The Institute of World Politics
Curriculum Review: Year 3

Report to the Academic Council
17 May 2021

The Institute of World Politics internal Curriculum Review is now in the final stage of its three-year cycle. In Year 1, a review was conducted of objectives and learning outcomes at the institutional and program levels to assure their continued relevance to the Institute's educational mission and priorities. In Year 2, faculty subcommittees appointed by the Dean conducted a "redundancies and gaps analysis" of IWP's degree and certificate programs to determine whether there were either excessive duplication of course material or insufficient coverage of important subjects. In Year 3, individual faculty members are revising and updating their syllabi in light of the Year 1 and Year 2 reviews.

During the Year 2 review, the faculty generally felt that the overall curriculum was sound and broadly consistent with the school's mission and learning outcomes. However, they also noted a number of gaps and areas for improvement. The first recommendation concerned revising the political philosophy classes at IWP, making all three courses required for standard MA students and changing them from four-credit courses to two-credit courses with the remaining two credits to be applied to a required capstone course, taken in a student's final semester at IWP. The capstone course was originally set to begin in the spring semester of 2021 on a trial basis; however, due to a lack of students registering for the course, its launch has been pushed to Spring 2022.

Further findings during the Year 2 review proposed updating course readings to include more recent scholarship and the rebalancing of course coverage to be less "Cold War-heavy." The report also endorsed better incorporation of US government information, enhanced coverage of foreign government perspectives, and a reexamination of IWP's electives to ensure the classes align with each degree for which they are offered. At the 2020 fall faculty meeting, faculty were informed of the recommendations of the Curriculum Review and asked to update their syllabi to reflect these suggestions and to revise (as appropriate) their Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) to ensure that they are compatible with the Institute's Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) and Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO).

IWP has successfully changed the political philosophy courses to two-credit required classes and faculty have been adjusting their reading lists to incorporate more contemporary scholarship. Furthermore, all syllabi are now required to include an SLO chart, which will facilitate the process of ensuring that course learning outcomes support the broader program outcomes.

The curriculum review process will begin again next year, when all ILO and PLO will be reviewed to determine if they require revision. The Dean will report these findings to the AC with his recommendations in the Spring of 2022.