

International Studies Department
2017-2018 Assessment Report for the Bachelor of Arts in International Studies Program
October 26, 2018

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, 2 functional track electives, and 4 or 5 courses for the regional minor). 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 intending to assess PLOs through the BASIC course sequence in the major.

These difficulties of assessment in interdisciplinary programs have been discussed repeatedly with the administration. One specific example of this occurred during the 2016-2017 academic year, when non-IS housed faculty taught both sections of the BASIC Course Introduction to International Politics. One of these faculty didn’t respond to emails asking about collecting assignments for assessment purposes.

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 2017-2018 ACADEMIC YEAR

We will evaluate PLO1 for one semester of our BASIC class *The World since 1945* and (direct and indirect assessments, explained below) PLO 2 for two semesters of our BASIC class *Introduction to International Politics* – during the 2017-2018 academic year.

Direct Assessment of PLO2 in Introduction to International Politics

Introduction to International Politics was taught once in the Fall 2017 semester and once in the Spring 2018 semester. Each section offered in the 2017-2018 academic year was taught by a faculty member who is not housed in International Studies, but rather in the Politics Department. Both were informed of the BAIS PLOs and the need to collect assignments for assessment of PLO 2. Both faculty members responded and, while not creating an assignment specifically targeted towards assessment of PLO 2 among the students, did provide student work to assess. The course no longer is part of the Politics curriculum so is completely controlled by the International Studies Department.

In Fall 2017, the assignment was for students to write a blog post providing an assessment of one of a number of international issues. In Spring 2018, the assignment was a take-home 4-page essay in which students role-played as an adviser to the UN Secretary General to attain a more peaceful world. The results for these assessments of PLO2 are discussed in the ‘Results’ section below.

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 is currently discussing changing the

undergraduate curriculum. While we don't anticipate major changes to the PLOs, they may be tweaked if we substantially change our current curriculum. For 2017-2018, however, as mentioned above, we are working with our existing courses and existing PLOs.

6. METHODS

As described above in Section 4, we opted for direct assessment of PLO1 through *The World since 1945* and PLO2 through *Introduction to International Politics*. As this course is part of our BASIC sequence for the major, we anticipate that students will acquire an 'I or 'Introductory Level' of understanding of the skills and knowledge outlined in PLO 2.

The assignments collected were reviewed and summarized by Professor Lindsay Gifford for *Introduction to International Politics*.

7. RESULTS

PLO 1 for The World since 1945

Learning Outcome Assessments for International Studies Undergraduate Program

Program Learning Outcome 1

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.

To evaluate this program learning outcome, we focus on a self-evaluation and the final exam for the World Since 1945 (BAIS 101). Each student to enter the undergraduate program in International Studies is required to take the World Since 1945 course and they are advised to take this course in the first year of their studies. Professors teaching this class had worked together to ensure a similar final exam for students in both of their classes and these require students to "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". In the 2017-18 academic year, the course was offered twice and, in the fall, it was taught by an adjunct who is no longer with the university so no assessments are available. This assessment will be based then on Professor Zarobell's spring 2018 class.

Indirect method, surveys:

Out of 24 students in the class, 22 answered the survey. Below is a copy of the survey instrument.

World Since 1945 Self-Evaluation for International Studies Undergraduate BAIS Learning Outcomes

One of the goals of the undergraduate International Studies program at the University of San Francisco is defined as follows:

- 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.

Please fill out the following self-evaluation of your final paper that will help us to determine if this course is meeting this program goal. The information gleaned from this survey will help us to develop the program and make it more effective in the future. Please provide a rating for each category and answer the survey prompts.

1. Please rate the following statements in relation to your experience:

“In this course, I learned how to analyze complex international issues.”

Strongly Disagree:	1
Disagree:	2
Uncertain:	3
Agree:	4
Strongly Agree:	5

2017-18 results:

Strongly Disagree:	0
Disagree:	0
Uncertain:	0
Agree:	16
Strongly Agree:	6
Total:	22

2. “In this course, I learned how to use theories and methodologies of various disciplines in order to analyze transnational problems.”

Strongly Disagree:	1
Disagree:	2
Uncertain:	3
Agree:	4
Strongly Agree:	5

2017-18 results:

Strongly Disagree:	0
Disagree:	0
Uncertain:	2
Agree:	11
Strongly Agree:	9
Total:	22

Now you will be asked whether you achieved this learning outcome in your *written work* for this class.

3. Please rate the following statements in relation to your experience:

“In my papers, I analyzed complex international issues.”

Strongly Disagree:	1
Disagree:	2
Uncertain:	3
Agree:	4

Strongly Agree: 5

2017-18 Results:

Strongly Disagree: 0
Disagree: 0
Uncertain: 1
Agree: 8
Strongly Agree: 13
Total 22

4. "In my papers, I used theories and methodologies of multiple disciplines."

Strongly Disagree: 1
Disagree: 2
Uncertain: 3
Agree: 4
Strongly Agree: 5

2017-18 Results:

Strongly Disagree: 0
Disagree: 0
Uncertain: 3
Agree: 5
Strongly Agree: 14
Total: 22

5. "In my papers, I employed a multidisciplinary approach to analyze transnational problems."

Strongly Disagree: 1
Disagree: 2
Uncertain: 3
Agree: 4
Strongly Agree: 5

2017-18 results:

Strongly Disagree: 0
Disagree: 0
Uncertain: 1
Agree: 10
Strongly Agree: 11
Total: 22

These survey results suggest that students had strong experiences in this class analyzing transnational experiences from interdisciplinary perspectives. It seems that overall scores were higher for written assignments and that students perceived that they learned how to analyze transnational problems somewhat more than they learned how to do so from the perspective of multiple disciplines. The takeaway from the surveys is that he

students are overwhelmingly in agreement that the PLO goal was met in this course. This is reinforced by the direct results from the final exam.

Direct method, exams:

The final exam question was

In lectures and during the last workshop assignment, you have worked to prepare an analysis of which causes from the other social processes so far discussed (Geopolitics, Neoliberalism, Modernization, Globalization and Nationalism) have led to migration. This essay for the final asks you to develop this analysis further and to make an argument for how all of these processes lead, directly or indirectly, to some form of displacement, whether it be migration, exile, asylum seeking, or transnational identity. You can approach this essay in a variety of ways but the goal is for you to connect the course material to the theme of migration and make an argument for what root historical causes lead to contemporary developments. You need to determine what are the most important causes that lead to migration and you should speculate about what the results of migration are upon contemporary politics and society. I expect you to cite at least three texts (one of which must be from the Migration section). The successful essay will be clear and well-reasoned, but will take on a breadth of material and make it clear how these issues are related and what the implications are.

The rubric for evaluating the essays was as follows:

- 1: Students were able to use multiple disciplinary approaches with confidence and convincingly develop an interdisciplinary argument on a contemporary transnational issue.
- 2: Students demonstrated an understanding of how to employ multiple disciplinary approaches and used methods from more than one discipline to evaluate a contemporary transnational issue.
- 3: Students demonstrated familiarity with distinct disciplinary approaches in their analysis of a contemporary transnational issue.
- 4: Students did not employ more than one disciplinary perspective to analyze a contemporary transnational issue.

2017-18 results:

1:	10
2:	11
3:	2
4:	1
Total:	24

These direct results suggest that the students were in agreement that the course delivered material that covered multiple disciplinary approaches to complex transnational issues and they were also successful in mastering those skills themselves in this course. There was, more or less, an even split among the top two categories with only one student who really did not employ multidisciplinary perspectives. Last year's results suggested that more work needed to be done to move the numbers towards the top rating, and this was largely successful, with only three students (12.5%) falling into the bottom two categories.

PLO 2 for Introduction to International Politics Fall 2017

The blog posts made available for the one section of *Introduction to International Politics* offered in Fall 2017 were reviewed for understanding of PLO 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.*

A total of 37 blog posts were reviewed. It appears the assignment was for students to work in groups to create a substantive essay outlining the historical development of the issue and the various factors impacting the current situation. Each post was reviewed according to the rubric below.

	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations	Does Not Meet expectations
Problem Framing (Assesses the issue thru different levels of analysis and the importance of historical and contextual factors)	26	11		0
Problem Identification (Identifies and analyzes the global problems in the scenario presented and the different fields [interdisciplinary] and issue areas that are relevant)	29	8		0
Theoretical Understanding (Summary of the different theoretical approaches [which are conceptual and analytical tools] relevant for international relations and global interactions in the contemporary world)	12	22	3	0

For the first two components of the PLO – problem identification and problem framing – the students clearly demonstrated introductory acquisition at either the ‘meets expectations’ or ‘exceeds expectations’ levels. On the third component of the PLO – whether the students gained the conceptual and analytical tools of the theoretical approaches relevant to international politics – the results were somewhat lower, but still the majority of students met or exceeded expectations.

PLO 2 for Introduction to International Politics Spring 2018

The take-home essays made available for the one section of *Introduction to International Politics* offered in Spring 2018 were reviewed for understanding of PLO 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.*

A total of 25 take-home essays were reviewed. The assignment consisted of students’ playing the role of a main adviser to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and using various theoretical perspectives, case studies,

institutions, and actors studied in class to write up a 4-page report on how to attain a more peaceful world. Each take-home essay was reviewed according to the rubric below.

	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Problem Framing (assesses the issue through different levels of analysis and the importance of historical and contextual factors)	19	6	0	0
Problem Identification (identifies and analyzes global problems in the scenario presented and the different [interdisciplinary] fields and issue areas that are relevant)	10	15	0	0
Theoretical Understanding (summary of the different theoretical approaches [which are conceptual and analytical tools] relevant for international relations and global interactions in the contemporary world)	7	16	2	0

For the first two components of the PLO – problem identification and problem framing – the students clearly demonstrated introductory acquisition at either the ‘meets expectation’ or ‘exceeds expectations’ levels. On the third component of the PLO – whether students gained conceptual and analytical tools of the theoretical approaches relevant to international politics – the results were somewhat lower, but still the vast majority of students either met or exceeded expectations.

The reasons for such effective results regarding the PLO 2 seem to be the following: class content which mixed class discussions and student presentations with lectures, use of visual learning aids (power point, short videos), use of multimedia (weekend films related to the subject matter under discussion), and open line of communication and feedback between the faculty and students.

	PI01	PI02	PI03	PI04	PI05
Upon completion of the undergraduate program, international studies students will be able to:	be able to analyze complex international issues using the theories and methods of multiple disciplines in a holistic response to the transnational problems of the 21 st century.	Compare complex globalized technologies, theories, traditions, practices, cultures, and environments, understand and evaluate global interactions and transnational relations in the contemporary world.	Describe complex global issues when interdisciplinary, research-oriented, problem-solving, and critical global and/or regional research, design, and/or analysis is used to address global and/or transnational patterns.	Demonstrate an understanding of the language, history, dynamics, and problem-solving of 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 of their education successfully and effectively in the workplace in preparation for further education after graduation.

BAS199 Courses (required for all majors)

BAS101: Introduction to International Politics	I	I			
BAS102: The Global Economy	I	I	I	I	
BAS201: Research Methods	C	C	I		I

BAS Required Courses for the International Trade

<i>Global Societies and Culture</i>					
ANT-100: Introduction to Cultural Anthropology	D	D	D		D

Environment and Development

BAS100: Understanding Environment	C		C		C
BAS300: Global Environment and Policy	C	C	C		C
BAS366: Environmental Policy	C	C	C		C

Global Politics and Society

BAS350: Introduction to Law and Operations	D	D	D	D	
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International Economics

ECON101: Principles of Microeconomics					
ECON102: Principles of Macroeconomics					

Research and Analysis

BAS320: Human Rights and Global Change	C	C	C	C	C
POLS350: Politics of War and Peace	C		C		C

Additional Requirements

BAS338: Introduction of Affairs Review			N		N
BAS339: Internship			N		N
BAS499: Honors Thesis	N		N		N
Regional Minor				M	

	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 or	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	