Elements of the Assessment Process  
Form E-1-A for Boston College Departments/Programs

Department/Program  International Studies, B.A. Degree

1) Have formal learning outcomes been developed? What are they? (What specific sets of skills and knowledge does the department expect its majors to have acquired before they graduate?)

(a) Students are expected to develop an interdisciplinary understanding of international affairs. Students should be able to apply basic analytical frameworks to analyze problems and interpret policy alternatives.
(b) Students also are expected to obtain a basic understanding of the core concepts and methodological tools used in the discipline(s) comprising their chosen track of the major. Students should be able to interpret and apply basic methods and understand empirical papers of an appropriate level.
(c) Students are expected to develop basic facility with theoretical and empirical applications of the discipline(s) comprising their track through a set of elective courses.
(d) When writing papers, students are expected to responsibly utilize data and research methods and to give appropriate attribution to original work and source material.
(e) Students are expected to understand the differences between positive and normative dimensions of international affairs, in particular as applied to instances for which ethical aspects conflict with, or reinforce, power and economic objectives.

2) Where are these learning outcomes published? Be specific. (Where are the department’s learning expectations accessible to potential majors: on the web or in the catalog or in your dept major handouts?)

The above learning outcomes are found under the "International Studies Major" heading found at the International Studies Program website [bc.edu/isp]. They also are presented in alternative prose in the university course catalogue.

3) Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine whether graduates have achieved the stated outcomes for the degree? (What do you use to assess which of the student learning outcomes are being achieved more or less well?)

(a) Faculty teaching the senior seminar will use a 1-5 scale to evaluate senior performance in their courses with respect to each of the learning outcomes detailed in (1) above. The Director of International Studies will construct average scores across these seminars. Annual reports will be maintained in the International Studies Program files.
(b) The faculty member overseeing the senior honors thesis course will use a 1-5 scale to evaluate senior performance on a randomly selected sample of completed theses with respect to each of the learning outcomes detailed in (1) above. The Director of International Studies will construct average scores across all theses. Annual reports will be maintained in the International Studies Program files.
(c) Senior majors will complete an exit survey asking how well they believe they achieved the learning outcomes detailed in (1) above.
4) **Who interprets the evidence? What is the process?** (Who in the department is responsible for interpreting the data and making recommendations for curriculum or assignment changes if appropriate?)

(a) The Director of International Studies will form and chair a faculty subcommittee of the International Studies Academic Advisory Board at least every third year to formally review the undergraduate curriculum in light of the data described in (3) above. This subcommittee will make recommendations to be discussed at a meeting of the full Academic Advisory Board. A written report of these recommendations and actions taken will be maintained in International Studies Program files. More generally, the Director of International Studies reports to and is advised by the Academic Advisory Board at semi-annual meetings to discuss undergraduate issues, curriculum and program modifications.

(b) The Director of International Studies or his/her designated representative will have primary responsibility for arranging teacher reviews, designing and evaluating any exit surveys, and designing/implementing all program modifications.