

# International Studies Program ~ Spring 2015 Update

Richard Lotspeich ~ ISU Department of Economics  
Chairperson ~ International Studies Advisory Board, 2014-2015 AY  
1 May 2015

This bulletin is directed to all ISU faculty and administrators affiliated with the International Studies Program. Its purpose is to:

- Report on the number of students in the IS Program and other developments,
- Inform the Affiliated Faculty about actions taken over the past year by the IS Advisory Board (IS-AB),
- Report the results of our spring elections to governance positions and other personnel changes,
- Announce student awards and program completions,
- Raise issues currently facing the governance in International Studies,
- Generally raise awareness about International Studies among the relevant faculty.

## ***Program Growth and Development***

### *Students*

The number of students enrolled in the IS Minor increased substantially, from around 25 to around 35 – about a 40% increase. The vagaries of databases prevent a definite and precise count, but it is clear that a substantial growth has occurred. We cannot know all the reasons, but part of this increase is attributable to Chrissie Strong, Director of Academic Programs Abroad, who often recommends students whom she counsels to consider declaring the minor. In early fall, Kathleen Heath and I consulted the campus ROTC Commander, Lt. Colonel Sam Morgan, about potential interest among the ROTC cadets. This led to a brief presentation to the assembled cadets by Heath and myself. Subsequently Kathleen received inquiries from several cadets and three of them declared the minor. Among this group is Steven Middleton, who was awarded an IS Scholarship for study abroad in Morocco.

### *Speakers Series*

We hosted a first International Studies Speakers Series in the spring. Well, a modest series of two speakers. But each of the events was a great success.

On 3 April celebrated journalist David Satter (*persona non grata* in Russia) delivered a public lecture on: *Putin's Russia – The Road to Dictatorship and War*. Over 75 people attended.

Russian historian Maxim Matusevich spoke on 23 April on: *The Soviet Union in Africa – The Cold War Era*. Over 100 people attended.

Both of these speakers came to campus through the support of the Russian and East European Institute at Indiana University – Bloomington. In December Barbara Skinner and I met with the Director and Interim Director of REEI to investigate how our IS Program might collaborate with them in their efforts on outreach, something required by their large federal grant. We hope to continue this next year – hopefully with a longer series of public lectures.

## ***Advisory Board Actions***

### *Accommodating the IS Curriculum for International Students*

Discussions on whether and how to accommodate the IS curriculum to the special circumstances of international students began in spring 2014. At that time we took a first step of waiving the requirement to complete a study abroad program since this was implicit in being an international student at ISU. Other steps were discussed intensively by the IS-AB, and the entire IS Affiliated Faculty were surveyed to gather their viewpoints on a few specific curriculum proposals. The following steps of accommodation were approved by the IS-AB on 30 January.

1. Allow international students (for whom English is not a native language) to pursue courses in the Department of English or English courses in the Department of Languages, Literatures and Linguistics as a means of meeting the foreign language requirement for the IS Minor. These course selections would be subject to approval by the IS Academic Advisor.
2. Allow international students to include up to two courses focused on the United States as a means of meeting the thematic cluster of three courses required for the IS Minor. These could be courses treating the history, culture, politics or economics of the United States. Such course selections would be subject to approval by the IS Academic Advisor.

We did not seek to establish a separate program through the formal curricular modification process. Rather these alternative means of meeting the curricular requirements will be accommodated by petitions through the Office of the Dean of College of Arts and Sciences to the Office of Registration and Records. The Associate Dean for student affairs was engaged in this process early on and understands and approves of regular submission of petitions for this accommodation.

#### *Navigating to a New Administrative Home*

Establishment of a new administrative home for International Studies continued across this academic year, although there were no actions required of the IS-AB in this regard. The highest levels of ISU governance have now approved establishing a Department of Multidisciplinary Studies, which will administer several programs of study: Gender Studies (formerly Women's Studies); International Studies; Multidisciplinary Studies (formerly Liberal Studies); Philosophy; and Sociology. The search for a chairperson of this new department is almost completed. IS Affiliated Faculty, including members of the IS-AB, were engaged in the search and in campus interviews with three candidates. Donna Selman has agreed orally to an offer to assume the chairmanship position. Selman is currently Associate Professor at Eastern Michigan University in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology & Criminology.

#### *New People in International Studies Roles*

##### *Affiliated Faculty*

During the past academic year one ISU faculty member joined the IS Affiliated Faculty.

**Paul DuongTran**, Professor of Social Work, College of Health and Human Services

##### *IS Advisory Board Members*

Terms on the IS-AB are ending for Tim Hawkins, Kathleen Heath and Rick Lotspeich. The IS Affiliated Faculty elected the following members to fill these vacated seats:

**Paul DuongTran**, Professor of Social Work, College of Health and Human Services

**James Gustafson**, Assistant Professor of History, College of Arts and Sciences

**Rick Lotspeich**, Professor of Economics, College of Arts and Sciences

##### *Academic Advising*

After many years of dedicated service to the IS Program, Kathleen Heath will resign as academic advisor effective 1 July. James Gustafson from the Department of History will be taking on this role. They began this transition through the spring semester, and as of fall 2015, Dr. Gustafson will be the Primary Academic Advisor for students engaged in the International Studies Minor.

#### *Awards, Scholarships and Minor Completions*

The following students received the IS recognition awards for their performance in International Studies:

**Olivia Bohnhoff** ~ *International Studies Ambassador*

**Nancy Kaj** ~ *International Studies Expert*

One student was awarded an IS scholarship for a study abroad program.

**Steven Middleton**, Morocco – summer 2015 (\$500)

Mr. Middleton will be studying Arabic and the cultures of North Africa in his study abroad program.

The following students completed their Senior Projects for IS – 490 and thus the IS Minor requirements.

**Matthew Bueker** – Department of Languages, Literatures and Linguistics

**Nancy Kaj** – Department of Economics

**Katherine Matthias** – Departments of English and Languages, Literatures and Linguistics

**Barbara Niziolek** – Department of Languages, Literatures and Linguistics

### ***Future Issues Needing Attention***

#### *The New Department of Multidisciplinary Studies*

The coming academic year will have the IS Programs in a new administrative structure that is considerably more complicated than what we have been used to with Interdisciplinary Programs. It will have seven programs altogether as well as resident faculty members in Philosophy and Sociology. In her campus interview, Dr. Selman expressed optimism that, unusual as it is, this grouping of programs and faculty could be collaborative and mutually supporting. Unexpected challenges will likely arise. It is my belief that the IS Affiliated Faculty are sufficiently resilient and capable of surmounting any difficulties that come our way.

#### *Recruitment ~ Students and Faculty*

There is considerable scope for expansion in the number of ISU students who declare the IS Minor. We should encourage more to do so. This minor is complementary to a broad range of major programs of study. Please help to spread the word on what we offer students to expand their perspective and make them stronger applicants for employment.

We also seek to have broader engagement with faculty in the professional colleges of ISU. I am aware of several faculty members in the Colleges of Business, Education, Health and Human Services and Technology who have international interests and experience that could make substantive contributions to the International Studies Program. You probably know some as well. Encourage them to engage with us.