

**International Studies Department 2020-2021
Assessment Report for the Master of Arts in International Studies (MAIS)**

1. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

- a) Name of Program: Master of Arts in International Studies Program (hereinafter MAIS)
- b) Type of Program: Graduate Program
- c) CAS Division: Social Sciences
- d) Submitter & Point of Contact: Brian Dowd-Uribe, Associate Professor & MAIS Academic Co-Director, bdowduribe@usfca.edu

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 graduate 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, international development, international business, international media and communication, social advocacy, and the law.

3. PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (PLOs)

The MAIS PLOs were drafted and adopted by the Faculty Advisory Board in the Spring 2015 semester.

1. Understand the major structural, cultural, and relational shifts that have emerged in response to globalization from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, with a special emphasis on non-state actors.
2. Identify key organizations, institutions, and global and regional norms and how they interact with sub-state forces to shape policy, advocacy, and social movements.
3. Develop an understanding of the diverse aspects of global civil society and the political, economic, legal, environmental, social and cultural forces that are shaping contemporary global issues through the local-global connection.
4. Demonstrate an ability to critically engage categories of cultural difference and diversity and evaluate their influence on contemporary phenomenon.
5. Utilize mixed research methodologies, an interdisciplinary perspective, and community engagement skills to analyze key issues in international studies.

A new set of MAIS PLOs were approved in Spring 2020, along with a broader curriculum revision. These new PLOs will be reviewed beginning when the new curriculum begins in Fall '22.

4. CURRICULUM MAP*

TABLE 1. MAIS Curricular Map 2019-2020

MAIS Course	Program Learning Outcomes				
	PLO 1	PLO 2	PLO3	PLO 4	PLO 5
MAIS 620 Global Critical Social Theory	D	D	D	D	
MAIS 624 Graduate Writing Seminar					D
Core Concentration Classes (MAIS 621-623)	D	D	D	D	
MAIS 625 Research and Project Design					I
Elective Courses (MAIS 630-636)	I	I	I	I	
Skills Courses (MAIS 650-652)					I
Capstone Project MAIS 626	M	M	M	M	M

* Key: D = Developing; I = Intermediate; M = Mastery

5. SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT PLAN FOR 2019-2020 ACADEMIC YEAR

Past Assessments: International Studies (MAIS)					
YEAR	PLO1	PLO2	PLO3	PLO4	PLO5
	Understand the major structural, cultural, and relational shifts that have emerged in response to globalization from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, with a special emphasis on non-state actors.	Identify key organizations, institutions, and global and regional norms and how they interact with sub-state forces to shape policy, advocacy, and social movements.	Develop an understanding of the diverse aspects of global civil society and the political, economic, legal, environmental, social and cultural forces that are shaping contemporary global issues through the local-global connection.	Demonstrate an ability to critically engage categories of cultural difference and diversity and evaluate their influence on contemporary phenomenon.	Utilize mixed research methodologies, an interdisciplinary perspective, and community engagement skills to analyze key issues in international studies.
2016/2017					MAIS 613, Direct and Indirect Assessment
2017/2018					MAIS 613 Direct and Indirect Assessment
2018/2019	No Assessment				
2019/2020	MAIS 626 Indirect Assessment	MAIS 626, Indirect Assessment			MAIS 626, Indirect Assessment
2020/2021	MAIS 626 Indirect Assessment	MAIS 626 Indirect Assessment			MAIS 626 Indirect Assessment; MAIS 625 Direct Assessment

In previous years MAIS assessments have principally examined PLO5 via a direct assessment of coursework from MAIS 613 and an indirect assessment via a student survey. MAIS 613 has now transitioned to a new number MAIS 625, but is still the same course (Research Methods). Last year assessment expanded to a new course - MAIS 495, and encompassed new PLOs - PLO1 and PLO2 (as well as PLO5). These were assessed indirectly via a student survey in the MAIS Capstone Class (MAIS 626).

This year (2020/2021) the IS Assessment Committee decided to include the same indirect assessment survey from last year, and complement this with a direct assessment of

coursework from MAIS 625. The Assessment Committee wishes to continue to use the same student survey over several years to mark any significant changes in student views.

Last year students gave very high ratings to their comprehension of the different components of PLOs 1,2 and 5. For PLO1, 89% of students strongly agreed or agreed to their mastery of its different components. For PLO2, 95% of students strongly agreed or agreed to its mastery. For PLO 5, 82% of students strongly agreed or agreed to their mastery of its different components. Given these responses, and in lieu of a direct assessment, we feel confident that students achieved mastery in these program learning outcomes.

6. METHODS

As outlined above in section 5, we opted for both an indirect and direct assessment. The indirect assessment is via a student survey in the MAIS 626 Capstone Class, and comprises questions related to PLO1, PLO2, and PLO5. The direct assessment is of final papers for the MAIS 625 Research Methods class.

As indicated in our Curricular Map, we anticipate that MAIS 625 students will have achieved an ‘Intermediate’ level of competence with the skills embedded in the corresponding PLO, and MAIS 626 student a “Mastery” level of competence. As this is a graduate program, we believe that mastery of these skills will come through the completion of the master’s thesis or applied project that the student conducts during her or his final semester in the program.

Direct Assessment for Program Learning Outcome #5

- Utilize mixed research methodologies, an interdisciplinary perspective, and community engagement skills to analyze key issues in international studies.

For the Direct Assessment, the MAIS Assessment Committee, composed of Professors Nora Fisher Onar, Ilaria Giglioli and Brian Dowd-Urbe met to directly assess the work from the two sections of MAIS 625 taught in Spring 2022. The assessment committee used the following rubric:

Assessment Rubric

	Exceeds expectations	Meets expectations	Needs improvement	Below expectations	Not Applicable
Comprehension of different research methodologies (development of a methods statement, engagement with the					

academic literature around a method or methods, understanding of how method or methods will be operationalized)					
Evidence of Interdisciplinarity (draws from literature from multiple disciplines; develops and understanding of how multiple disciplines could approach the central problem)					
Evidence of Community Engagement (acknowledges complexity of community engaged research; draws from appropriate literature / logical arguments to situate understanding of community engagement)					

Indirect Assessment

For indirect assessment, students in the Capstone Class (MAIS 495) were given a survey by the professor for the course. This is a required course for all MAIS students in their fourth and final semester. They were asked to respond to a series of questions to assess their familiarity with mixed research methodologies, community engagement, research ethics, and the use of an interdisciplinary approach to research. The survey is available in Appendix I. This is the same survey from last year.

7. RESULTS

Based on the direct and indirect assessment of these metrics outlined above, we believe that MAIS students in the 2020-2021 cohort achieved a ‘Mastery’ level of competence for PLOs 1,2 and 5.

Direct Assessment Results

We reviewed a total of 21 final proposals (14 from Professor Zarobell, and 7 from Professor Cantero). The assignment was a research proposal, with an introduction,

literature review, and methods statement. The committee reached the following assessment, described in further detail below.

	Exceeds expectations	Meets expectations	Needs improvement	Below expectations	Not Applicable
Comprehension of different research methodologies (development of a methods statement, engagement with the academic literature around a method or methods, understanding of how method or methods will be operationalized)	5	7	8		
Evidence of Interdisciplinarity (draws from literature from multiple disciplines; develops and understanding of how multiple disciplines could approach the central problem)	10	7	3		
Evidence of Community Engagement (acknowledges complexity of community engaged research; draws from appropriate literature / logical arguments to situate understanding of community engagement)	8	8	4		

The committee found that 85% of the final proposals either met (35%) or exceeded (50%) expectation in terms of interdisciplinarity. Our assessment demonstrated that students felt uninhibited and well-trained to engage in problem-driven research, and to weave together literature, design and methods in ways that cut across and draw from multiple disciplines. Similarly, student work demonstrated a strong sense of community engagement, with 80% of final proposals either meeting (40%) or exceeding (40%) expectations in terms of community engagement. The committee found a variety of ways that community engagement was expressed, including the orientation to the problem, detailed positionality statements, and expression of how community-engaged research could transpire.

The committee found that the comprehension of different methodologies and the development of detailed methods statements was adequate, but not as strong as the other two criteria. The committee found that 60% of final proposals either met (35%) or exceeded (25%) expectations in this category. The final proposals were more mixed in terms of the sophistication of their engagement with research design and methods. Some proposals had, for example, spoken about IRB proposals, while others seemed more descriptive but less engaged in their development of a research statement. This is to be expected to a certain extent given that many students are still developing a master-level capstone project, and some switched projects midway through the semester.

Indirect Assessment Results

Students gave very high ratings to their comprehension of the different components of PLOs 1,2 and 5. For PLO 1, 80% of students strongly agreed or agreed to their mastery of its different components. For PLO 2, 80% of students strongly agreed or agreed to its mastery. For PLO 5, 85% of students strongly agreed or agreed to their mastery of its different components. These were essentially the same as the year prior; PLO1 had a 9% point drop, PLO2 had a 15% point drop, and PLO5 had a 3% gain. We view these changes as relatively minor, particularly given the high overall percentage of competency.

Below are the results for each question:

PLO1

1) After completing my capstone, and all coursework I feel adequately prepared to understand the major structural and cultural shifts brought about by globalization

- Strong Agree	1 (10%)
- Agree	7 (70%)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree	2 (20%)
- Disagree	0
- Strongly Disagree	0

2) After completing my capstone, and all coursework I feel adequately prepared to understand different disciplinary perspectives of globalization

- Strong Agree	1 (10%)
- Agree	7 (70%)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree	2 (20%)
- Disagree	0
- Strongly Disagree	0

PLO 2

3) *After completing my capstone, and all coursework I feel adequately prepared to understand the roles of non-state actors in globalization*

- Strong Agree	4 (40%)
- Agree	4 (40%)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree	2 (10%)
- Disagree	0
- Strongly Disagree	0

PLO 5

4) *After completing my capstone, and all coursework I feel adequately prepared to use multiple research methods of data collection for interdisciplinary research on key issues in International Studies*

- Strong Agree	1 (10%)
- Agree	6 (60%)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree	3 (30%)
- Disagree	0
- Strongly Disagree	0

5) *After completing my capstone, and all coursework I feel adequately prepared to understand the role of community engagement in interdisciplinary research on key issues in International Studies*

- Strong Agree	1 (10%)
- Agree	7 (70%)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree	2 (20%)
- Disagree	0
- Strongly Disagree	0

6) *After completing my capstone, and all coursework I feel adequately competent to assess the ethical conditions of conducting research*

- Strong Agree	3 (30%)
- Agree	7 (70%)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree	0
- Disagree	0
- Strongly Disagree	0

7) *After completing my capstone, and all coursework I feel adequately prepared to understand the politics around how research is produced on key issues in International Studies*

- Strong Agree	4 (40%)
- Agree	5 (50%)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree	1 (10%)
- Disagree	0
- Strongly Disagree	0

8. CLOSING THE LOOP

The International Studies department will have one more assessment year on the current PLOs, and will move to a new curriculum beginning Fall '22. Next year will consist of building a more robust approach to assessment and looking for ways to make the assessment process build across curricula.

Appendix I

**MAIS 626: Capstone Course
Indirect Assessment Survey**

1) After completing my capstone, and all coursework I feel adequately prepared to understand the major structural and cultural shifts brought about by globalization

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

2) After completing my capstone, and all coursework I feel adequately prepared to understand different disciplinary perspectives of globalization

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

3) After completing my capstone, and all coursework I feel adequately prepared to understand the roles of non-state actors in globalization

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

4) After completing my capstone, and all coursework I feel adequately prepared to use multiple research methods of data collection for interdisciplinary research on key issues in International Studies

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

5) After completing my capstone, and all coursework I feel adequately prepared to understand the role of community engagement in interdisciplinary research on key issues in International Studies

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree

- Strongly Disagree

6) After completing my capstone, and all coursework I feel adequately competent to assess the ethical conditions of conducting research

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

7) After completing my capstone, and all coursework I feel adequately prepared to understand the politics around how research is produced on key issues in International Studies

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree