

Millikin University
Student Learning in IN350 Sequential Requirement (University Studies)

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For 2010-2011

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Global Issues is the final of six courses in the sequential component of University Studies. Students entering as freshmen typically take the Global Issues course in the junior year. The IN350 Global Issues courses explore topics of global importance and build on the skills students have developed in previous sequential university studies courses (i.e., IN140, IN150, IN151, IN250, and IN251). After serving as IN350 Coordinator from October 2009 to December 2010, Dr. Jervis was awarded a sabbatical leave and was replaced by Cheryl Hilgenberg, who assumed responsibilities as IN350 Coordinator January 21, 2011. In addition, new IN350 Learning Goals were implemented Fall semester 2011.

As Dr. Jervis noted in the 2010 report, consistency has been difficult to attain because of different assessment processes and different faculty serving in the IN350 Coordinator position. Another difference that will be noted in this report is the implementation of new learning goals. Valuable data from the assessment process will be analyzed to improve the continued implementation and assessment practices.

Learning Goals

The Nyberg Summer Seminar Project 2007 faculty team recommended the renaming of Global Studies to Global Issues to give new focus to the courses and revised the learning goals (p. 7). Recommendations coming from this team were reviewed and revised during the 2007-2008 academic year, with final reforms voted on and passed by faculty university-wide. The course description for IN350 courses for 2010-2011 is as follows:

IN350. Global Issues (3) Junior year. Global Issues courses, taken during the junior year, explore a topic of global importance. Students will continue to develop their understanding of democratic citizenship with an intense focus on a particular issue of global importance and associated ethical and social justice issues. These courses include a significant research component, are writing

intensive, and require exploration of primary sources (e.g., texts, music, artifacts, etc.).

The learning goals are that the student will be able to

- analyze a topic of global importance and associated ethical and social justice issues through substantive research, including examination of primary sources;
- reflect on how a topic of global importance affects them as democratic citizens of a global community as well as how their behavior relates to the topic locally and globally; and
- engage in activities characteristic of democratic citizenship in a global environment.

Achievement of IN350 learning outcomes facilitates advancement of the university mission to prepare students for professional success, democratic citizenship in a global environment, and a personal life of meaning and value. The IN350 courses facilitate students' global awareness which is foundational for professional success, democratic citizenship, and a personal life of meaning and value and complements learning in the major to achieve the university mission.

Snapshot

According to the Course Listings on MU Online (5-27-11), in fall 2010, 16 sections of IN350 Global Issues courses were taught with a total of 275 students enrolled in all sections. Ten of these sections (serving 200 students) were offered in the traditional program; six sections (serving 75 students) were offered in the PACE delivery format.

In spring 2011, 22 sections of IN350 Global Issues were taught with 308 students enrolled. Sixteen of the sections were offered in the traditional program with 229 students enrolled, and 79 students enrolled in the six sections provided in the PACE delivery format.

Global Issues course offerings in the 2010-2011 academic year offered a wide array of choices for students. Faculty from a wide variety of disciplines offered courses as diverse as Global Women's Writing; Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan; Sociology of Globalization; Global Environmentalism, and Global Approach to Medicine and Healthcare. Many sections were offered on campus, but other offered travel experiences to international destinations such as London and Spain.

The Learning Story

The 2010-2011 academic year was the first year for implementation of the new IN350 Global Issues learning goals that were recommended in the Nyberg Summer Seminar Project 2007 report. The new learning goals were revised by the Council on Curriculum during the 2007-2008 academic year, and voted on and passed by the full faculty in Spring 2008. The focus of Global Issues courses is to guide students' in thinking beyond the local and national environment to explore a topic of global importance.

The Nyberg Summer Seminar Project 2008 report further developed three learning threads that were identified in the 2007 Nyberg report for focus in the sequential elements of the University Studies program: reflection, writing, and ethical reasoning. These three threads are evident in the IN350 learning goals and are integrated in each of the IN350 courses. The courses are designed to be writing intensive which means students are expected to critically analyze a topic of global importance through substantive research that includes primary sources resulting in a research paper with multiple drafts and guided revision. Students apply ethical reasoning to examine ethical and social justice issues and reflect on how a specific global issue affects them as democratic citizens locally as well as globally. The diversity of courses offered throughout the year presents opportunities to view the world from a different perspective and consider issues from a different cultural viewpoint. The skills of writing, reflection, and ethical reasoning that students learn in the IN350 Global Issues courses and the understanding of important topics affecting our world from a different perspective help students achieve the university mission of professional success and democratic citizenship in a global environment. Application of ethical reasoning fosters the development of a life of meaning and value.

Assessment Methods

A review of student artifacts using a rubric developed by the 2010-1011 IN350 Assessment Team (see Appendix A) was the method of assessment to determine achievement of the new IN350 learning goals implemented this academic year.

A request was made by the IN350 Coordinator for faculty to submit artifacts of student assignments that were to be used to assess achievement of IN350 learning goals. Fall semester, artifacts from two sections of IN350 were submitted, and artifacts from six sections were submitted spring semester. All were from traditional courses; no artifacts were submitted this year from PACE courses.

The Assessment Team and University Studies Director, Dr. Carmella Braniger, met May 27th to discuss the assessment process. Samples were randomly

selected from each section that submitted artifacts and were divided equally among the three team members and coordinator. The 2010 IN350 Assessment Rubric was reviewed and revised to reflect the new IN350 learning goals (Appendix A). After previewing the artifacts, there was consensus among the group that the artifacts did not reflect evidence of Goal 3: Engagement in activities characteristic of democratic citizenship. The director, coordinator, and team members agreed that it was most appropriate not to assess Goal 3 this year, but to concentrate efforts on Goal 1 and Goal 2. In applying the rubric with a maximum score of 5.0, the group set benchmarks for a rating of green, yellow, and red. A mean score of 3.5—5.0 would be considered meeting expectations and would be awarded the green designation indicating excellence; a mean score of 2.0—3.4 would be designated yellow or adequate; and a mean score of 1.9 or below would be designated as red or nominal. Artifacts were assessed by individual team members and results returned to the coordinator for analysis.

Assessment Data

The IN350 Assessment Team reviewed six artifacts from the two sections that submitted artifacts in fall 2011. The following table presents the assessment results for fall 2011.

IN350 Learning Goal	Mean Rating Fall 2010	Overall Assessment
1. Analyze a topic of global importance	2.5	Yellow
2. Reflect on issue's affect on them	3.3	Yellow
3. Engage in democratic citizenship	<i>Not assessed</i>	

The IN350 Assessment Team assessed 38 artifacts from the six IN350 sections that submitted materials for spring 2011. The following table displays the findings of the team.

IN350 Learning Goal	Mean Rating Spring 2011	Overall Assessment
1. Analyze a topic of global Importance	2.36	Yellow
2. Reflect on issue's affect on them	2.42	Yellow
3. Engage in democratic citizenship	<i>Not assessed</i>	

In examining the success of meeting IN350 Global Issues learning goals for the entire 2010-2011 academic year, the data suggests that students are adequately meeting Goal 1 and Goal 2, but not at the level of excellence.

IN350 Learning Goal	Mean Rating 2010-2011 Year	Overall Assessment
1. Analyze a topic of global Importance	2.38	Yellow
2. Reflect on issue's affect on them	2.55	Yellow
3. Engage in democratic citizenship	<i>Not assessed</i>	

Analysis of Assessment Results

Data from the analysis indicates students in 2010-2011 were meeting learning Goal 1 and Goal 2 at an adequate level, but not at the level of excellence. In interpreting the data, it is important to note that new learning goals were implemented in fall 2011. Perhaps not all faculty members had adjusted their assignments so that achievement of the new learning goals was clearly evident in the artifacts submitted this year. The number of sections submitted artifacts was low; only eight sections turned in artifacts compared to 19 sections in 2009-2010.

Only one of the faculty members on the 2010-2011 IN350 Assessment Team participated in the assessment process last year. Two team members and the coordinator were new to the IN350 assessment process. Perhaps the standards in applying the new rubric by the assessment team this year were different from previous years. It is also important to note that although Global Issues is the final course in the sequential portion of University Studies for students entering as freshmen, many transfer students taking an IN350 course have not had the benefit of taking earlier foundational courses in the sequence. Junior transfer students are unlikely to have the same level of experience in writing, reflection, and ethical reasoning, and the lack of previous learning may be reflected in the artifacts submitted for assessment.

Because new IN350 learning goals were implemented fall 2010, meaningful comparisons cannot be made with the 2009-2010 IN350 Global Studies report or previous reports. Current IN350 Global Issues learning goals were met at the adequate level in the first year of assessment, but the yellow rating indicates that strategies to improve student achievement of learning goals needs to be explored.

Improvement Plan

The low number of IN350 sections that submitted artifacts raises the question of the accuracy of the assessment findings. In the coming year, the assessment process would be improved by exploring a consistent process that can be put in place so that a more representative sample of artifacts can be retrieved and assessed. A special focus will be directed at obtaining artifacts from IN350 courses offered in the PACE format. For improved achievement of IN350 learning goals, faculty members teaching IN350 courses need to engage in dialogue to share ideas and have input into the assessment process. Discussion of creating appropriate artifacts that can assess the third learning goal--Engage in democratic citizenship—needs to be explored. Through the assessment process, it has become apparent that the language of goal three is somewhat problematic making it difficult to adequately assess artifacts for achievement of this goal.

The assessment of learning goals should accurately reflect student learning in IN350 courses in ways that foster innovative, creative teaching-learning strategies that are stimulating and challenging to students and faculty alike. The annual IN350 Assessment Report is found on the Millikin Assessment page and is available to all faculty members. Increased effort needs to be directed at establishing conversations with all IN350 faculty to improve understanding of the new IN350 learning goals and discuss artifacts that can accurately reflect student learning in these areas. One workshop was held spring semester for IN350 faculty members which was very valuable but poorly attended. A series of workshops may enhance ongoing dialogue and increase attendance among IN350 faculty members. Faculty development opportunities need to be directed at faculty teaching in the PACE delivery format as well as faculty teaching in the traditional semester format. Strategies to facilitate student learning and achievement of the IN350 learning goals will hopefully result in higher scores in future years.

Appendix A

IN350 Global Issues Assessment Rubric
for 2010-2011 Learning Goals

Semester _____

Goal	Excellent (5 points)	Adequate (3 points)	Nominal (1 point)
1. Analyze a topic of global importance and associated ethical/social justice issues through substantive research, including examination of primary sources.	An excellent analysis demonstrates the student's consistent ability to use discipline-appropriate primary sources. The student interprets, rather than summarizes, relevant evidence. Students formulate a well-positioned and well-supported argument by critically synthesizing multiple perspectives on a topic of global importance and associated ethical/social justice issues through substantive research, including examination of primary sources.	An adequate analysis demonstrates the student's inconsistent attempt to use discipline-appropriate primary sources. The student may make errors in documentation and/or grammar and mechanics. Student may summarize in large part rather than synthesize diverse points of view on a topic of global importance and associated ethical/social justice issues through research, including examination of primary sources.	A nominal analysis demonstrates no attempt to edit or document. There are many errors in documentation and/or grammar and mechanics. The research is inadequate and/or fails to analyze a topic of global importance and associated ethical/social justice issues.
2. Reflect on how a topic of global importance affects them as democratic citizens of a global community as well as how their behavior relates to the topic locally and globally.	An excellent reflection demonstrates a deep understanding of how a topic of global importance affects them as democratic citizens of a global community as well as how their behavior relates to the topic locally and globally.	An adequate reflection demonstrates an average ability to understand how a topic of global importance affects them as democratic citizens of a global community as well as how their behavior relates to the topic locally and globally.	A nominal reflection demonstrates no attempt to understand how a topic of global importance affects them as democratic citizens of a global community as well as how their behavior relates to the topic locally and globally.
3. Engage in activities characteristic of democratic citizenship in global environment	<i>Not assessed</i>	<i>Not assessed</i>	<i>Not assessed</i>

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