**2009 Assessment Report Feedback – International Studies**

**Assessment Committee Contact**: Scott Hendrix, Academic Skills Center

*\*Note*: Assessment report/feedback was reviewed/provided by Vicki Baker, Mark Bollman, and Scott Hendrix

 Overall, your program assessment plan is an effectively detailed document that provides helpful presentation of program goals, key program components that connect back to these goals, and some helpful discussion about methods and instruments you plan to use for assessing the extent to which specific program components are helping students meet IS learning goals/outcomes.

 The feedback below is intended to help you reconsider and/or revise and update your assessment plans, as needed, as you move through the next steps of the assessment process.

*Step 1: Mission*

 Your mission statement seems clear and cohesive, and focuses on student learning and outcomes within the IS program. In addition, your program mission seems in line with overall college goals for developing student awareness of global issues, and preparing students to meet the challenges of these issues.

*Step 2: Outcomes*

 Your program goals/outcomes seem appropriate given the IS mission. However, you would probably benefit from not including here—and then trying to actually assess—so many student learning outcomes for both IS major and minor: the proposed assessment plan creates a huge task for you and your students, right now and moving forward, and provides you with fewer opportunities to pilot methods, instruments, etc. for assessment. In contrast, you probably should focus on a few specific student outcomes—and probably for the IS major only (at least to start, especially given that you only have two IS minors presently).

Moving forward then, you could simplify and clarify your assessment plan by focusing on 1-3 KEY learning goals/outcomes for students in the IS major. For example, you might begin your assessment efforts by focusing on student learning of “analytic models and frameworks” introduced in INTN 130 (and listed as the second outcome for the IS major); then, your program component (Step 2) to assess this outcome would remain INTN 130; and the specific method or instrument to assess student learning of analytic models and frameworks (Step 3) could be one or more specific element of that course: exam, paper, class exercise or presentation, etc.

*Step 3: Program Components*

 The program components listed here are clearly significant for the IS major and minor. However, the relationship of these components back to specific student learning goals/outcomes is not clearly presented here (though the relationship of INTN 130 to students learning “analytic models and frameworks” can be discerned, as discussed above). It may be *assumed* that the two 200+ foundation courses are intended to help students “acquire a solid base of knowledge about a variety of important international, transnational, and global phenomena,” but that relationship is not presented in your proposed plan.

As noted in the previous section (Step 2), focusing your assessment efforts more narrowly on a few specific student learning goals/outcomes would allow you to present in this section only those IS components that are relevant for the specific learning goals/outcomes. (This kind of focus would likely be both internally and externally valuable, as it would reduce your initial workload and reporting requirements, and would also help clarify the IS program goals, components, and assessment methods/instruments for outside audiences, such as Assessment Committee and Accreditation Team members, etc.).

 Other items to consider (or perhaps clarify): study abroad and competence in a second language are listed as important outcomes; however, how are you assessing these outcomes? In other words, how do you know that the study abroad component is achieving what was intended? Who is assessing students’ language proficiency? Are these outcomes being assessed in collaboration with CIE or MLAC, for example? Are there standard forms or exams that students must complete to ensure these program components/requirements/learning outcomes are connected? Are students being critiqued by someone local on the study abroad experience that let’s IS know the intended outcomes are in fact being achieved?

*Step 4: Methods/Data*

 The questionnaire discussed in this section is certainly a valuable indirect measure of student learning (since you are collecting student self-report data/information); however, for more comprehensive and useful understanding of student learning/outcomes, you will want to augment this with other assessment methods and instruments that are direct measures of student learning and outcomes. Examples of direct measures include tests/examinations, assignments, papers/projects, exercises, portfolios and field experience evaluations (to name just a few), most of which you are probably already requiring of students in your courses. [*See bottom of this page for definitions and further examples of direct and indirect measures/evidence*.]

 \*\*\*Finally, it’s important to highlight that the IS major has both an entry and exit course (INTN 130, INTN 370), which presents you with significant opportunities for assessment of student learning within your academic program: you could embed a similar assessment instrument in both courses (since all students must take both), or assess a key learning outcome in both courses, etc.

 For your next round of assessment plan updating, please consider the comments, suggestions, and recommendations above, and incorporate these as feasible and appropriate. Overall, a good start toward developing and presenting an effective assessment plan for the IS program.

 Direct & Indirect Measures

 In assessing student learning, there are direct and indirect sources of evidence. Direct evidence is clear and convincing information about student learning, such as: tests, examinations, papers, projects, assignments, field experience assessments, and portfolios. These are particularly strong sources of evidence especially when accompanied by articulated standards (such as a rubric). On the other hand, with indirect evidence there is room for other factors to affect the outcomes either positively or negatively. Examples of indirect evidence include: retention, graduation, and placement rates (may be impacted by economic conditions or college policies); surveys of students and alumni (may indicate feelings about college experience); grades (standards and even content may differ across instructors and institutions).

**Fall 2009 International Studies:**  
1. First, thanks for your diligence and extensive time working on the plan/report updates. Overall, the document is much easier to read now, and is considerably more effective in presenting IS student learning goals, along with the program components and methods or instruments used within the program to assess how students are doing in reaching the learning goals. Sticking with IS major assessment for the near future seems like a pragmatic decision that will simplify program assessment in both short and longer term.  
  
2. In general, the information, analysis, and commentary added for **Steps 5 & 6** is very helpful in providing a clearer sense of the evidence for student learning within the IS program, as well as details about how the program is using (and will use) information drawn from assessment tools and methods/measures for IS program conversations and curricular or program revisions.  
  
From the evidence presented here, it is clear that student learning happens within the program--and that those of you coordinating the program and faculty teaching courses in the program are working to assess the student learning as it happens.  
\*\*\*Your suggested plans for adapting the Mode course direct assessment for IS courses seem especially logical and helpful, given that many faculty will already be familiar with this model, procedures are in place for collecting and analyzing data, etc.  
  
Likewise, your longer term plans for both indirect and direct assessment seem smart and helpful--and should be fairly easy to implement, and will likely yield a reasonable amount of data and information for program analysis and discussion.  
  
3. For the current round of assessment, it would be helpful (especially for external audiences) if you would include \*some\* information from the INTN 370 senior surveys. Even though the number of such surveys is small (total of 9 students), and the results have only been collected for two semesters, specific data and comments from students do provide a useful base to build upon.   
\*\*\*Including selected student comments and data/responses to specific questions would also emphasize that the IS program highly values individual student comments and suggestions as part of program assessment efforts (as you note regarding IS program discussion about requiring economics courses, in Step 6).  
  
Otherwise, at this point, I don't have other specific suggestions or concerns for this round of assessment.