

# International and Global Studies (INST) Program Assessment Report 2022-2023

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## INST Program Goals and Learning Outcomes

The International and Global Studies (INST) program prepares our students for globally minded careers and helps them to become engaged global citizens. There are several student-centered goals for the program:

1. **Global Focus** We lead students to develop a broad understanding of the world and prepare them to think, read, and write critically about the interactions between nations, between non-state actors, and through explorations of local and regional issues with global scope.
2. **Interdisciplinary Focus** We are grounded in interdisciplinary teaching. Overall, we aim to teach students how different academic disciplines work together to study foreign affairs, changing networks in the neoliberal world order, global ecologies and economies, and the interactions of peoples across political boundaries.
3. **Area Studies Focus** Along with our three concentrations, students are encouraged to develop and deepen their knowledge of areas beyond the United States. We actively collaborate with Area Studies programs such as African and African American Studies (AAST), Asian Studies (AIST), Latin American and Latino Studies (LALS), and Middle East Studies (MEST) to highlight diverse offerings and co-host events and speakers with these programs.
4. **Transcultural Focus** We cultivate students' ability to apply their knowledge and skills to communicate, interact, and cooperate in meaningful ways with people from diverse backgrounds, cultures, faiths, linguistic groups, and nationalities. Overall, we foster an inclusive and ecumenical environment both inside and outside of the classroom.

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

*Outcome 1: Interdisciplinary Knowledge.* Demonstrate broad, interdisciplinary understanding of international cultures, geographies, histories, politics, economics, and societies.

*Outcome 2: Area Studies Knowledge.* Develop deep understanding of a selected world region (i.e., Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, or Middle East).

*Outcome 3: Research Skills.* Demonstrate the ability to think critically and to effectively analyze and research global issues.

*Outcome 4: Communication Skills.* Develop effective written and oral communications skills suitable for describing and interpreting aspects of global affairs and conveying them to both specialists and non-specialists.

*Outcome 5: Language Competency.* Become functionally competent in speaking, reading, and writing at least one modern world language other than English.

### Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

INST uses a combination of direct and indirect methods, including 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 six sections of INST 2813 at the Fayetteville campus in the 2022-2023 academic year, with a total enrollment of 194 students, including 104 students in Fall 2022 and 90 students in Spring 2023. This represents a slight increase from the total enrollment number (179 students) in the 2021-2022 academic year. Additionally, we offered two sections of INST 2813 at the UA Rome Center (15 students) and one Honor’s section in Fall 2022 (12 students). The following table provides a breakdown of student enrollment in INST 2813 during the past year.

Fall 2022	
Introduction to International Relations and Global Studies	Enrolled
INST 2813-001	25
INST 2813-002	49
INST 2813-003	30
INST 2813-601 (Rome Center)	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>
Honors Introduction to International Relations and Global Studies	
INST 2813H-001	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>
Spring 2023	
Introduction to International Relations and Global Studies	Enrolled
INST 2813-001	15
INST 2813-002	19
INST 2813-003	27
INST 2813-004	19
INST 2813-601 (Rome Center)	7
INST 2813-901 (Online)	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>

- INST 4003/INST 4003H Special Topics in International Studies**  
 INST offered five sections of INST 4003 Special Topics in International Studies in the 2022-2023 academic year. Total student enrollment in these sections (46) is roughly comparable to that in 2021-2022 (40). We additionally taught a total of 19 students in the Honor's sections of INST 4003.

Fall 2022	
<b>INST 4003 -Special Topics in International and Global Studies</b>	
INST 4003-001 The Bible and The Quran	8
INST 4003-002 Globalization/Antiglobalization	16
INST 4003-004 Methodology Research & Design	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>INST 4003H -Honors Special Topics in International and Global Studies</b>	
INST 4003H-00 Methodology Research & Design	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>

Spring 2023	
<b>INST 4003 -Special Topics in International and Global Studies</b>	
INST 4003-002 Methodology Research & Design	7
INST 4003-003 Rise of Monotheism	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>INST 4003H- Honors Special Topics in International and Global Studies</b>	
INST 4003H-002 Methodology Research & Design	2
INST 4003H-003 Rise of Monotheism	9
INST 4003H-004 Nonprofits and Philanthropy	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>

- INST 4913/INST 4913H International Studies Seminar**  
 In Fall 2022, INST introduced INST 4913/INST 4913 (International Studies Seminar) and taught a total of 11 students in this course in 2022-2023. This course provides students with a more intense learning experience through smaller class sizes. Student enrollment in this course was somewhat low in the past year, likely because many students are not yet aware of new course.
- Honors theses**  
 Eight INST students successfully completed honors theses by the end of Spring 2023. Except for one student, all of them earned either *summa cum laude* or *magna cum laude* honors. Two students received SURF fellowships to support their research, while three were Honor's College grant winners.

- **INST Exit Survey**

In the INST exit survey administered in Spring 2023, nine students answered questions about the degree to which the INST major or minor has helped to increase their understanding of various aspects of international affairs. Answers to this question were scored on a scale of “1” to “4,” with “1” indicating “not at all” and 4 indicating “a great deal.” The average score of student responses to the above questions is as follows:

Question	Score
Increased my general understanding of international affairs and global issues	3
increased appreciation of global cultures	3.14
increased understanding of global economics	2.71
increased familiarity with world geography	3.14
increased knowledge of world history	3
increased understanding of global politics	3

2. The following methods are used to assess student learning outcome 2 regarding knowledge of a world region:

- INST students are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a major world region by completing 3-12 hours of approved courses in one of the Area Studies programs housed in the Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences, including African and African American Studies (AAST), Asian Studies (AIST), Latin American and Latino Studies (LALS), and Middle East Studies (MEST). The specific number of such courses needed to complete the major or minor varies depending on the degree program under consideration.
- In the spring 2023 exit survey, three students reported having taken courses in European Studies and Latin American and Latino Studies to fulfill this requirement, respectively, followed by African and African American Studies (1) and Middle East Studies (1). Three (or about one-third) of the students reported that they have either graduated or will graduate with a degree in an Area Studies program, all in LALS.

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

- **Advanced Language Courses**

All INST majors and GLST minors are required to complete at least six and three credit hours of language instruction in a world language at the 3000-level or higher, respectively. All students graduating with either an INST major or a GLST minor in 2022-2023 have fulfilled the above requirements.

- **Exit Survey**

In the Spring 2023 exit survey, students responded to a question about the world language they primarily studied to fulfill the language requirements for their major or minor. Specifically, four students reported Spanish as their primary language of study, followed by French (4), and German (1). The fact that no student reported studying a non-European language is somewhat concerning and suggests the need to encourage the study of a wider range of world languages. In the future we will coordinate with MEST and AIST to see what we can do to help our students access non-European languages from early on in their degree programs.

In the same exit survey, students self-reported their perceived proficiency in their primary foreign language. Responses to this question were recorded on a scale of “1” to “3,” ranging from “beginner” (1) to “advanced” (3). The average score for spoken, reading, and written proficiency was 2, 2.22, and 1.875, respectively. The lower score for perceived written proficiency indicates the importance of further improving students’ ability to write comfortably using a foreign language.

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

- *Study abroad:* According to the Study Abroad Digital International Course Equivalency system, 17 students applied credits earned in a study abroad program to their INST major or GLST minor in the 2022-2023 academic year, with 10 students receiving approval for their requests. These numbers are very similar to those from last year, suggesting that student interests in study abroad programs have remained somewhat steady as the pandemic became endemic, but that more could be done to encourage student participation in study abroad programs.

- *Internships:* Six INST students were enrolled in INST 300V Internship in International Studies in 2022-2023. These students interned at organizations such as Canopy NWA, University of Arkansas Terrorism Center, Post Families Wines, and Al Otro Lado.

- *Undergraduate Research:*

8 INST majors completed honors theses in the 2022-2023 academic year, with 5 of them graduating with Summa Cum Laude, 2 with Magna Cum Laude, and 1 with Cum Laude.

INST held an Undergraduate Research Workshop in Spring 2023. Three INST students presented their research in front of a panel of faculty experts and received valuable feedback on their thesis projects.

Three out of the eight students who completed the 2023 INST exit survey reported that they had the opportunity to participate in faculty research, publications or conference presentations while studying toward an INST degree at the University. All reported that these experiences have helped to improve their understanding of international affairs to a great extent.

- *Service Learning and Volunteer Activities:*

Three of the eight students who have completed the 2023 INST exit survey reported that they had participated in volunteer activities while studying toward an INST degree, while three of the respondents indicated that they had participated in service-learning activities.

### **Analysis of Assessment Results**

The above data suggests that enrollment in INST classes has remained steady in the past year. Students are exposed to the interdisciplinary studies of global issues and diverse approaches to understanding the political, economic, cultural, and social characteristics of the international environment through the gateway course, capstone seminar, and written assignments. In addition, all INST graduating seniors have completed the language as well as area studies requirements for the major or minor. A reasonable number of students have acquired experiential learning experience through study abroad, internships, or service-learning opportunities. Overall, the data indicates that the program has generally done a good job in teaching the knowledge, skills, and tools that students need to better understand today's dynamics international context for nations and their citizens.

While we are on target to achieve our main program goals, there remain areas for improvement. Consistent with the patterns shown in previous assessments, students are less satisfied with the degree to which the major or minor has helped to increase their understanding of global economics compared to other areas of global affairs. We have tried to increase our offerings of courses related to the global economy, for example, we cross-listed PSLC 4833 (International Political Economy) with a special topics section of INST in the past year. We will continue to explore options for increasing the number of economics offerings in our curriculum going forward.

Furthermore, while all INST students have gained some exposure to area studies during their course of study, we are continuing to see more student interests in European Studies and Latin American and Latino Studies. Students are less likely to be drawn to other world regions, such as Africa, the Middle East, or Asia. The fact that none of the students who have completed the exit survey indicates that they have taken courses in Asian Studies (AIST) to satisfy their area studies requirements is somewhat concerning. We have already started a conversation about revamping our curriculum, especially the concentration in the Global South, as detailed in the following section.

As outlined in the 2021-2022 INST assessment report, the program has generally done well in providing our students with research opportunities, as indicated by the number of students completing a major research assignment or an Honor's thesis. We continue to strive to enhance students' research experience by introducing an INST Undergraduate Research Workshop in Spring 2023. We will capitalize on the success of the workshop in 2023, and repeat the workshop in March 2024.

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

- In view of the relatively low level of student satisfaction with the degree to which the program has helped to improve their understanding of the global economy, we plan to strengthen this aspect of the program. As mentioned above, we cross-listed PLSC 4833 International Political Economy with INST 4003 Special Topics. We will consider cross-listing more courses with an economics focus such as Emerging Markets or Development Economics in the future. Another possibility is to add a field distribution requirement to ensure that students complete a certain number of social sciences, including economics courses, in addition to humanities courses in order to fulfill the requirements of their degree plan. Additionally, in spring 2023, we submitted a program change proposal to create a new concentration in Global Commerce and Development. If approved, this concentration should provide opportunities for students with an interest in this area to further explore the dynamics and processes of the global economy and development and increase content related to the global economy in the curriculum.
- The data presented here suggests that fewer INST students study world regions outside of Europe. Coupled with recent personnel changes which would increase the difficulty for us to offer the required course for the Global South concentration (INST 3503 Issues in the Global South) on a regular basis, this points to the need for us to potentially revisit the Global South Concentration. Specifically, we are considering revamping the Global South concentration to a concentration that focuses on global development and sustainability. This will help to create a specialized track for the growing number of students who are interested in development issues. Students will be required to complete a certain number of courses from the approved catalog of courses in African and African American Studies, Latin American and Latino Studies, Middle East Studies, or Asia Studies. This change, if implemented, will not only allow students to demonstrate competency in global development issues, but will also help to provide opportunities for them to develop in-depth knowledge of a particular world region, especially as it relates to development work. Overall, this plan also aligns more closely with the teaching and research specialties of our core faculty.
- To further enhance students' research experience, we will continue to hold the Undergraduate Research Workshop in the next academic year. We also have plans to invite students from other nearby campuses both in Arkansas and in the surrounding states to participate in the workshop. This should provide opportunities for students to network with their peers at other institutions and help to increase the visibility and impact of the workshop.
- The number of INST students participating in study abroad programs has remained relatively steady. However, we would like to see even more students studying abroad through either faculty-led programs or those organized by third parties. In Spring 2023, Dr. Hammond is leading a faculty-led study abroad program to Japan with Dr. Kim Sexton. She is also planning a faculty-led study abroad program with Dr. Callabreta-Sadger to Italy and Germany about the history of Fascism in 2025. Beyond this, we have

been working with the Office of Study Abroad over the past year to create a list of curated programs to incentivize student participation in study abroad by pairing them with selected scholarship opportunities. We will continue to advertise these programs aggressively by holding regular information sessions about study abroad programs and widely distributing promotional materials. Overall, we have a very good working relationship with the Study Abroad office and maintain regular contact with them.

- Student participation in internship programs has been negatively impacted by the pandemic. INST assigned a faculty member to supervise internships prior to the pandemic, but this was no longer justified in view of the relative decline of internship participation. Currently we are considering compiling and distributing a list of internship programs for students to better identify potential internship programs.