Program-Level Assessment: Annual Report

Program Name (no acronyms): International Studies	Department: Political Science
Degree or Certificate Level: B.A.	College/School: Arts and Sciences
Date (Month/Year): June 2021	Assessment Contact: Ellen Carnaghan
In what year was the data upon which this report is based collected? Spring 2021	
In what year was the program's assessment plan most recently reviewed/updated? 2018	

1. Student Learning Outcomes

Which of the program's student learning outcomes were assessed in this annual assessment cycle? (Please list the full, complete learning outcome statements and not just numbers, e.g., Outcomes 1 and 2.)

Outcome 6: Graduates will be able to estimate the global and transnational impact of local actions.

Outcome 7: Graduates will be able to apply their knowledge of international phenomena to engage effectively as global citizens.

2. Assessment Methods: Artifacts of Student Learning

Which artifacts of student learning were used to determine if students achieved the outcome(s)? Please describe and identify the course(s) in which these artifacts were collected. Clarify if any such courses were offered a) online, b) at the Madrid campus, or c) at any other off-campus location.

According to the International Studies assessment plan, artifacts for these outcomes are collected in the International Studies capstone course. During the 2020-2021 academic year, the capstone was offered once, in Spring 2021, as ISTD 4962 Comparative Revolution. The capstone was not offered in Madrid this academic year, although Madrid students were able to register for the St. Louis course, which was offered online. Two Madrid students did register, both International Studies students, registered and are included in this report.

3. Assessment Methods: Evaluation Process

What process was used to evaluate the artifacts of student learning, and by whom? Please identify the tools(s) (e.g., a rubric) used in the process and **include them in/with this report document** (do not just refer to the assessment plan).

The instructor of the class used a rubric to measure student learning on two assignments. For outcome 6, the assignment was a question on the final exam about the international diffusion of revolutionary mobilization. For outcome 7, the assignment was a short Blackboard writing assignment asking students to reflect on (a) how they might use the information learned in the capstone as well as in their major to address challenges outside the US and (b) what further knowledge they might need to be an effective global citizen.

4. Data/Results

What were the results of the assessment of the learning outcome(s)? Please be specific. Does achievement differ by teaching modality (e.g., online vs. face-to-face) or on-ground location (e.g., STL campus, Madrid campus, other off-campus site)?

Below is a summary of results from the rubric. The top number represents the International Studies majors in the class. The bottom number represents results from the rest of the class. The rest of the class includes a variety of majors, including Political Science, Public Health, Business, and Communication. One International Studies major was absent on the day we did the assignment that measured outcome 7, which explains the lower totals in that area.

Student is able to:	**Does not meet expectations**	**Meets (but does not exceed) expectations**	**Exceeds expectations**	**Outcome does not apply to this course**
Impact of local actions				
Describe how the lives, values, and experiences of people are affected by factors or processes outside their own countries	2 ISTD major 2 Other major	2 7	5 6	
Reflect on how personal choices and local actions affect and are affected by events or processes beyond national borders	2 2	2 6	5 7	
Apply knowledge to engage effectively				
Reflect on ways individuals can impact their community or the world	2 0	3 4	3 11	
Envision strategies to address challenges outside the US	2 0	3 5	3 10	
Assess what further knowledge is needed	1 0	3 3	4 12	

Overall, most international studies (7 out of 9 or 78 percent) met expectations for both learning outcomes. That percentage was similar to, but not quite as good as for students from other majors in the class (13 of 15 or 86 percent for outcome 6 and 15 of 15 or 100 percent for outcome 7). A somewhat larger proportion of international studies majors exceeded expectations for outcome 6 (5 of 9 or 56 percent for international studies students versus 6-7 out of 15 or 40-47 percent for other majors). By contrast, a lower proportion of international studies majors exceeded expectations for outcome 7 (3-4 of 8 or 38-50 percent of international studies majors versus 11-12 of 15 or 73-80 percent for other majors.

Since these data were collected from one online synchronous class open to students in Madrid and St. Louis, and there were only two Madrid students enrolled, it is not possible to make comparisons related to mode of delivery or location of the class. However, it did seem that some students strongly expected an online class to be easier than this one was.

5. Findings: Interpretations & Conclusions

What have you learned from these results? What does the data tell you?

With only nine international studies majors included in this analysis, there is a danger of drawing clearer conclusions than the data support. That danger is compounded by Covid-related disruptions to the classroom and students' lives, which mean that this semester was different from what we hope will be the case in the future. Nonetheless, it is possible to raise some questions and perhaps draw tentative conclusions.

Because of the small number of students involved, a single student has considerable impact on the results. In particular, the same two International Studies major did not meet expectations on every item in the rubric. Neither student seriously engaged with the class. It was clear that they learned very little in this class, but it was less clear whether that was due to any shortcoming of the major. One of these students raises concerns, though, in that she appears not to have learned how to write a research paper without drawing too heavily on a small number of sources. International Studies students take courses in a wide variety of departments and from a variety of instructors. This makes it harder to track what may have been a consistent problem. On the other hand, this student's poor work may have only been the product of poor engagement in this specific class.

Weaknesses in preparation may have been shared by other student in the class. About a third of the International Studies students in the class said that they felt unprepared for much of the work in the class. They did not believe themselves to be capable of extracting key arguments from an article or book on their own. They struggled with written assignments. They were largely unfamiliar with many of the disciplines that are usually a part of International Studies, and they did not believe that an International Studies class should require them to engage with disciplines, approaches or subjects that were not to their interest. This feeling of being unprepared was at odds with students' positive performance on the two student learning outcomes assessed and also at odds with their work in the class overall. But their sense of being unprepared led to anxiety. This raises the question of whether the present requirements of the major adequately prepare students for multidisciplinary work. The students who did not complain had taken advanced courses across a larger number of disciplines than the complaining students.

That the International Studies students performed better than the other students in the class on outcome 6 indicates that majors are largely successful in developing analytical skills that permit them to trace transnational effects of actions. This is especially notable since some of the International Studies students expressed uncertainty about their preparation for the class at the beginning of the semester, though in the end most performed well.

It is somewhat surprising that the International Studies were less prepared than other students in the class to apply the knowledge they gained in their classes to their future role as a global citizen. This may be in part because the other students were a mix of Political Science students (who think in terms of engaging in global challenges) or professional students (who can imagine a clear role for themselves going forward). That there are so many different paths through the International Studies major appears, in this case, to leave some students with uncertainty regarding how they will use the skills and information from their major going forward. The program could address this issue though career-oriented speakers and events.

6. Closing the Loop: Dissemination and Use of Current Assessment Findings

A. When and how did your program faculty share and discuss these results and findings from this cycle of assessment?

The International Studies advisory board will discuss these findings in Fall 2021. In particular, the board will consider:

- Methods for tracking students mid-major, to alert us to deficiencies in student learning when there is still time to correct them
- Whether current requirement adequately prepare students for multi-disciplinary study

- Options for career-oriented speakers and events
- Whether the capstone should remain a multi-disciplinary seminar with a research project (as it was taught this semester) or whether students would be served better by a more independent project on whatever interests the student (as some students seem to have expected). Whatever the decision, it may not be wise to use the label "capstone" to describe a seminar.

B. How specifically have you decided to use these findings to improve teaching and learning in your program? For example, perhaps you've initiated one or more of the following:

Changes to the Curriculum or Pedagogies	• Course content • Teaching techniques • Improvements in technology • Prerequisites	• Course sequence • New courses • Deletion of courses • Changes in frequency or scheduling of course offerings
Changes to the Assessment Plan	• Student learning outcomes • Artifacts of student learning • Evaluation process	• Evaluation tools (e.g., rubrics) • Data collection methods • Frequency of data collection

Please describe the actions you are taking as a result of these findings.

We have decided that the International Studies capstone will not be cross-listed with Political Science in the future (or, if absolutely necessary to cross-list, will have only a small number of seats for Political Science students). With only half of graduating majors on the new curriculum, we did not have enough International Studies students to run a dedicated class for them this year. In the future, all International Studies majors will be on the new curriculum, so the numbers should be sufficient.

A dedicated International Studies class will have the advantage of providing space for more direct engagement with the multi-disciplinary nature of International Studies. In a cross-listed class, some students experienced anything that was unfamiliar, whether it be history, economics, anthropology, or sociology, as "political science" since the class was cross-listed with Political Science and taught by a political scientist. A dedicated International Studies class will also give International Studies majors a chance to interact with each other in a way the major does not always do.

If no changes are being made, please explain why.

7. Closing the Loop: Review of Previous Assessment Findings and Changes

A. What is at least one change your program has implemented in recent years as a result of assessment data?

We incorporated a rubric to measure more directly student learning on the outcomes being assessed. The rubric used this year was developed in the fall, discussed with the faculty advisory board, and revised to better fit with the Global Interdependence attribute of the new SLU Core. Since instructors of many International Studies courses are likely to apply for their courses to fulfill the Global Interdependence attribute, it will be easier for them if Core and major learning outcomes overlap.

The present curriculum has only been in place for three years, one and a half of them under pandemic conditions. We are still gathering evidence about where curricular changes may be necessary. Previous assessment results were necessarily focused on introductory classes, since those were the only classes being offered in the new curriculum. Those results produced some suggestions for approaches in individual classes, which were shared with faculty who teach those classes, but no suggestions for curricular changes.

B. How has this change/have these changes been assessed?

At the Fall 2021 International Studies meeting, we will re-assess the rubric for outcomes 6 and 7.

In academic year 2021-22, we will return to outcomes 1 and 2, and that will allow us to determine whether suggested approaches in individual classes were adopted and had the desired effect.

C. What were the findings of the assessment?

Too soon to report.

D. How do you plan to (continue to) use this information moving forward?

We have rubrics for outcomes 1 and 2, but in the past instructors were not required to use them. Going forward, instructors will be asked to submit a summary of their findings from the rubrics. We will revise the rubrics as needed.

IMPORTANT: Please submit any assessment tools (e.g., rubrics) with this report as separate attachments or copied and pasted into this Word document. Please do not just refer to the assessment plan; the report should serve as a stand-alone document.

Rubric for ISTD BA assessment

Outcome 6: Graduates will be able to estimate the global and transnational impact of local actions.

Outcome 7: Graduates will be able to apply their knowledge of international phenomena to engage effectively as global citizens.

Directions: Please fill in at least one rubric for each student in your class. You may use one or multiple assignments. Expectations should reflect the level of the course. For purposes of program assessment, you will be asked to report the number of students who do not meet, meet, or exceed expectations for each of the qualities listed below. You will also have a chance to report other comments.

Student is able to:	**Does not meet expectations**	**Meets (but does not exceed) expectations**	**Exceeds expectations**	**Outcome does not apply to this course**
Impact of local actions				
Describe how the lives, values, and experiences of people are affected by factors or processes outside their own countries				
Reflect on how personal choices and local actions affect and are affected by events or processes beyond national borders				
Apply knowledge to engage effectively				
Reflect on ways individuals can impact their community or the world				
Envision strategies to address challenges outside the US				
Assess what further knowledge is needed				

Comments, in particular anything related to this outcome that students can or cannot do well that is not covered by the rubric: