

February 10, 2014

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE International Studies Program

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A. *brief description and analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the current operation of the program.*

Since the beginning of the International Studies Program (ISP) in 2003, the undergraduate major has occupied an important position in the undergraduate curriculum at U.C. San Diego and has enjoyed tremendous growth. Proposed by an International Studies Advisory made up of faculty from Political Science, Anthropology, Sociology, Literature, Economics, History, Linguistics, the Graduate School of International Relations and Pacific Studies, and the Provost of Eleanor Roosevelt College, the International Studies Program brought together resources across campus departments to construct a coherent major that would expose undergraduates to broad international issues that increasingly impact all peoples in the modern world. Following a move to the global and transnational by humanities and social science departments at the end of the millennium, ISP provides undergraduates a means of integrating knowledge about the world as a global system, disciplinary perspectives and analytical approaches, with an historical and contemporary, regional, and thematic grounding.

The undergraduate program requires 2 introductory courses in common, INTL 101 *Culture and Society in International Perspective*, and INTL 102 *Economics, Politics and International Change*, and a “capstone” course normally taken during the senior year and requiring a major research paper written during INTL 190 *Seminar in International Studies*. Students who qualify may do the capstone course in a 2-quarter Honors sequence, INTL 190H and INTL 196H. Students take the bulk of their courses in one of 7 disciplines that make up the IS- majors: IS-Anthropology, IS-Economics, IS-History, IS- Linguistics, IS-Literature, IS-Political Science, and IS-Sociology. A large majority of IS majors choose the Economics or Political Science track and over half of majors come from Eleanor Roosevelt College. Some ideas about how to attract majors to the other tracks and residential college students will be discussed in the next section. Students may also enroll in the 5-year BA/MIA degree in 2 flavors, IS-Political Science/Economics and IS-Economics/Political Science.

ISP successfully launched the major in 2003, starting with 109 students, and growing substantially to 934 declared majors by 2010. Following declining enrollments in other Social Science departments and programs, ISP had 620 majors in 2012 and this has risen to 700 in 2013. Current levels of enrollment have relieved some of the pressure that the 2 advising staff felt previously.

Data provided by Academic Affairs and the College Deans of Advising show that undergraduate majors generally approve of almost all aspects of ISP and at levels or above the relevant UC San Diego averages elsewhere on campus. UCUES data from September 2013 shows International Studies majors provided “satisfied” answers to most questions about the program and curriculum in the 80-89 percentile, and in most questions a few percentage points higher than for “all other Social Sciences”. A few notable responses: 94.2% satisfied with “quality of faculty instruction” compared to 89.9% for all other Social Sciences; “satisfying academic experience”, 85.5% to 80.7%. International Studies students were over twice as likely to want to study abroad as other Social Science majors, and this desire supports actual participation on Education Abroad programs at 46% for freshman entrants and 23% for transfer students. The corresponding UCSD averages are far lower.

On the other hand, 53.6% of IS majors agreed that their degree prepared them for graduate or professional school, compared with 61.7% of the other Social Science majors. A small number (62) reported that they were in graduate programs, those students felt equally or better prepared for their course of study than those from other majors. As the responses from the Deans of Advising survey suggest, IS draws many students who look for a business background with an international economics or policy component, since UCSD does not have a Business major.

Like all UCSD undergraduate programs, teaching support comes from faculty who voluntarily affiliate and a relatively small number of dedicated FTEs hired to support ISP. These lines are located in departments, not in ISP, but each owes 2 courses per year to the program. Faculty hired in association with Political Science (3), Economics (2), and History (1), together provide 12 courses per year for ISP. Because these faculty searches concluded before CEP (now EPC) had approved the International Studies Program, departmental MOUs did not promise courses each year from a particular professor, but rather set up a constant negotiation between the Program Director and each department as to which course will be covered, INTL 101, INTL 102, or one of the INTL 190s. Other programs such as Urban Studies and Planning and Critical Gender Studies have MOUs that cover courses from the specific faculty hires through joint FTEs; when the faculty cannot teach in a given year another agreed upon instructor provides the required course instruction. Since each year ISP needs to offer 3-4 INTL 101 and INTL 102 courses, and about 16 INTL 190 sections, the particular circumstance of the agreements between ISP and the home departments makes the Director’s task of assuring faculty coverage less predictable and more difficult. Given the current situation, the review committee recommends that the Director and Faculty Advisory Committee, with funding support from the Dean of IR/PS, identify modest incentives to help recruit faculty, and perhaps arrange multi-year agreements with departments.

*B. Analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum.*

Since this is the first campus review of ISP since its inception, the committee notes that the concept of the ISP curriculum as originally proposed to CEP and implemented has proven very successful. Strong student participation and general satisfaction with the major, a broadly representative faculty advisory committee, expert advising and a

capacious and flexible curriculum underscore the strength of the concept, and ISP has provided a place in the UCSD undergraduate curriculum to emphasize scholarly interest in the international across a number of disciplines and the Divisions of Art & Humanities and Social Sciences. In its meetings, the review committee found impressive dedication and enthusiasm from both the members of the Faculty Advisory Committee, and from the impressive number of affiliated faculty who attended. ISP has added a minor since the inception of the major in 2003. Although the number of minors has been modest, about 40 minors per year at last count, the limiting factor may be the 4 quarter language requirement. Another important addition to ISP is the BA/MIA, established in 2006 in partnership with International Relations and Pacific Studies (IR/PS). The course of study combines the 4-year IS degree with an emphasis in Economics or Political Science with a 5<sup>th</sup> year of graduate studies leading to a MIA. Although the BA/MIA component is small, 9 students having entered in fall 2013 to make up a cohort of 14, the caliber of students compares well with the students recruited into the 2-year MPIA degree.

The review committee notes that the effectiveness of the IS curriculum depends upon the strength of the INTL 101 and 102 core courses, a coherent set of departmental offerings that correspond to each of the IS- tracks, and the capstone research course INTL 190. We have identified issues for consideration at each segment of the curriculum.

Apart from the issues of staffing of the INTL 101 and 102 courses, a review of the course descriptions and syllabi provided yield very different faculty approaches to the core courses offered. Students who attended the meeting with the review committee understood these differences in terms of a perspective on either the social-cultural or economic-political view of international studies tied closely to a particular department. Some students found it difficult to connect the approach taken in the core course to subsequent courses taken in other disciplines, a sentiment that underscores the importance of the core sequence to orient undergraduates toward their future coursework. The review committee recommends periodic discussions among the INTL 101 and 102 instructors in order to discuss common understandings about how to frame each course, and to identify the skills and context for connecting to courses offered by departments for their corresponding IS track.

A slightly different issue comes from the recruitment of TAs for the 101 and 102 courses from the department of the faculty instructor. Evaluations and student conversation with the review committee rate TAs highly, in general, but TA recruitment reinforces the disciplinary stance of the course, both from the point of view of undergraduates and their graduate student teaching assistants. None of the TAs who met with the review committee knew about the role that the core course played in the IS major, or how it might make connections to subsequent coursework. The TAs did not have a sense of how other TAs who had taught in INTL 101 and 102 dealt with similar teaching situations. Structured meetings or workshops that inform TAs about the IS majors and takes advantage of peer training and experience would help provide graduate students with useful resources that can make the core sequence more effective for IS majors.

The review committee discussed the sizeable gap that IS majors experience between the core sequence and the capstone experience gained in an INTL 190, during which they

choose from course offerings in the department that correspond to their IS track. Originally, participating departments selected the courses included for each IS major in consultation with ISP. Ten years later, it is unclear how or how often revisions are made by departments for each of the ISP tracks. We recommend a mechanism that periodically reviews the departmental courses included in each track in consultation with the ISP Faculty Advisory Committee and/or Director, one that evaluates how the included courses will likely be utilized by IS students as they progress from the core courses to the capstone course in the major.

Another way to support the coherence of the IS major tracks would be to expand and strengthen the feeling of community among undergraduates. ISP has been moving in this direction already, beginning a newsletter, organizing and promoting internships and study abroad opportunities, as well as IS-related campus colloquia and workshops. Undergraduates reported a good sense of community, but pointed out that this was generally among the bulk of IS majors that came from Eleanor Roosevelt College (ERC). They mentioned recent programs with the International House and events put on by the International Affairs Group, and the International Journal, but all of these also work most closely with ERC. ISP needs to think about ways to encourage undergraduate participation from the other residential colleges, both in terms of recruitment to the major and minor, but especially in ISP-related events after declaring the major. The ISP Director, Faculty Advisory Committee, and undergraduates interviewed, all expressed interest in creating a student organized IS club that would help in these areas.

Discussions with the ISP affiliated faculty identified a group of intertwined issues that confront INTL 190 instructors. Although faculty teaching INTL 190 generally find the experience rewarding, many students begin the quarter-long research process unprepared to choose a topic, conduct research, and write an extended final paper. Compressing all of the skills and techniques into a 10-week course for those without adequate training or experience proves extremely difficult. Affiliated Faculty discussed a number of possible changes that might address these concerns, including: creating a 2 quarter sequence, the first quarter teaching for research and writing skills and producing a rough draft and the second quarter for revising; creating a stand alone pre-capstone course to impart research and writing skills, and topic selection before the INTL 190; and creating sections within the INTL 190 seminar with additionally trained TAs to work 1-on-1 to aid student development. The review committee encourages the Faculty Advisory Committee to consider each of these ideas. In the interim, the review committee recommends that all faculty teaching an INTL 190, 190H or 196H should meet together before the beginning of each academic year to discuss, generate, and share best practices for structuring a 10-week research seminar given the skills of current ISP majors. These meetings would also help promote a feeling of belonging to a larger academic enterprise, a connection that some affiliated faculty found lacking.

*C. An analysis of strengths and weaknesses of the program in the context of campus and University policies*

The review committee notes that the IS degrees in Anthropology, History, Linguistics, Literature, and to a lesser extent Sociology, are utilized by undergraduates far less than

those in Economics and Political Science. As a part of a coordinated strategy to broaden interest in the less-utilized degrees in ISP, and to strengthen the Humanities component of the ISP curriculum, the review committee strongly recommends that the campus provide a joint FTE with ISP and housed in either History or Literature. We further recommend that the MOU agreed upon between ISP and the department that receives the line guarantee two courses to ISP ordinarily taught by the faculty hired through the joint search.

The ISP Director, Faculty Advisory Committee, and affiliated faculty all reported that chairs of Social Science departments had been told during Fall quarter something to the effect that they should exercise their prerogative to discourage faculty from teaching courses with large enrollments outside of the department. The review committee was unable to clarify the situation, but needless to say, such a suggestion makes it extremely difficult for the ISP Director to assemble the faculty needed to teach the core INTL 101 and INTL 102 lecture courses. Campus policies involving teaching responsibilities to programs such as ISP need to be consistent and well publicized.

ISP Faculty and teaching assistants instructing in the INTL 101 and INTL 102 courses also have experienced an increase in international students with significant problems with writing assignments in English, and in some cases difficulty understanding the lectures and reading materials. All concerned feel that this set of problems must be solved at the campus level. In admitting an increasing number of International students, UCSD has the responsibility to ensure that they succeed by providing formal programs to prepare International students for the academic demands at UCSD, as well as resources to help them with supplementary skills each quarter. Further, due to its international focus, the IS major likely attracts a disproportionate number of international students. At this time, neither faculty nor TAs have the requisite ESL/ELL skills to mount workshops or specialized instruction to address the language issues that they encounter. ISP will need to develop a partnership with the Writing Center, International Center, or another facility with the expertise to develop appropriate programs, and funding must be made available to do so. For ISP, this problem is following some International Students into their capstone INTL 190 seminar.

Two recent changes to ISP appear to have proved positive, on the whole. Recent budgetary concerns prompted ISP to move to the School of International Relations and Pacific Studies during the 2011-12 academic year. ISP has kept its autonomy after the move and benefitted synergistically from affinity and coordination.

Responding to calls to streamline the ISP curriculum and reduce time to degree, ISP has removed a "Secondary Track" in a discipline other than their "Primary Track" (major). Instead of 5 upper division courses, students now take 3 upper division, non-language courses from a wider list of "Interdisciplinary Electives". Since the change took effect in the Fall of 2013, it is too early for the review committee to evaluate except to note that it should make the program more attractive to transfer students. The Director and Faculty Advisory Committee should continue to evaluate these changes for their impact on time to degree and student satisfaction with the intellectual rigor of the major.

D. *Recommendations for alleviating any shortcomings suggested by the description and analysis*

Structural Issues:

- 1) ISP majors overwhelmingly select the IS-Economics and IS-Political Science tracks and come from Eleanor Roosevelt College. ISP should work to attract majors to the IS major tracks other than Economics and Political Science and students from residential colleges other than Eleanor Roosevelt. Support for undergraduates to establish an IS Club might be part of a strategy to broaden student interest in ISP.
- 2) ISP has a difficult time recruiting faculty to teach the required INTL 101 and 102 courses, and INTL 190 sections. The ISP Director and Faculty Advisory Committee, with funding support from the Dean of IR/PS, should identify modest incentives to help recruit faculty, and perhaps arrange multi-year agreements with departments.
- 3) In order to provide assistance to ISP's efforts to engage faculty and broaden student participation, the program should request and receive an FTE for a joint hire in Literature or History.
- 4) Unlike existing FTEs in ISP, an MOU with the hiring department should promise two courses each year from the specific faculty hired with the new FTE, with the department committed to supply faculty for required courses when the original faculty is on leave.

Curricular Issues:

- 5) In order to assure coherence in the core INTL 101 and 102 courses, ISP should organize periodic discussions among instructors to discuss common understandings about how to frame each course, and to identify the skills and context for connecting to courses offered by departments. A similar meeting before each academic year will allow the INTL 190 and 190/196H instructors to discuss, generate, and share best practices for structuring the current 10-week research seminar given the skills of current ISP majors, and will help promote a feeling of belonging to a larger academic enterprise.
- 6) Teaching Assistants for INTL 101 and INTL 102 courses need regular training to develop and communicate skills and experience among successive instructors and to provide useful resources that can make the core sequence more effective for IS majors.
- 7) Faculty Advisory Committee should be charged to address the issues associated with teaching INTL 190 in one quarter by considering changes including: creating a 2 quarter sequence, the first quarter teaching for research and writing skills and producing a rough draft and the second quarter for revising; creating a stand alone pre-capstone course to impart research and writing skills, and topic selection before the INTL 190; and creating sections within the INTL 190 seminar with additionally trained TAs to work 1-on-1 to aid student development.
- 8) Establish a mechanism that periodically reviews the departmental courses included in each IS major track in consultation with the ISP Faculty Advisory

Committee and/or Director in order to evaluate how the included courses will likely be utilized by IS students as they progress from the core courses to the capstone course in the major.

Other issues:

- 9) Given reports of departmental chairs advised to discourage faculty from teaching courses with large enrollments outside of the department, campus policies involving teaching responsibilities to programs such as ISP need to be consistent and well publicized.
- 10) In order to support an increase in students with significant problems with writing assignments in English, and in some cases difficulty understanding the lectures and reading materials, ISP will need to develop a partnerships with the Writing Center, International Center, or another facility with the expertise to develop appropriate programs. Funding by the campus must be made available to facilitate such partnerships.
- 11) The Director and Faculty Advisory Committee should continue to evaluate the curricular recent changes that substituted 3 upper division, non-language courses from a list of “Interdisciplinary Electives” for the “Secondary Track”, to assess their impact on time to degree and student satisfaction with the intellectual content of the major.

July 24, 2014

**PROFESSOR CLARK GIBSON, Director**  
**International Studies Program**

SUBJECT: Undergraduate Program Review for the International Studies Program

Dear Professor Gibson,

The Undergraduate Council has discussed the International Studies Program's 2014 Undergraduate Program Review. The Council applauds the overall positive review and the dedication of the affiliated faculty and staff. The Council supports the findings and recommendations of the review subcommittee and would like to comment on the following:

- **Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs):** The Council reaffirms the critical need for MOUs between the Program and the Departments from which the faculty FTEs originate. The Council suggests a meeting between the Dean of IR/PS and the Deans of Arts and Humanities and Social Sciences. The MOUs should detail teaching commitments from each of the departments. The uncertain teaching commitments are creating problems for affiliated faculty and impacting the student experience. With time-to-degree being a paramount campus issue, course predictability is essential.
- **Course Review:** Every program should conduct a periodic review of the courses that count for their major to determine their continued relevance to the program. The Council recommends that the International Studies Program undertake such an evaluation before the follow-up review. Specifically, the Council encourages the Program to examine the coherence between INTL 101, 102 and 190 and the suitability of the various departmental courses that make up each track of the ISP curriculum.
- **Cross-listing:** The Council discussed the Program's desire to cross-list their core courses with the departments who currently teach those courses. Instead, the Council suggests that the Program approach related departments (e.g. Economics, Anthropology, etc.) to see if they will accept the INTL course for their departmental major.

The Council also recognizes that larger campus issues surfaced in the review. The following concerns of the International Studies Program faculty were reported to campus administration:

- An increased international student population but not an increase in resources to support that population or the faculty and staff that serve those students.
- Challenges with students' writing abilities and an inability to address the deficiencies within the structure of the course and experience of the instructors.

The Council will conduct its follow-up review of the Program in Spring Quarter 2015. At that time, our goal is to learn about the Program's progress in implementing the recommendations of the program review subcommittee and the Undergraduate Council. The Council extends its thanks to the Program for its engagement in this process and we look forward to the continued discussion.

Sincerely,



James Nieh, Chair  
Undergraduate Council

cc: G. Boss P. Cowhey L. Carver K. Pogliano R. Rodriguez B. Sawrey M. Sidney