

Memorandum of Understanding  
Bachelor of Arts in International Studies  
College of Liberal Arts  
December 2012

This Memorandum of Understanding outlines the consensus reached by the International Studies (I/ST) program, the College of Liberal Arts, and the Division of Academic Affairs, based on the recently conducted program review. It describes the goals to be achieved, and the actions to be undertaken by all parties to this MOU to achieve these goals, during the next program review cycle. Progress toward goals is to be addressed in the annual report.

The BA in International Studies was developed by a multi-disciplinary task force and was first offered in the 1993-94 academic year. The 2002 program review led to a decision to hire faculty, grow the number of majors, update the curriculum in line with national best practices, and further institutionalize the minor and the student learning outcomes. The first dedicated faculty member was hired in 2006. By 2011 the faculty had grown to four and the number of students to well over 200. The 2011 program review process identified a number of strengths of the program, including a strong alignment with the university's mission; an impressive and very devoted faculty; a well-conceived and rigorous curriculum in line with best practices in the discipline; enthusiastic students; and a history of effective leadership.

Concerns emerging from the program review include:

1. Faculty resources are severely constrained; with 4 full-time core faculty and approximately 260 students in fall 2012, the core faculty members are spread very thin with teaching and advising. In addition, they all have active research agendas. The external reviewers identified the existence of a dedicated core faculty as key to the success of the CSULB program, stating that programs that rely solely on affiliated faculty are not thriving nationally. The severe resource constraint combined with the limited flexibility of a small core has led to a disproportionately high department-level service load, and the faculty expressed the concern that a breaking point had been reached. The faculty resource problem has been regularly exacerbated by the success of IS/T faculty members in obtaining external grants and fellowships and by leaves for faculty development or other opportunities.
2. At the time of the program review, the I/ST program had little or no dedicated budget of its own; subsequently, the college has provided an operations budget. This allotment will be reviewed by the CLA Budget Committee to ensure that all the relevant issues have been addressed, and CLA will adjust the allotment beginning in the spring 2013 term as needed. Another key challenge arises from the fact that in the past I/ST administrative staff and operational resources were shared with the Political Science Department. Both the administrative support and space issues have now been addressed, and further changes in I/ST's needs for support will be considered as part of the college's periodic reviews of operations budget, space, and staff support. Of particular concern is that in the current arrangement the offices for the I/ST program and faculty are distant from the office assigned to the Global Studies Institute.

3. Although relatively new, the IS student learning outcomes assessment program is well-developed, incorporating both indirect and direct assessment of student learning. The external reviewers suggested the use of multiple raters for the direct assessment as well as the incorporation of research design activities earlier in the BA curriculum.
4. The external reviewers expressed concerns about a growing gap between a program that is rapidly becoming a “national model program,” and resource starvation that could lead to its “implosion.” They identified three paths forward including enhancing resources and departmentalization, shrinking the size of the program, and folding the program into another department, advocating the alternatives in that order. The UPRC recommendations to the college and administration were that they “must immediately prioritize funding of this growing high quality program. These immediate resource needs include personnel, space, and budget,” and to consider departmentalization.

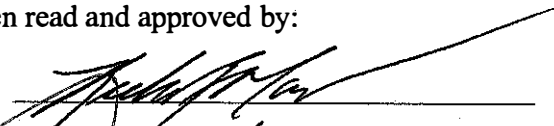
Unfortunately, the growth and successes of the I/ST program were realized in unpropitious budgetary times. Given the fiscal constraints of the university and the college, it is not possible to ensure that all of the resources will be available to fully enact the recommendations of the program review process.

It is therefore agreed that:

1. The college will work with the program to back-fill faculty resources when core faculty are on leave for research or faculty development, and, depending on budget, will provide an instructional allocation to meet student demand in I/ST courses.
2. As budget allows, the college will obtain authorization for hiring an additional core faculty member or two joint hires; where appropriate, the college will authorize faculty members from other departments or programs to join the International Studies program, with the eventual goal of attaining departmental or other organizational status appropriate to the number of majors, minors, and FTES taught by the program faculty. Should I/ST drop below 4 FTEF, the college will make an effort to include I/ST in its request for future tenure track hires.
3. If budget does not allow for the appropriate resourcing of faculty to the number of students in the program, the number of students will be reduced to match the resource allocation. The “trigger” will be the 2013 revision of department level admissions special requirements, which will be used to begin the process of downsizing the program. Should the program downsize to a more selective major, commensurate changes to the program design will be made.
4. The IS/T program will regularly monitor the curriculum of the BA and minor for ways to ensure compliance with the Timely Graduation Policy. If the program finds itself out of alignment with college norms on the Timely Graduation Policy it will take rapid steps to analyze the curriculum of the BA and minor for ways to streamline requirements and reduce the number of units while still maintaining the program’s mission.
5. The program will address the concerns raised by the external and internal reviewers in respect to student learning outcomes assessment and the infusion of research design earlier in the curriculum.

This MOU has been read and approved by:

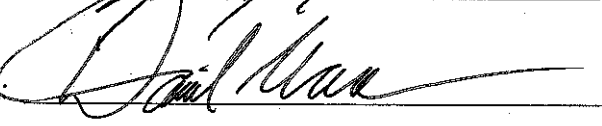
Department Chair:



Date:

12/26/12

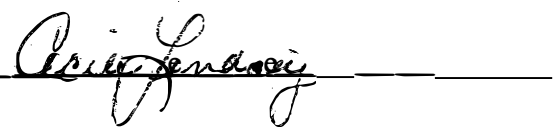
College Dean:



Date:

1/8/13

Vice Provost:



Date:

1-22-13