of the undergraduate program in International Studies, students will be able to:	Be able to analyze complex international issues using the theories and methodologies of multiple disciplines so as to better respond to the transnational problems of the 21st century.	Gain the conceptual and analytical tools to synthesize information from the domains of politics, economics, history, culture, and the environment to understand and elucidate global interactions and international relations in the contemporary world.	Be able to assess global issues with an interdisciplinary research practice that promotes deeper understanding of the global-local connection through robust research design skills, understanding of mixed research methods, and strong written and oral skills across a variety of platforms.	Demonstrate an understanding of the language, history, dynamics, and problems facing at least one region of the world and be able to relate this knowledge to the broader global context.	Gain the knowledge, skills, cultural competence, and service ethic to function successfully and ethically in the workplace or in pursuit of further education after graduation.
BAIS BASIC Courses (requires for all majors)					
BAIS 101: The World Since 1945	I	I			
BAIS 102: Introduction to International Politics	I	I		I	
BAIS 103: The Global Economy	I	I	I		
BAIS 201: Research Methods	D	D	I		I
BAIS Required Courses for the Functional Tracks					
<i>Culture, Societies, and Values</i>					
ANTH 200: Introduction to Cultural Anthropology	D	D	D		D
<i>Environment and Development</i>					
ENVS 100: Understanding our Environment	D		D		
BAIS 310: Global Environmental Politics <u>or</u>	D	D	D		D
ENVA 366 : Environmental Policy	D	D	D		D
<i>Global Politics and Societies</i>					
BAIS 350: International Law and Organizations	D	D	D		
SOC 231: Introduction to Globalization					
<i>International Economics</i>					
ECON 111: Principles of Microeconomics					
ECON 112: Principles of Macroeconomics					
<i>Peace and Conflict Studies</i>					
BAIS 320: Human Rights and Global Change	D	D	D	D	D
POLS 353: Politics of War and Peace	D		D		
Additional BAIS Electives					
BAIS 395: International Affairs Review			M		
BAIS 399: Internship					M
BAIS 499: Honors Thesis	M	M	M		M
Regional Minor				M	