International Studies Course Guidelines

In the University Calendar, the entry of an IS course prioritizes the study of international processes, institutions and peoples in today’s global society. “International” is used in its macro-level sense (e.g., global and worldwide), and not in a narrow micro-level manner (e.g., between a number of countries or nations). An IS course emphasizes global phenomena which are manifest beyond national boundaries and have a worldwide reach. Students are taught about border-crossing interactions, practices and processes that are cultural, economic, humanitarian, political and/or social in character, running temporally to the twenty-first century to facilitate understanding of the present era.

University Calendar Entry for Courses Receiving the IS Designation

1. There must be no ambiguity in the calendar entry of a designated International Studies (IS) course as to whether or not it warrants the designation. It is assumed and expected that a course syllabus will reflect the nature of the calendar entry.

2. An IS course must emphasize (1) the study of worldwide phenomena, processes, institutions and/or peoples in a global context, rather than in more local, national or regional contexts, and (2) comprehension of the present day. The designation is reserved for regularized humanities and social sciences courses at the 2000-level or above.

3. Receiving the IS attribute is the outcome of a process that involves meeting the following minimum standards:
   a) The calendar entry as a whole must clearly emphasize global/worldwide study. Formative concepts such as global, international and/or worldwide must appear. These are supplemented by related concepts such as globalization, global reception, intercontinental, transcontinental, transnational, transcending boundaries, and so on;
   b) The course title will indicate global/worldwide study, as this reduces ambiguity no matter who is teaching the course, making it easier for students to identify eligible courses on their transcript. Notwithstanding this, some flexibility with respect to the formal title will be considered if there is ample clarity within the formal description; and
   c) Once the IS attribute has been assigned, the calendar entry must include the following statement: “All sections of this course follow International Studies guidelines available at www.mun.ca/hss/IS”.

4. Notwithstanding that some IS courses are primarily designed to meet the needs of a program’s Honours, Major and/or Minor course requirements, an IS course is as free of prerequisites as is reasonably possible in order to facilitate enrollment by students with diverse disciplinary backgrounds.

5. Due to the entry-level nature of content, a 1000-level course is not eligible for the designation.

6. Due to their temporal nature and limited formalized descriptions, special topics courses do not qualify. Such courses may provisionally receive the designation via a waiver request provided that the instructor commits to regularizing the course.
7. A designated Critical Reading and Writing (CRW), Language Study (LS) or Quantitative Reasoning (QR) course will not be eligible for the IS designation, unless it is comprehensively demonstrated that both qualifications will be met on an ongoing basis.

Examples of Eligible and Ineligible Courses

Based on the criteria outlined here, a course with the IS designation might:

- refer to international concepts in the course title;
- articulate cultural lenses of Indigenous peoples across the globe;
- examine the global contexts of world cinema or literature;
- explore a variety of cultural approaches to forms of inequality around the world;
- focus on how the United Nations is confronting global poverty;
- investigate the international regime of oceans management;
- study a worldwide economic event or mass movement; or
- deal with any number of other issues and processes that are clearly taught in an international context.

Not all courses that feature international, global or multidisciplinary subject matter have the IS designation. Some courses may study issues, peoples and phenomena that transcend national borders, but not consider them from a global perspective or consider the present day. In this respect, the defining criterion should be whether a course examines an international subject in its global context. Courses that feature international content, but do not receive the IS designation might include those which:

- identify a country in the course title;
- understand Indigenous peoples as primarily Canadian, or through the Canadian context;
- study a single country or region outside of Canada, such as Europe;
- compare cinema and/or literature around the world without concern for global aspects;
- examine issues like feminism or religion without an explicit focus on global practices/implications;
- explore the implications of oceans management for the Newfoundland and Labrador fishery;
- prioritize an introduction to an academic discipline (e.g., a department’s introductory course);
- investigate the effects of poverty in a few countries without a worldwide context;
- look at the economics of a chosen continent on a philosophical or practical level; or
- deal with any number of other issues and phenomena that are not taught as international, perhaps because the manner of instruction does not prioritize the associated global implications which are supported by case studies drawn from around the world.

Administrative Matters

8. The following administrative practices are normally observed:

a. All questions regarding the IS eligibility of a course should be referred by academic unit Heads to the Faculty’s Committee on Undergraduate Studies (CUGS).

b. In the event of concerns about designated IS courses’ adherence to these guidelines, the Chair of CUGS, in consultation with the relevant academic unit Head or designate, will coordinate a review. On the recommendation of CUGS, the IS guidelines shall be updated by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Academic unit Heads are responsible for ensuring that designated IS courses observe the principles within those guidelines.

c. Courses that are eligible to satisfy the IS requirement are designated by an appropriate indication in the University Calendar. Such a notation must be approved by Senate, after which the Office of the Registrar will apply the appropriate attribute on the course catalogue in Banner. The application of this attribute on Banner allows easy identification of courses which satisfy this requirement when that Office advises faculty, staff, and students.
d. In the event that a course substitution for an individual student is deemed necessary by CUGS, such a decision will not set a precedent, and a record of the Committee's decision will be maintained by the Office of the Registrar in student files. If CUGS approves a substitution, it shall be on the basis of extraordinary circumstances, and the committee will encourage the Head of the corresponding academic unit to initiate a Calendar change proposal to formally assign the IS designation to the course so that it is visible to all.

e. A course completed at another institution whose syllabus at the time of delivery clearly establishes that the course content has observed these guidelines may, upon approval of CUGS in consultation with the Head of the relevant academic unit, be deemed eligible for transfer with the IS designation.

9. Information in the University Calendar and approved by Senate prevails over information in these guidelines.