

Form E-1-A for Boston College Departments/Programs

Department/Program: ICSP

- 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?)
 1. demonstrate substantial knowledge in their chosen concentration in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies: Art History, History, Language and Culture, Politics and International Relations, or Theology;
 2. conduct scholarly research at the undergraduate level, including submission of the senior thesis, which must be approved by a faculty committee;
 3. demonstrate intermediate level of proficiency in at least one relevant language, such as Arabic, Hebrew, Turkish or Farsi;
 4. think analytically, write cogently, and speak clearly about the Greater Middle East and Islamic world

- 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?)

Learning outcomes are clearly described and published on the ICSP website www.bc.edu/ics and reiterated during advisement periods. Hard copies of the learning outcomes are handed to students when they declare the ICS major.

- 3) Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine whether graduates have achieved the stated outcomes for the degree? (What evidence and analytical approaches do you use to assess which of the student learning outcomes are being achieved more or less well?)
 1. students are tested on their language facility at each stage on an annual basis and the results are logged;
 2. The DUS/Associate Director reviews writing samples of each student in the third year before approval for senior thesis is given;
 3. Senior theses are rated annually for overall quality of writing, clarity of argument, framing of research questions, and use of citations;
 4. Students are tracked after graduation to check for employment and admission to graduate programs in the field
- 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? When does this occur?)

The Undergraduate Program Committee meets annually in the fall semester to review and discuss aggregate data. It makes recommendations to individual students, and to the program faculty as a whole for improvements. The entire ICSP faculty also meets for regular faculty meetings at which time curriculum issues can be brought up. The Associate Director reviews all senior thesis proposals in the summer before senior year, and requires weekly reports on senior thesis progress beginning in the fall of senior year. The senior thesis committee reviews all completed theses in April with an eye to satisfaction of learning outcomes.

- 5) What changes have been made as a result of using the data/evidence? (Have there been any recent changes to your curriculum or program? Why were they made?)
1. We have created a well-developed 80 page guide that explains the entire process of writing a thesis. In particular, the chapters on developing a research question, writing a proposal, framing an argument, and conducting original research have proved most valuable. The booklet is required reading for the ICSP research seminar.
 2. More flexibility has been built into the program so that students on the Politics track can take more Humanities courses and vice versa. This change was done to ensure that the interdisciplinary nature of the program was emphasized.
 3. Additional outside language opportunities have been added to improve language facility, such as NaTakallam which allows students to Skype with Syrian refugees in Arabic.
 4. Efforts are being made to improve advanced levels of all relevant languages. We have found in exit interviews with students that, although the first two years are strong, students languish in the more advanced levels, often returning from abroad with no structured courses to take.
 5. The senior thesis seminar is now offered in the spring semester as a continuation of the fall course. Previously, only the fall seminar was required data, including student feedback, indicated that the seminar should be offered in the spring to ensure high quality research and writing in the final product.
- 6) Date of the most recent program review. (Your latest comprehensive departmental self-study and external review.)

Internal program review was completed in May 2021 and was based on student interviews and course evaluations followed by faculty meeting. The next review is scheduled for fall 2024.