

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 & Point of Contacts: John Zarobell, Ph.D., Associate Professor & Undergraduate Director, International Studies Department and Dana Zartner, Ph.D. Associate Professor & Chair, International Studies Department dzartner@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 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 even respond to emails asking about collecting assignments for assessment purposes. This is discussed in more detail below.

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 2016-2017 ACADEMIC YEAR

In our assessment report submitted in July 2016, we indicated we would evaluate PLOs 1 and 2 in two of our BASIC classes – *The World Since 1945* and *Introduction to International Politics* – during the 2016-2017 academic year.

Direct Assessment of PLO1 in the *World Since 1945*

BAIS 101 *The World Since 1945* focuses on PLO 1, which states: *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 PLO, we focused 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 Goldman and Zarobell – who taught the sections of BAIS 101 in Fall 2016 and Spring 2017 respectively – worked together to ensure a similar final exam for students in both of their classes. This exam required 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” pursuant to PLO1. In the 2016-17 academic year, both also professors rated their final exams for this PLO.

Indirect Assessment of PLO1 in *World Since 1945*

In the 2016-17 academic year, both Professors Zarobell and Goldman administered surveys at the end of their courses to capture student reflections on their own understating of the concept s outline in PLI1 (indirect method) and rated their final exams for this PLO (direct method).

**Nota Bene:* Professor Goldman’s death over the summer makes it impossible to access his exams and ratings, so in our results section we provide survey data from both semesters and exam ratings for the Spring 2017 semester in Professor Zarobell’s class.

Direct Assessment of PLO2 in *Introduction to International Politics*

Two sections of the *Introduction to International Politics* class were taught in the Fall 2016 semester and no sections were taught in Spring 2017. Each section offered in Fall 2016 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 on both August 13, 2016 and September 19, 2016. One faculty member responded and, while not creating an assignment specifically targeted towards assessment introduction to PLO 2 among the students, did provide some student work to assess. The second faculty member never responded to the emails. Part of the issue in Fall 2016 was that the course was cross-listed as BAIS 102 and POLS 113. Our control over the course from the International Studies Department perspective was minimal. This will no longer be an issue, however, as the course no longer is part of the Politics curriculum so is completely controlled by the International Studies Department. We will be meeting as a department later this semester to determine a better assessment mechanism for this course.

For the one section of the course for which we have an assignment to assess, the assignment was for students to write a blog post providing an assessment of one of a number of international issues, including the coup attempt in Turkey, Boko Haram, Brexit, terrorism in France, US-Cuba relations, the US-Iran nuclear deal, or the refugee crisis. The results for this assessment 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 both PLO1 and PLO2 through *The World Since 1945* and *Introduction to International Politics* respectively. There is also some indirect assessment data for PLO1..

As both of these courses are 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 these two PLOs.

The assignments collected were reviewed and summarized by Professor John Zarobell for the *World Since 1945*. Professor Dana Zartner reviewed and summarized the data for *Introduction to International Politics*. were both handed out and have been or will be reviewed by the course professors according to the rubrics attached in Appendices II and III.

7. RESULTS

PLO 1 for the World Since 1945

Indirect method, surveys:

A copy of the complete survey is provided in Appendix I. The response distribution is as follows:

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Uncertain (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Total
In this course I learned how to analyze transnational problems	0	0	2	23	35	60
In this course, I learned how to use theories and methodologies of various disciplines in order to analyze transnational problems.	0	1	7	25	27	60
In my papers, I analyzed complex international issues	0	0	5	21	34	59*
In my papers, I used theories and methodologies of multiple disciplines	0	1	6	31	22	60
In my papers, I used theories and methodologies of multiple disciplines	0	1	6	30	21	58**

* One student did not respond

** Two students did not respond

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 than 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 the students are overwhelmingly in agreement that the PLO goal was met in this course. However, direct results from the final exam in spring 2017 are less convincing.

Direct method, exams:

PLO 1 was assessed in the *World Since 1945* through the following question on the students' final exam:

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.

The results for the 33 students completing the course (please remember that unlike the surveys which were conducted both sections of the course, the exam assessment was only conducted for Professor Zarobell's course.

2016-17 results:

- 1: 9 students
- 2: 11 students
- 3: 11 students
- 4: 2 students

These direct results suggest that while the students were in agreement that the course delivered material that covered multiple disciplinary approaches to complex transnational issues, they were less successful in mastering those skills themselves in this course. There was, more or less, an even split among the top three categories with only two students who really did not employ multidisciplinary perspectives, but this suggests that more work needs to be done to help the students master interdisciplinary analysis on their own and move more students from category 3 to 2 and from category 2 to 1.

PLO 2 for Introduction to International Politics

The blog posts made available for the one section of *Introduction to International Politics* 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 28 blog posts 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.

	Exceed Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Problem Framing (assesses of the issue in through different levels of analysis and the importance of historical and contextual factors)	18	10		0
Problem Identification (identifies and analyzes the global problems in the scenario presented and the different fields [interdisciplinary] and issue areas that are relevant)	15	13		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)		3	25	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 much lower, with the majority of students not meeting expectations.

There are a couple of reasons for the result on the third component of the rubric. It could be that this component was demonstrated through a different assignment form the blog post and so our material for assessment was not sufficient. Another possibility could be tied back to the point made above that it was difficult to get communication and cooperation from faculty in Fall 2016 on assessing this PLO through their class, so in the end we were left with this single option. Despite this, it is clear that students are gaining the requisite introductory familiarity with much of PLO2, but there is room to work on ensuring the same acquisition for the third prong.

8. CLOSING THE LOOP

We have some work to do in our assessment for our undergraduate program. Instituting better incorporation of our PLOs into our undergraduate courses will be part of the ongoing discussions on potential changes to our undergraduate curriculum. For the 2016-2017 we will continue to assess PLO 1 and 2 through the same two courses. We are trying to work more closely with the faculty teaching these courses this year to ensure we have appropriate student work to assess.

Appendix 1: Indirect Assessment Survey for PLO 1

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

One of the goals of the BAIS 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 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.

Please rate the following statements in relation to your experience:

1. "In this course, I learned how to analyze transnational problems."

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

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

3. "In my papers, I analyzed complex international issues."

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

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

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

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

	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 <i>or</i>	D		D		D
ENVA 366 : Environmental Policy	D		D		D
<i>Global Politics and Societies</i>					
BAIS 350: International Law and Organizations	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	

	PLO1	PLO2	PLO3	PLO4	PLO5
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ENVS 100: Understanding our Environment	D		D		
BAIS 310: Global Environmental Politics <i>or</i>	D		D		D
ENVA 366 : Environmental Policy	D		D		D
<i>Global Politics and Societies</i>					
BAIS 350: International Law and Organizations	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	

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BAIS 310: Global Environmental Politics <i>or</i>	D		D		D
ENVA 366 : Environmental Policy	D		D		D
<i>Global Politics and Societies</i>					
BAIS 350: International Law and Organizations	D		D		
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