

International and Area Studies

Academic Learning Compact

Expected Student Learning Outcomes for the International and Area Studies Concentrations

The International and Area Studies (IAS) concentration is designed to meet the need for a new generation trained to enter the international arena with a comprehensive grounding in international politics and economics, language skills, and an in-depth understanding of a major region, the international system, or a major issue in world affairs. The IAS area of concentration offers three tracks to meet a range of student interests and still provide solid training for future work or study in the area. The “area studies” track combines fundamental courses on the international political and economic systems with the student’s choice of specialization in a regional area; the “systemic track” focuses on a deeper understanding of the international political and economic systems; and the “issue” track is designed for students with a specific interest in a major international issue that affects more than one region, e.g., development issues or peace and conflict.

In addition to these three tracks in the IAS AOC, we offer separate Area Studies AOCs in Caribbean and Latin American Studies, East Asian Studies and European Studies. These AOCs are designed for students with intensive interests in the region and less of a focus on the international system. Students are free to concentrate in other regional areas either under the IAS area studies track or as an individually designed major.

International and Area Studies, Caribbean and Latin American Studies, East Asian Studies, and European Studies are also very appropriate “slashes” for students combining them with disciplinary AOCs, so we offer a reduced set of requirements for those options.

International and Area Studies AOC Learning Outcomes

Expected Outcomes for the International and Area Studies Area of Concentration	Content	Communication	Critical Thinking
1 The student demonstrates understanding of international political systems.	X	X	X
2. The student demonstrates understanding of international economic systems.	X	X	X
3. The student demonstrates specialized understanding of one of the following: a regional area, the international system, or a major international issue that affects more than one region.	X	X	X
4. The student demonstrates at least an intermediate-level (and for area studies specialists an advanced-level) mastery of a foreign language.		X	

5. Students develop, implement, and communicate the results of a thesis or project with international area studies content, and defend it in an oral exam.	X	X	X
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Area Studies (CLAS, EAS, ES) AOC Learning Outcomes

Expected Outcomes for (Regional) Area Studies Areas of Concentration	Content	Communication	Critical Thinking
1 The student demonstrates understanding of regional political and economic systems.	X	X	X
2. The student demonstrates understanding of culture and society.	X	X	X
3. The student demonstrates specialized understanding of a major topic in the region of study	X	X	X
4. The student demonstrates at least an advanced-level mastery of a foreign language appropriate to the region.		X	
5. Students develop, implement, and communicate the results of a thesis or project focused on the region, and defend it in an oral exam.	X	X	X

Measures to track student progress

Student performance in courses required for the International and Area Studies area of concentration are evaluated on the basis of homework assignments, papers, presentations, projects, and participation in class discussions. Evaluative comments are summarized at the end of each semester in a narrative course evaluation. International and Area Studies faculty members review all aspects of a student’s previous work and the student’s proposed plan of additional work in the fifth term before a student is approved to declare International and Area Studies as their area of concentration.

Three faculty members review and approve student’s progress toward meeting the requirements for an International and Area Studies area of concentration when they submit a Thesis Prospectus in their sixth term.

Specific measures to demonstrate each graduate’s competencies

All students with a concentration in International and Area Studies develop and implement a research thesis or project under the direct supervision of a member of the International and Area Studies faculty, and defend that research project or thesis in a public oral baccalaureate exam. The form and content of a student’s senior project or thesis is defined in close collaboration with the academic sponsor and with the approval of the baccalaureate committee. Theses and projects are judged according to the

comprehensiveness of the research, the strength and originality of the interpretation, and the clarity and elegance of the writing style. Performance on the oral exam is judged by how well the student responds to questions, demonstrates knowledge of the field, and defends his or her own interpretation. Satisfactory completion of a senior project/thesis and satisfactory performance on the baccalaureate exam are required prior to graduation.

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