

International and Global Studies (INST) Program Assessment Report 2021-2022

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INST Program Goals and Learning Outcomes

The International and Global Studies (INST) program currently offers a Bachelor of Arts degree in International Studies and a minor in Global Studies. Both degree programs aim to help students develop a broad understanding of the world in which we live and to think, read, and write critically about major global political, economic, social, and cultural issues. The program seeks to achieve this objective by not only exposing students to multiple disciplinary approaches to the study of the international system, but also providing focused training in specific world geographic areas. It additionally seeks to promote the acquisition of intercultural competency by encouraging experiential learning through language training, study abroad, internships, service opportunities, and research.

Students are expected to demonstrate competency in the following areas by the end of their course of study:

Outcome 1: Demonstrate the ability to think critically about global issues by successfully completing internationally focused courses offered by a variety of departments/programs;

Outcome 2: Demonstrate knowledge of a selected region of the world (e.g., Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, or the Middle East);

Outcome 3: Develop the ability to effectively analyze and research global issues;

Outcome 4: Develop effective written and oral communications skills for describing and interpreting aspects of global affairs;

Outcome 5: Demonstrate competency in a modern world language other than English

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

INST uses a combination of direct and indirect methods, including meaningful tests, written and oral assignments, participation in professional development projects, and student surveys, to assess the above student learning outcomes. Below are examples of processes used to assess student competency:

1. The following methods are used to assess student learning objectives 1, 3, and 4 regarding interdisciplinary knowledge, research skills, and oral and written communication skills.

- **INST 2813 Introduction to International and Global Studies**

INST offered four sections of INST 2813 at the Fayetteville campus in the 2021-2022 academic year, with a total enrollment of 179 students. Two additional sections were offered at the UA Rome Center, with an enrollment of 13 students.

- **INST 4003/INST 4003H International Studies Seminar**

INST taught 40 students in four sections of INST 4003 in the 2021-2022 academic year. An additional section of INST 4003 was offered at the Rome Center, with an enrollment of five students. Starting in Fall 2022, INST 4813 will replace INST 4003 as the capstone seminar, while INST 4003 will become a special topics class. The reduced enrollment cap for INST 4813 will allow the instructor to provide students with a more intensive learning experience in a writing-intensive class such as this one.

- **Capstone seminar paper**

All students enrolled in the capstone seminar have completed a significant term paper and oral presentation.

- **Honors theses**

Eight INST students have successfully completed honors theses by the end of Spring 2022. Half of them earned either *summa cum laude* or *magna cum laude* honors, and two students received SURF fellowships to support their research. In Fall 2021, all students taking INST 399V Honors Thesis were enrolled in a section supervised by the INST director and tracks their progress toward the completion of the thesis. Nearly all seven of them have earned a grade of A in the course.

- **INST Exit Survey**

An INST exit survey was administered to graduating INST seniors in Spring 2022.

- 83 (15/18) of students who have completed the INST exit survey reported that they “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the major had increased general understanding of international affairs and global issues.
- 44% (8/18) of students who have completed the INST exit survey reported that they “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the major increased appreciation of global cultures.
- 22% (4/18) of students who have completed the INST exit survey reported that they “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the major increased understanding of global economics.
- 33% (6/18) of students who have completed the INST exit survey reported that they “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the major increased familiarity with world geography.
- 56% (10/18) of students who have completed the INST exit survey reported that they “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the major increased knowledge of world history.
- 33% (6/18) of students who have completed the INST exit survey reported that they “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the major increased understanding of global politics.

• **Course Grades and Student GPA**

- The average student GPA for all International Studies majors with at least 12 hours of credit is 3.44 in both the Fall 2021 and Spring 2022 semesters was 3.44. The average student GPA for all Global Studies minors was 3.65 in Fall 2021 and 3.61 in Spring 2022.
- Below are the course grades for INST 2813 Introduction to International and Global Studies and INST 4003 International Studies Seminar in the 2021-2022 academic year.

Semester	Course Section	Instructor	Enrollment	Course grade avg.
Fall 2021	INST 2813-001	Spencer Allen	34	3.406
Fall 2021	INST 2813-002	Donald Kelley	80	3.714
Fall 2021	INST 2813H	Jared Phillips	13	4.000
Spring 2022	INST 2813-001	Spencer Allen	45	2.933
Spring 2022	INST 2813-001	Donald Kelley	20	3.750

Fall 2021	INST 4003-004	Adam/Peredo	23	2.565
Fall 2021	INST 4913-001	Adam/Peredo	2	1.000
Spring 2022	INST 4003-002	Spencer Allen	6	4.000
Spring 2022	INST 4003H-002	Spencer Allen	4	4.000
Spring 2022	INST 4003-003	Thomas Adam	4	2.750
Spring 2022	INST 4003H-003	Thomas Adam	4	4.000
Spring 2022	PLSC 4913-001	Thomas Adam	8	1.375
Spring 2022	PLSC 4913H-001	Thomas Adam	1	4.000

2. The following methods are used to assess student learning outcome 2 regarding knowledge of a world region:
 - INST students are required to complete 3-12 hours of approved Area Studies courses depending on the specific degree program under consideration. The Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences is currently home to five autonomous area studies programs, including African and African American Studies (AAST), Asian Studies (AIST), European Studies (EUST), Latin American Studies (LAST), and Middle East Studies (MEST). All INST majors are required to complete their area studies requirements from a list of courses approved by their choice of one of the five programs. Although the Area Studies programs do not offer a standalone major, each program offers a dependent major and a minor. 11 current INST majors are studying towards a double major in an area studies program.
 - In the spring 2022 exit survey, 18 students responded to a question about their selected area studies courses. The distribution of students occurred as follows: LAST (6), European Studies (6), MEST (3), and AIST (3).

3. The following methods are used to assess student learning objective 5 regarding language competency:

- **Advanced Language Courses**

The International Studies major and the Global Studies minor require that students complete at least six and three credit hours of 3000-level or higher instruction in a modern world language, respectively. All students graduating with either an INST major or a GLST minor have fulfilled the above requirements. No exemption was granted in 2021-2022.

- **Exit Survey**

16 students responded to a question about their language study choices in the spring 2022 INST exit survey. The distribution of the answers is as follows:

Chinese	Spanish	Italian	Russian	Other
6 (37.5%)	6 (37.5%)	2 (12.5%)	2 (12.5%)	0 (%)

- In the same exit survey, students self-reported their perceived proficiency in their primary foreign language and the results are as follows:

Competency	Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced
How would you rate your spoken proficiency?	6 (37.5%)	6 (37.5%)	4 (25%)
How would you rate your reading proficiency?	4 (25%)	4 (25%)	8 (50%)
How would you rate your written proficiency?	4 (25%)	8 (50%)	4 (25%)

4. Experiential Learning (indirect measure for assessing learning objectives 1-5):

- *Study abroad:*

- Data for student participation in study abroad programs are not available for the entire year. Nevertheless, based on the number of study abroad pre-approval requests submitted to the Study Abroad Digital International Course Equivalency system, 16 students have applied to transfer credit to their INST major or GLST minor from study abroad experiences since March 2022, with 11 of these students receiving approval for their requests. These data point to continued student interests in study abroad programs despite the continuing negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- *Internships:*

- Of 18 students who have completed the INST exit survey in Spring 2022, 9 (50%) responded that they had participated in an internship during their undergraduate study. Most of these internships took place either on campus or in the local region.
- *Undergraduate Research:*
 - 8 Honors INST majors completed honors theses in the 2021-2022 academic year.
 - 9 of the 18 students who have completed the 2022 INST exit survey reported that they have had the opportunity to participate in faculty research, publications or conference presentations while studying toward an INST degree at the University.
- *Service Learning and Volunteer Activities:*
 - 9 of the 18 students (50%) who have completed the 2022 INST exit survey reported that they had participated in volunteer activities while studying toward an INST degree, while 5 of the respondents (25%) indicated that they had participated in service-learning activities.

Analysis of Assessment Results

The above assessment suggests several areas for improvement. Importantly, while student satisfaction with the overall INST curriculum is high, there is considerable variation in the level of satisfaction with the curriculum in specific subject areas, with global economics receiving the lowest ranking, followed by global geography and global politics. The low level of satisfaction with the economics offerings is consistent with the pattern shown in previous INST assessment reports. This underscores the importance for us to revisit our program requirements for economics to potentially consider increasing the number of economics classes required for INST majors and minors.

Another pattern that is consistent with that shown in previous reports is the even distribution of student interests in world regions. INST students seem to have indicated a slight preference for Latin America and Europe. We will continue to monitor the distribution of student preferences for world geographic regions and make adjustment to our curriculum and recruitment strategies where necessary.

An area that the program has done relatively well is the research opportunities it offered to INST students. A good percentage of our students have had experience with undergraduate research. As well, the number of students who have completed honors INST theses is on par with previous years. We will continue to build on our strength in this area in the future (see detailed plan in the following section). In addition, the number of students participating in internship programs is generally satisfactory. This indicates that the creation of an internship class supervised by an INST faculty member may have helped to make internships more accessible to students.

The above data further shows that the average GPA for INST majors and GLST minors are relatively high, suggesting that students are generally well prepared for rigorous upper-level work. However, course grades for INST 2813 and INST 4003 vary, with course grades in some of the INST 4003 sections being rather low. We are not sure if this represents a general pattern

but would like to see the average course grade for the capstone seminar to increase to at least 3.00 in the future.

Any changes to degree/certificate planned or made on the basis of the assessment and analysis.

- Given the relatively low level of student satisfaction with the degree to which the program has helped to improve their understanding of international economics, and, to some extent, global geography and politics, we will consider adding a field distribution requirement for both the major and the minor so that students will need to complete a certain number of hours in economics or political science courses in order to fulfill the requirements for their degree plan.
- The above assessment data indicate that the program has done relatively well providing students with research opportunities. We would like to continue to strengthen this aspect of the program. Currently we have plans to hold an undergraduate research workshop that will be open to all INST students in Spring 2023 in which students will have the opportunity to receive feedback from faculty members from both INST and other units.
- INST has submitted a course change proposal to create a new capstone seminar (INST) to allow the instructor to provide more feedback to students on their written assignments. As a result, the original capstone seminar (INST 4003) will now become special topics class. This change is intended to ensure the quality of the student research experience. INST faculty members are in the process of redesigning the rubric for assessing capstone seminar essays to more effectively measure learning objectives 1, 3, and 4.
- While student participation in study abroad programs generally seem satisfactory, we will explore ways to further incentivize participation in such programs. For example, we can better publicize study abroad opportunities and connect students with organizations offering scholarships for study abroad.
- Student participation in internships has grown steadily since the program appointed a faculty member to oversee the internship program. While student participation in internship programs has been affected by the pandemic, with more internships being conducted virtually, the numbers have remained healthy so far. We will continue to monitor the situation to ensure that the program is able to effectively facilitate student interests in internships.
- INST plans to further improve the methods of assessment to collect more detailed data about student participation in service learning, volunteer, and other extra-curricular activities.