

REVIEW OF THE B.A., B.S. IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

Classification of Instruction Programs (CIP) Code: 52.1101
International Business/Trade/Commerce

Review Outcome: The Academic Planning Committee, as a result of this review process, finds the B.A., B.S. in International Business program to be in Good Standing.

The Academic Planning Committee recognizes that many of the efforts and activities that led to the development of the self-study report were accomplished during the time period coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic. The committee thanks the program for a comprehensive and critical self-study report that included input from multiple stakeholders. The curriculum in the B.A., B.S. in International Business offers an interdisciplinary program, combining core courses in general business and world languages with advanced courses in international business. The advanced courses focus not only on international activities in different functions, but also at the way cultures affect business operations and the legal environments globally. The program is designed for students seeking to work with global opportunities for corporations, governments, or non-profit organizations. The curriculum is delivered by faculty members who collaborate to provide foundational courses and specialized courses. Illinois State University is the only public institution in the state currently offering this degree program.

The committee commends faculty efforts to sustain the program's enrollment during the period covering the program review cycle through the use of several recruitment strategies identified in the self-study report that the program has begun using (e.g., hosting recruiting events, participation in open houses, and through involvement in the Illinois Global Scholar program). We further commend the program faculty for their efforts that have resulted in consistent enrollment of students from traditionally underrepresented groups, ranging between 30 and 41 percent over the past five years.

The committee recognizes the program faculty's commitment to activities that support student success. We commend the program on its ability to continue to limit enrollments in many of its courses, which is in keeping with the University's commitment to fostering a small-college atmosphere with large-university opportunities. The committee commends the program's development and support of international internships, exchange partnerships, and study abroad opportunities that are central to the student experience within the program. We also note that the program encourages and supports student participation in conferences, symposia, competitions (e.g., International Business Case competitions), and several registered student organizations (RSOs; e.g., International Business Association). We congratulate the program faculty for their mentoring of four Bone Scholars and for support leading to high participation in the Honors program on campus (ranging between 9 and 13 percent). The committee commends the faculty for their efforts that have allowed near 70 percent to complete their degree within 4 years, especially considering high participation in study abroad and that many students enrolled in the program chose to enroll in a second program. We also note that the employment and salary data indicate strong outcomes for program graduates. The committee also commends the program advisors for their efforts to support students transferring both into and out of the major. The committee notes the fall-to-fall retention rates are generally at or above the University-wide rates overall. The committee commends the program's efforts to keep their alumni engaged through social media, homecoming events, and periodic personal email contacts.

The committee commends the faculty's work to revise the curriculum during the period of review based on feedback from multiple stakeholders. These efforts included the elimination of the two tracks, a redesign of requirements regarding the international function courses, the development of additional options to satisfy the language requirements, and the development of a new course in emerging and developing markets. We further commend the Department of Management and Quantitative Methods and the College of Business for their continued accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business-International (AACSB) and wish them well for their reaccreditation efforts in fall 2021.

The committee notes the faculty members of the program for their scholarly contributions to the B.A., B.S. in International Business program. Faculty members are active researchers who publish in international peer-reviewed journals.

The committee commends the program faculty on the development and implementation of their plan for the assessment of student learning outcomes, especially within a program that includes coursework and faculty that span the entire college. The assessment plan provides for collecting evidence of student performance, evaluating this evidence with rubrics, and consulting with the program advisory board in curricular and program review based on this evidence. The self-study report provides ample evidence that evaluation and assessment findings continue to be used by faculty to design and implement program modifications.

Follow-up Report.

Aspirational Programs. The committee has included analyses of comparator and aspirational programs in the self-study report guidelines to provide faculty with opportunities to consider the niche their program has among its peers and to gather information for program planning. The committee would like the program to revisit the aspirational section of the self-study. Although the faculty did briefly discuss aspirational initiatives the committee believes that an analysis of institutions that have international business program [perhaps others institute members of the Consortium for Undergraduate International Business Education (CUIBE)] will provide greater insight into the initiatives that faculty have identified in their self-study. Accordingly, the committee asks faculty to revisit their discussions of aspirational institutions and to summarize the findings of those discussions in a report submitted to the Office of the Provost by May 15, 2022.

Recommendations.

The Academic Planning Committee thanks faculty and staff of the B.A., B.S. in International Business program for the opportunity to provide input regarding the program at Illinois State University through consideration of the submitted self-study report. The following committee recommendations to be addressed within the next regularly scheduled review cycle are provided in a spirit of collaboration with program faculty and staff. In the next program review self-study report, tentatively due October 1, 2028, the committee asks the program to describe actions taken and results achieved for each recommendation.

Update the program's strategic plan. The committee agrees that the program faculty should engage in discussions to review and revise the program's strategic plan in light of the changes in the support structures of the program (e.g., administrative restructuring, new dedicated physical space, financial endowment).

Continue to monitor enrollment trends and program growth. The committee encourages faculty to continue to actively monitor the growing enrollments and how it is impacting the program. We encourage the program faculty to look to their comparator and aspirational institutions for indicators of enrollment growth impacts on program quality. The committee encourages the program to continue to monitor their strategies for increasing enrollment by students from gender, racial, and ethnic groups traditionally underrepresented in the program and discipline. The committee recommends that the program work with the College of Business administration to explore and support ways to better market and increase early awareness of the program so that prospective students will enroll earlier (ideally as incoming freshmen). The committee agrees that the program will benefit from strengthening their relationship with INTO and the International House (both on campus). We suggest that the program faculty explore opportunities for collaboration with other programs within the University outside of the College of Business and examine the impact of restricting some courses and minor programs only to students within the College.

Continue to focus on diversity, inclusion, and equity. The committee encourages the program to pursue its goals related to further developing a diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment that effectively supports students, faculty, and staff from diverse backgrounds. While the committee commends the inclusion of MQM 349 (Cross-Cultural Behavior in Business) as a required course, we recommend that the faculty continue their efforts to infuse both domestic and international diversity issues across the broader curriculum.

Develop a plan for student success and retention. The committee recommends that the program faculty develop a plan for student success. The plan should be used to increase transparency and communication around "student success" by defining the program's goals for, assessment of, and actions towards supporting students enrolled in the program. The plan may provide an overarching structure for other plans (e.g., retention, time-to-degree, curriculum, alumni engagement). The committee notes the program's concerns regarding extremely high advisor loads. We support the efforts to develop avenues designed to reduce these loads. We also recommend that the College

Advisement Center review their metrics for advising effectiveness, looking beyond student outcomes exclusively. The committee also encourages the program to ensure that students are provided sufficient advising with regards to the selection of courses during? their international experiences to support students' ability to graduate on time. We suggest that looking to aspirational institutions may provide valuable insights for the development of action items for this plan.

Complete a review and evaluation of the changes to the curriculum. The committee encourages faculty to complete a comprehensive review of coursework in the program. Although the committee commends the program for offering a minor in international business, we ask that the program explore ways to open that program to non-business majors. The committee also recommends that the program examine the catalog copy to ensure that there is clarity regarding the requirements for international experiences (e.g., the rationale for different credit hour requirements across the international experiences). The committee encourages the program to continue developing opportunities for student scholarship and creative activities. We suggest that looking to aspirational institutions may provide valuable insights for the development of action items for this plan.

Continue the collaborative work with Milner Library. The committee recommends that the program work with the subject liaison librarian to examine and evaluate the library's journals and monograph collection related to international business to aid in both the selection and deselection process of these sources. Given recent journal cancellations and expected increases in distance and hybrid courses, we encourage the Department and Library to further collaborate to increase awareness of alternative access to resources, such as Interlibrary Loan and I-Share lending, among faculty and students. We also recommend that the program work with the subject liaison librarian to develop a tiered approach for information fluency learning outcomes for the Department, align those outcomes to the curricula, and integrate those outcomes into the student learning outcomes assessment plan for the program.

Continue implementing and refining the student learning outcomes assessment plan. The committee encourages faculty to continue its implementation of the student learning outcomes assessment plan for the program during the next program review cycle, to continue to utilize information gathered through plan implementation to make program revisions as necessary, and to document how that has been done. The committee encourages faculty to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the plan in assessing student learning to identify any modifications to the plan faculty may deem necessary. The committee supports the development of student learning outcomes that are specific to the distinctive international objectives of the program including the assessment of cultural awareness growth among the program's students.

Panama program assessment plan. The committee commends the program for their innovative partnership with the Quality Leadership University in Panama and greatly appreciated the additional information regarding this partnership program. However, the committee expressed some concerns about the potential differences between experiences and opportunities of the Illinois and Panama student cohorts. We strongly recommend that the program develop an assessment plan that will allow a comparison of the student experiences and outcomes across the two cohorts (domestic and international).

Continue to refine a plan for alumni tracking and engagement. The committee encourages the program faculty to continue to refine their plan for tracking and engaging program alumni and use this system to enhance alumni networking. These activities may become even more important in the years ahead as the program's alumni become more diverse. The program could benefit from increased involvement of its alumni in providing input regarding the program and in mentoring students. The committee recommends that the program explore the potential of developing an advisory board to provide additional stakeholder feedback to guide program development.