

# **International Studies Assessment Plan**

## **I. Rationale for the International Studies Program**

The purpose of International Studies is to provide an interdisciplinary program designed to give students 1) both general and specialized knowledge of the world as an interconnected global system, 2) second language skills, and 3) significant international experience. The particular combination of interdisciplinary education (transcending any limits placed by staying within a particular disciplinary boundary), language learning beyond one's native language, and the experiential component make a unique contribution to the creation of a "global citizen," thereby meeting several of the goals in the Webster University Mission Statement.

We are committed to interdisciplinarity in the pursuit of international knowledge. Our curriculum investigates all aspects of the human condition from the international perspective. We believe the broadness of such an approach prepares the student for informed involvement in the global system.

## **II. Learning Goals for the International Studies major**

The learning goals for the IS major includes serious engagement in a participatory program in which the student:

- Attains a general awareness of the globe as a system
- Gains a consciousness of the issues that face us internationally
- Obtains knowledge of other cultural forms outside one's natal experience
- Masters (a) language(s) other than one's native language
- Participates in a program of study or internship abroad that becomes the initial experience to which the academic knowledge and language are applied
- Selects an emphasis for the last 12 credits of the major in which these principles are applied in a specific disciplinary or professional area of study

## **III. Learning Outcomes:**

### **1. What do students know? Each IS major will be able to:**

Define the ways an interdisciplinary approach to International Studies differs from specific disciplinary approaches

Identify major regions of the globe in geopolitical, environmental and geographical terms

Describe the ways history, culture, language, social organization and political perspectives influence the directions of global regions and the international system as a whole

Identify and explain global and regional conflicts, their genesis, and their likely outcomes

**2. How do students apply knowledge? Each IS major will be able to:**

Categorize economic and political systems as to their approaches to solving international problems

Compare the effectiveness of different national and international approaches to meeting human needs

Construct a framework to explain the various forces acting upon the global community

Formulate hypotheses explicating the directions of human society as a global system

**3. In what ways do students demonstrate their knowledge? Each IS major will be able to:**

Apply different theories to explain global problems and conflicts

Demonstrate an ability to apply different theories to emerging global issues

These outcomes will be demonstrated by students in the papers and assignments collected in their portfolios, described in part 3 below.

**IV. Assessment measures:**

A) Throughout the program, we will collect assignments for a portfolio to be stored in the Center for International Education. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the major, each student, in consultation with professors, will submit one assignment from each core course and selected advanced courses for inclusion in the ongoing portfolio. These will be available for review. In the spring semester biannually, a selection of portfolios will be reviewed by the members of the International Studies Committee. In the alternate year, the committee will examine what we learned about the program from student portfolios and make changes accordingly.

B) As part of the 4500 capstone, each student shall:

1) respond to a set of questions about the program which will be used to evaluate whether we are delivering the skills, information and attitudes the program is

intended to deliver. In this form, the student evaluates the program, both by course and overall as to its success from her or his perspective.

2) present her or his research to their peers in the 4500 course as well as to the members of the ISC and other interested observers. The student presenters will be evaluated by the professor supervising the course with suggestions from ISC observers, who will also evaluate the presentation and give their feedback directly to the responsible professor. This is a direct method of assessing the learning outcomes for graduating students.

C. the outcomes for the language requirement and the study abroad/internship components will be determined and monitored by the International Languages and Cultures Department and the Study Abroad Office.