

**University of New Mexico**

**International Studies**

**Academic Program Review**

**Review Panel Report**

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## 1A. Introduction

The Visiting Committee, consisting of Drs. Andrea Duffy (Colorado State University); Arne Kalleberg (UNC-Chapel Hill) and Melissa Bokovoy (University of New Mexico) virtually visited the UNM campus on February 4-5, 2021. We read and discussed among ourselves the department's self-study and the information gained from the visit. In the course of our visit, we met with senior College administrators as well as the Provost and his core staff. We had meetings with the ISI director, associate director, the program administrator, International Studies Institute (ISI) board members, and undergraduate students, the constituency for the program. We took a virtual visit of the offices of the International Studies Institute and visited by Zoom two classes: IS1101: Intro to International Studies and IS400: Capstone Seminar in International Studies.

The academic program review itinerary, self-study, and other review materials were very effective in facilitating the review and providing a comprehensive picture of ISI. The introduction and background section describes well the history of the ISI and provides a good overview of it. It also makes clear the findings of the last APR and how the ISI responded to the challenges outlined in 2013. We were happy to see that the ISI (and the College of A&S) were able to implement many of the recommendations made by the previous APR committee which were:

- Hiring of a program administrator
- Hiring a permanent lecturer who also serves as the Associate Director
- Creation and implementation of core courses for the IS majors and minors
  - 1101 Intro to International Studies
  - 320 Study Abroad Research Methods
  - 400 Capstone seminar in International Studies
  - 402 Honors in International Studies
  - 499 Topics in International Studies
- Folded the European Studies and Asian Studies majors into the International Studies major
- Improved the undergraduate major experience through gateway and capstone classes.

Recommendations not realized:

- College, university and department and disciplinary hires not tied to staffing courses focused on Asia, Africa, or the Middle East.
- Aligning UNM's goals for study abroad, internationalization, and coordination with programs across campus with the IS program.
- Reduce advising burden of ISI director and associate director
- Increase participation of existing faculty in ISI, especially in other colleges.

Finally, everyone we met with at UNM was very helpful, informative, and candid. The effectiveness of the review process was particularly impressive considering the remote context.

### **Our Overall Impression of the ISI Program:**

- The ISI major is a successful one, with 113 majors and graduating 35 students in AY 2019-2020
- The ISI major is a very flexible one, allowing students to take a large number of courses tailored to their own interests
- The ISI accomplishes its mission despite considerable resource constraints, including an essentially flat budget for the past 12 years and only one faculty member (a full-time lecturer) who also serves as the Associate Director
- Student-centric program
  - Dedicated, passionate administrative team (labor of love)
  - Bright, engaged students
  - Scholarship opportunities for students
  - Enrichment opportunities for students (internships, study abroad)
  - Interdisciplinary perspective
  - Effective training for tomorrow's global citizens

### **1B. Summary of findings**

**Strengths:** Overall the IS program exceeds expectations

- Clear and directed Vision and Mission: The International Studies Institute has a two-fold mission: 1) to provide a high quality interdisciplinary undergraduate degree program, 2) to foster greater appreciation for and cooperation surrounding international issues within the broader UNM community and the State of New Mexico.
- Small and dedicated core of A&S Faculty who are affiliated with the ISI
- Since the last APR, significant increase in number of BAs majors and minors who graduate, on average, faster than other majors at UNM
- Introductory course anchors the major and minor and Capstone class integrates student learning and experience
- Motivated and globally engaged students
- Flexible and broad selection of courses
- ISI is the only **undergraduate** academic program/institute at UNM dedicated to internationalization and global studies.

### **Areas Requiring Improvement**

- Improve coordination across campus with like-minded programs since there is too much replication of mission and inefficient use of resources in regard to undergraduate education in international studies
- Need additional faculty to teach required courses
- Limited course options in Asia and Middle East
- Streamline advisement by reduction of curricular complexity and creation of electronic forms and approvals
- Engage and recruit existing A&S faculty in program
- Investment in promoting the program's success as one of the nation's most racially and ethnically diverse undergraduate International Studies majors and minors.

## **Criterion 2: Teaching & Learning: Curriculum**

Evaluation: Met (M)

Summary: The International Studies major curriculum is appropriate and broadly aligns with national trends and standards for International Studies programs. In particular, it includes thematic and area-studies components, required language study, interdisciplinary core courses, and course options in relevant disciplines that together provide a global scope. Certain features of the curriculum, such as the senior thesis, language training to the 300-level, and study abroad opportunities and experiences, distinguish this program from many of its peers and should be considered points of pride. Yet the curriculum also poses challenges for students and the program administration through its complexity, limited options in certain concentration areas, and the program's lack of control over course offerings and scheduling in other units.

The UNM International Studies curriculum fosters community among its majors, helps them to achieve student learning objectives, and effectively prepares them for internationally-focused careers and graduate school in relevant fields. The core courses provide relevant content and context, are appropriate to the student level, and cultivate a sense of community and identity in the major. The fact that the same faculty member teaches both the introductory course and the capstone, and thus works with students at multiple stages in their academic journey, is a valuable element of this program. In addition, students benefit from choice among a wide range of thematic and geographical degree path options, allowing them the flexibility to choose their own adventure, pursuing topics that interest them and align with their career goals. The recent addition of a third-year language course requirement likely will improve student performance and self-assessment results in this area, while opening up additional professional opportunities for graduates. The program's incorporation of high impact learning practices (HIPs) is admirable. It emphasizes experiential education, including relevant internships / community service as well as study abroad and other international experiences. The review team was particularly impressed by the faculty-led study abroad programs hosted by the ISI. Likewise, the capstone thesis paper seems to provide an exceptional learning experience for students that, through capstone presentations, also benefits the broader university community.

### Strengths:

- The range of degree path options and flexibility
- Thematic global studies options
- Language training to the 300-level
- Experiential education components / notable high impact practices: Study abroad and reflection on international experiences in the capstone, internship / community service opportunities
- Since the last APR, creation of two core courses that foster cohorts and a sense of community

### Concerns:

- ISI doesn't have control of course offerings beyond its two core courses.

- Limited course offerings in certain area studies concentrations (especially Asia and Middle East)
- Lack of knowledge of course offerings outside of A&S
- Heavy advising burden

While the International Studies curriculum is robust, the program review also exposed several weaknesses and areas of concern. Some of these issues fall under the purview of the International Studies program administrative team, though they may require significant time, effort, and resources to address. The complexity of the program's structure, requiring both a thematic and a geographic concentration, creates a heavy advising burden. It also limits the scope of the program to area studies, preventing students from pursuing a truly global course of study.

There are also concerns that lie largely beyond the program administration's control. In particular, UNM has few course offerings in certain geographical concentrations, limiting course options for students pursuing those concentrations, posing scheduling challenges, making it hard for them to progress to graduation in a timely manner, and generally exacerbating the advising burden for students in this major. These issues are not uncommon to international studies programs, but they can be mitigated if not resolved.

#### Recommendations:

- Reorient curriculum from area studies to global studies and utilize existing teaching resources from university to compensate for curricular innovation.
  - Create a "global studies" concentration option
- Create a "mid-major" course focused on research methods or require students to seek out disciplinary research methods course.
- Work closely with relevant programs to coordinate course offerings when possible—be proactive and use chairs and directors' meetings to highlight the needs of the ISI as an interdisciplinary program.
  - Coordinate course availability and develop courses that serve both units
- Reallocate some faculty teaching from other units to IS major Tenure-track and tenured faculty should be involved in teaching core ISI courses

### **Criterion 3: Teaching & Learning: Assessment**

Evaluation: Met

Summary: While the International Studies program's current assessment plan is effective, certain practices would improve the assessment process and enhance its results.

The program's self-assessment methods are sound, and they demonstrate definitively that International Studies majors are meeting program-level student learning objectives (SLOs). In particular, the review team's interactions with International Studies majors in both the introductory course and the capstone indicated that the curriculum effectively trains students to

be astute global citizens. The capstone thesis paper and exit survey represent appropriate and valuable assessment metrics. The program, moreover, has successfully implemented positive curricular changes based on past assessments.

Strengths:

- The reviewers' interactions with International Studies majors suggest that the curriculum effectively trains students to be astute global citizens
- The capstone paper / thesis and exit survey are both useful metrics
- Assessments done since 2016 have provided clear data to improve instruction
- Assessments show consistent achievement of student learning objectives and reflection on those results

Concerns:

- Some assessment measures seem overly time-consuming and/or place major demands on the administrative team (e.g. multiple reviewers for senior thesis projects)
- The assessment would benefit from additional metrics, such as the evaluation of a presentation (i.e. non-written work) and an entrance survey, so that the program administration could track student progress
- Lack of qualitative data/comments on program, which may differ from or complement the quantitative data.

The external review exposed a few weaknesses of the International Studies program's assessment plan, all of which could be addressed relatively easily. First, the evaluation of all capstone thesis papers by the ISI director, associate director / instructor, and members of the advisory board seems unnecessarily time-consuming and places major demands on the administrative team. Second, the assessment would benefit from additional metrics to address certain SLOs.

Recommendations:

- Select random sample of thesis papers for evaluation in the annual assessment process.
- Students' language competency at the time of graduation might be better reflected through performance in language classes than through self-report measures in the exit survey alone.
- Oral presentations, such as students' thesis defense, should be included in the assessment plan to broaden evaluations beyond written work.
- Addition of an entrance survey given in ISI 1101, so that the administration could compare results with the exit survey and track student progress.
- Include both quantitative as well as qualitative data, in order to better inform the program administration of student perspectives and the achievement of SLOs.

#### **Criterion 4: Students**

Evaluation: Exceeds (E)

Summary: The International Studies program clearly attracts and produces high performing students.

The review team was deeply impressed by the maturity, level of engagement, and preparation of students in both the introductory course and the capstone seminar. The program boasts an excellent record of on-time graduation for its majors. Its demographic, moreover, is consistent with the student body at UNM and is well above the national average for Latinx and BIPOC students for BA graduates in International Studies.

These points of pride are due largely to the program's structure and to the dedication of the core faculty and administration. Namely, the core courses seem to develop students' competencies effectively; capstone students were articulate, confident, and demonstrated a mature global perspective. The relatively small class sizes, restriction of core courses to International Studies majors / cohort, and consistent instruction by a single dedicated faculty member also promote student success. Additionally, the program benefits from the support of a graduate assistant and, critically, from the staunch, heartfelt mentorship of students by the director and associate director.

#### Strengths:

- Students are engaged, critical thinkers with considerable awareness and concern for the world
- Students have an excellent record of on-time graduation
- This major reflects the demographic characteristics of the student body at UNM and is well above national average for Hispanic and BIPOC students for BA graduates in International Studies; this makes the program highly accessible to a diverse group of students.
- The core courses seem to develop students' competencies effectively; the capstone students we met were articulate, confident, and demonstrated a mature global perspective
- Other strengths: Small class sizes (though partly due to COVID) and consistent instruction, with a dedicated faculty member who gets to work with students across multiple years and courses
- Graduate student assistance
- Program mentorship of students by director and associate director

#### Concerns:

- Obstacles to diversifying core curriculum / adding new courses (especially since there is only one core faculty)
- Limited sense of community (due to wide range of course options and lack of physical space to congregate)

- Declining student numbers but less than other majors at UNM

While the program's student composition and performance are exemplary, there are a few minor areas of concern. First, the existence of a single core faculty member presents serious obstacles to expanding and/or diversifying ISI's core curriculum. Second, the wide range of courses and the interdisciplinary nature of the program limit students' sense of community, and students would benefit from measures promoting more cohesion in the major. Third, the review team also noted that student numbers have been declining, though not at a faster rate than other majors in the College of Arts and Sciences at UNM.

#### Recommendations:

- The review team strongly recommends the addition of supplemental faculty, either through new hires or sharing faculty with other units (see the section of this report on 'faculty').
- The addition of a third core course (see the 'curriculum' section above) and the addition of an inviting physical space for students to congregate and collaborate (see "facilities" section below) would help amplify student engagement and success.
- Work with departments and faculty to develop a set of regularly expected undergraduate offerings.
- To the extent that the decline in student numbers is a problem, it may be mitigated through the student success measures outlined above, as well as by identifying and addressing student concerns that emerge in the exit survey and by implementing changes that reduce curricular complexity and align with national trends, such as the option of a global studies track that does not require a regional specialization.

#### **Criterion 5: Faculty**

Evaluation: Met with Concerns (MC)

Summary: The ISI program has an effective lecturer, but he is the only faculty member assigned to the ISI. The present lecturer is well qualified to teach the required introductory and capstone courses (a 4-4 teaching load) and receives a 2 course/year teaching release for serving as the ISI Associate Director and organizing a lecture series. The lack of additional faculty to teach core courses makes the provision of required courses somewhat precarious.

#### Strengths:

- The ISI has a dedicated and experienced lecturer and .5FTE Director
- The Director position is tenure track and connects ISI to other CAS units
- An Interdisciplinary Advisory Board consisting of 6-8 faculty members drawn from a wide variety of departments at UNM that advises the Director on budgetary and other matters
- Most faculty on advisory board and the Director participate in capstone paper and presentation evaluation



Concerns:

- The two core courses are taught by only a single lecturer
- The workload for the ISI lecturer (who is also Associate Director) is heavy, especially when considering the large number of capstone papers supervised as part of the capstone seminars
- There are no tenure track or tenured faculty teaching core courses and the few other INST courses
- There is a paucity of faculty with expertise in parts of the world besides Latin America (especially Asia and the Middle East)
- ISI has little control over faculty lines, course offerings, and course content beyond ISI
- There are no established procedures for tenure track or tenured faculty in other departments to dedicate part of their teaching/service workload to ISI
- There is a lack of resources for faculty, the Director, or Associate Director to participate in national conversations about Global Studies and International Studies
- The Director does not receive a summer stipend despite the significant advising and other duties required during the summer

Recommendations:

- Provide at least one month summer stipend to the Director, consistent with the practice for other department chairs
- After budgetary crisis, hire additional permanent instructor(s)
- Reallocate teaching and service obligations for tenure-track and tenured faculty in other CAS departments to ISI. Work with CAS departments and dean to formalize teaching and service appointments for faculty in ISI (via establishment of MOUs)
- Tie disciplinary/department hires in CAS department to underserved regions of the world (such as Asia and the Middle East)
- Reassess teaching workload of ISI faculty member in light of capstone papers supervision

**Criterion 6: Research, Scholarship and Service**

Evaluation: Met (M)

Summary: Research is not an explicit part of ISI's mission. The ISI has collaborated with other units at UNM to obtain grants to fund student initiatives and with local organizations to provide students with intercultural experiences. ISI has also supported several lecture series. The Director is actively engaged in faculty governance at UNM.

Strengths:

- The ISI Fall lecture series and the Contemporary Jewish Studies Lecture Series seem to be doing well and the ISI has become an intellectual home to different lecture series which facilitates the dissemination of research, scholarship, and creative works related to global issues

- Under the current ISI Director, there has been exceptional outreach and grant coordination with community and other scholarly partners and connections with a number of organizations to provide students in domestic intercultural experiences
- Faculty-led study abroad programs (e.g., in Italy, Germany) and partnerships provide intercultural experiences for students
- ISI curriculum encourages student scholarship and service learning

Concerns:

- Difficult to interest CAS faculty in ISI administration because of the high workload and inadequate compensation (e.g., lack of summer stipend)
- Questions about who will succeed the current Director
- There is no professional or disciplinary training related to International Studies—current faculty and affiliated faculty do not participate in the scholarship of learning in the field of International Studies

Recommendations:

- Identify possible successors to the Director through recruitment to advisory board
- Provide additional incentives to provide service to the ISI (as Director, etc.) through resource allocation

**Criterion 7: Peer Comparisons**

Evaluation: Exceeds (E)

Summary: The ISI program at UNM compares well with similar programs and its peer institutions (e.g., Arizona State University, Colorado State University, Texas Tech University and the University of Texas at El Paso) with regard to course offerings and student outcomes

Strengths:

- ISI is the only international studies program in New Mexico and thus fills an important need in the state
- The ISI outperforms peers and other R1 universities in regard to its high participation in the program by BIPOC students and first-generation students

Concerns:

- None

Recommendations:

- Consider possibility of greater focus on “global studies” rather than “international studies” as Arizona State and Texas Tech have done
- Recruit and promote diversity of IS program’s study body

## **Criterion 8: Resources and Planning**

Evaluation: Met with Concerns (MC)

### Summary:

The ISI has operated on a very limited budget since its inception. In the absence of budget increases, some resource re-allocation in teaching and service obligations from other CAS units to the ISI would help sustain its mission.

### Strengths:

- The ISI accomplishes a great deal with a small budget, which has essentially remained flat (and its operating funds have decreased by about \$500) for the past 12 years
- The ISI has effectively and efficiently used its available resources
- The ISI was able to leverage recommendations from the previous APR for additional resources to sustain the major and minor

### Concerns:

- There is a need for more faculty to teach ISI core courses. In the absence of new hiring, it would be desirable to reallocate resources from departments experiencing enrollment declines (e.g., asking tenure track faculty in other departments to shift some of their teaching responsibility, say one course every two years) to ISI
- The ISI has always been underfunded for its high rate of student and intellectual success.
- The retirement of the ISI administrator will result in reduction (or elimination) of staff position at .75FTE

### Recommendations:

- Hire an additional faculty lecturer to teach core courses (after the budget crisis)
- Analyze the duties of the ISI administrator to determine which tasks might usefully be located in an administrative “pod” and which tasks are best performed by an administrator located in the IS
- Increase Graduate Assistant line from .25 FTE to .5 FTE
- Increase operating budget to include professional development and disciplinary participation
- Review existing academic programs, like the undergraduate Latin American Studies major, and see if resources can be combined or coordinated.

## **Criterion 9: Facilities**

Evaluation: Met with Concerns (MC)

### Summary:

The ISI has three offices in the Humanities Building. However, ISI does not control any classrooms or conference rooms, which hampers building a sense of community among students and scheduling events.

Strengths:

- The existence of a shared physical space, and a designated place for majors to go, is helpful
- Available facilities are adequately utilized

Concerns:

- The facilities are meager. This ISI desperately needs a room for ISI students as well as for the GA
- The lack of a common area for students to congregate hinders creating a sense of community among them
- Shared office for the Director and graduate assistant is limiting for both persons
- ISI would benefit from shared space with other interdisciplinary programs or related departments

Recommendations:

- Provide a dedicated meeting or conference room for ISI students that could also be used as an event space

**Conclusions**

As the previous APR reported, the 2021 review team sees the promise and excellence of the International Studies undergraduate program and that it has been highly successful despite its shoestring budget, lack of faculty lines, and disappearance of curriculum related to Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. The review team understands the difficult budget situation and encourages UNM administration to reward and fund this undergraduate program since it has considerable student buy-in as evidenced by its enrollments, number of majors graduating, and their time to graduation. The addition of another regular lecturer to the ISI will provide additional support for the existing IS introductory and capstone course and new curriculum, perhaps focused on global studies vs. areas studies. As stated in 2013 and reiterated here, **“There is clear student appetite for a program like IS at the University of New Mexico.”** What impressed the review committee is also the diversity of the IS’s student body and how much of a demographic anomaly the program is in the national landscape of undergraduate global and international studies. With a little more investment, this program could draw more students to the humanities and social sciences, which are declining in enrollment.

As before, the most pressing challenge to the ISI will be how to sustain its growth with its current level of institutional support and how **not to** rely on unpaid and uncompensated faculty work. Long-term success of the program depends on the ability of the administration in the College of Arts and Sciences and in the Office of Academic Affairs to review existing programs that might be duplicating the curriculum and work of the International Studies program and re-allocate resources based on quality and efficiency of the programs in question. The most obvious program might be the undergraduate major in Latin American Studies, whose academic director, Dr. Ronda Brulotte, noted had very few undergraduate majors. The administration might want to

explore ways to spread the workload to more people, possibly by keeping the current area Program Directors as advisors; they would presumably retain their small SACs under that arrangement. If these positions vanish, the SACs attached to them should remain within the unit and be redistributed to the Directors in recognition of their huge workloads. The university might also consider some sort of summer compensation for the Directors who work year-round but are only paid for nine months.

**Conclusions:** Maintaining a high-quality program with the current level of resources appears to be unsustainable. We recommend that special attention be paid to the following urgent needs:

### **NEEDS**

- Program will be difficult to sustain without increased faculty participation, cannot depend solely on “laboring for love” and uncompensated work loads
- Summer SAC for director/one month in recognition of the advising and other needed activities s/he conducts over the summer
- Incentivize departments to fill in faculty lines which address lack of curriculum in the regions of Asia and Middle East
- Greater faculty involvement in teaching core ISI courses
- Increase GA from .25 FTE to .5 FTE to advance teaching and programmatic goals of ISI.
- Increase operating budget to include professional development and disciplinary participation

**Once again, we commend the faculty, staff, and students who have dedicated countless hours of work and effort to make the International Studies major an unqualified success in its first 12 years as a program.**