

2016

## Academic Learning Compact : Interdisciplinary Social Sciences [Effective 2016]

University of South Florida St. Petersburg.

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Academic Learning Compact: Fall 2016- Spring 2017

*“ . . . to ensure student achievement in undergraduate and graduate degree programs . . . ”*



**Academic Learning Compacts**  
**Academic Year: Fall 2016 & Spring 2017**

**Due: May 19, 2017**

**Academic Program-linked College Mission-based Goals/Objectives**

In the matrix on the following page, please place an X in the grid that identifies the degree program goals and objectives that align with the institutional mission-based goals/objectives and the College based goals/objectives. These goals/objectives need to be documented in your ALC data.



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**Signature Page for Academic Program**

**Academic Program:** Interdisciplinary Social Sciences

**Chair/Coordinator:** Dr. Rebecca Johns

**Date:** Nov. 30, 2017

**Summary Statement – Academic Program Performance in Fall 2016- Spring 2017**

*Provide a summary statement about academic program performance over the previous year including high points and low points*

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Following our external review, which was completed in 2016, ISS has implemented suggested changes as appropriate. For example, we added the new research methods requirement, which will be taught by Dr. Byron Miller this coming year. We modified our curriculum to add an additional requirement to our core, ISS 1102 or ISS 1103. This will further strengthen our interaction with our students from an early point in their academic careers and allow us to have a greater positive impact on their intellectual growth. While these changes were approved, they were not implemented until the 2017-2018 academic year so we cannot assess their impact yet.

We continued to graduate a large number of students over the past year. This caused the numbers of our majors to drop. We have increased our recruiting efforts through the implementation of a FUSE program with St. Petersburg College and through an outreach to non-traditional students with the help of USFSP’s recruitment office. The launching of our new Sociology concentration has also started to attract new students to ISS and we are seeing an increase of students coming to USFSP with ISS already in mind for a major.

The hard work we have put in over the years to increase the rigor of our major and to ensure that students arrive at the challenging senior seminar (ISS 4935) prepared to be successful has paid off. As we can see from the rate of success of our students on the assessments in our Academic Learning Compact, students are doing well and are mastering each assignment successfully, with the one exception of the three debates in ISS 3010. Dr. Gaskin-Butler has used this assessment successfully for a number of years; it is not clear if this group of students found the assignment more challenging than students have in the past or if the raising of the standard of performance is what has caused the assessment to now stand out. Faculty will discuss ways to improve student preparation for the assignment. Given that the use of this assessment has been successful in the past, we will continue to utilize it for the coming year and re-evaluate based on additional data at the end of the 2017-2018 year.

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Because we did not have enough students moving through our new curriculum in Spring 2017, the new research course was not offered. Our first opportunity to utilize the new assessments based on assignments in this course will be Spring 2018. In addition, we will be able to use our new ISS 1103 Nature and Culture class as part of this coming year's assessments.

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### **Summary Statement – Impact of Changes Made in Fall 2016- Spring 2017**

*Provide a summary statement about the changes that were made in your program resulting from the ALC's in the preceding Academic Year. Include both the high points and low points*

Based on recommendations from our external reviewers, we raised the targets for performance on all of our ALC assessments this past year. Students rose to the occasion and met these higher targets with one exception.

We implemented new assessments based on the ISS 1102 Self and Society course taught by Dr. Vikki Gaskin-Butler. The ISS 1103 Nature and Culture course will be utilized for assessments in the next ALC as it was first offered in Fall 2017.

The addition of Dr. Byron Miller to the ISS faculty and the launching of the sociology concentration has been a very positive development for our program. Dr. Miller's courses will appear in our 2017-2018 ALC report.

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**Mission of Academic Program (include URL): <http://www.usfsp.edu/scl/home-iss/>**

USF St. Petersburg's Interdisciplinary Social Science (ISS) program is intended to provide students a broad grounding in the social sciences while creating opportunities to explore selected disciplines in more depth. Rather than being a very general, catch-all degree, ISS at USFSP is a focused program in which students work with their advisors to create a unique course of study of specific societal issues and to prepare for specific career paths. The structure of the ISS degree allows a student to pick courses in two disciplinary areas which bring different perspectives or methodological and theoretical approaches to a topic or social problem. The program is research and writing intensive.

**List Program Goal(s) / Objective(s):**

The program emphasizes:

- critical analysis of social issues,
- introduces students to a variety of disciplinary perspectives with which to frame social problems,
- gives students the opportunity to explore the research process,
- exposes students to a variety of methodologies,

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- and emphasizes effective writing and professional presentation skills.

**Program Goals / Objectives must be mapped to College Goals / Objectives – use consistent nomenclature.**

[Please note impact of any changes that were made as a result of 2009-10 assessment]

**ALCs must address student learning in four areas: 1. Content/Discipline Skills; 2. Communication Skills; Critical Thinking Skills; and 4. Civic Engagement.**

**ALC GOALS ESTABLISHED FOR DATA COLLECTION: Fall 2016 & Spring 2017**

<b>1. Content/Discipline Skills</b>				
<b>Goals/Objectives</b>	<b>Means of Assessment/ Corroborating Evidence*</b>	<b>Criteria for Success</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Plan for Use of Findings in Fall 2017 – Spring 2018</b>
<b>1a. Identify an important social issue</b>	ISS 3010: students will identify an important social issue through the use of three structured debates or the development of a short paper.	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the debates.	Fall 2016 VGB: 71% of students earned 70% or higher on this assignment.	The use of debates in this class will be monitored in the coming year and faculty will discuss options for better preparation for students.
	ISS 4935: Students work to identify an appropriate social issue for their research project (Thesis Statement assignment)	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.	Fall 2016 RJ: 81% of students earned 70% or higher on this assignment. Spring 2017; 90% of students met the standard.	This assessment will continue to be used.
<b>1.b. Students will analyze the macro and micro level causes at the root of an important social problem as well as the social economic and cultural structures that help perpetuate the problem</b>	ISS 4935: Students analyze causes of a critical social problem through the original research of their final paper.	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.	Fall 2016 RJ: 100% of students met this standard. Spring 2017 ES, 100% of students met this standard.	This assessment will continue to be used.

\*Please include multiple assessments. For example: students perform well on classroom assignments, norm-referenced tests/surveys, and they get accepted to graduate school or are employed.

<b>2. Communication Skills</b>				
<b>Goals/Objectives</b>	<b>Means of Assessment/ Corroborating Evidence*</b>	<b>Criteria for Success</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Plan for Use of Findings in Fall 2017 – Spring 2018</b>
<b>2a. Write clearly and effectively, producing well organized, logical, well-</b>	ISS 3010: students write three short papers on debate topics or	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.	Fall 2016 VGB: 71% of students earned	The use of debates in this class will be monitored in the coming

<b>supported written arguments that reflect appropriate use of language and meet assignment objectives</b>	one longer research paper.		70% or higher on this assignment.	year and faculty will discuss options for better preparation for students.
	ISS 4935: Students complete a 13 to 15 page original research paper.	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.	Fall 2016 RJ: 100% of students met this standard; Spring 2017 ES, 100% of students met the standard.	This assessment will continue to be used.
<b>2b.Exhibit functional oral communication and exhibit a willingness to share research results with others</b>	ISS 4935 students are expected to present their research findings to the class in a power point presentation or equivalent.  ISS 3300 students will present their work orally at the end of the semester.  ISS 3010: students will engage in three oral debates of critical social issues.	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on these assignments.  80% of students will earn 70% or higher on these assignments.  80% of students will earn 70% or higher on these assignments.	Fall 2016 RJ: 100% of students met this standard. Spring 2017 ES, 90% of students met the standard.  No data; this course was not offered.  Fall 2016 VGB: 71% of students scored 70% or higher on this assignment.	This assessment will continue to be used.  This assessment will be used in Spring 2018 for the first time.  The use of debates in this class will be carefully considered and faculty will discuss options for better preparation for students.

\*Please include multiple assessments. For example: students perform well on classroom assignments, norm-referenced tests/surveys, and they get accepted to graduate school or are employed

### 3. Critical Thinking Skills

Goals/Objectives	Means of Assessment/ Corroborating Evidence*	Criteria for Success	Findings	Plan for Use of Findings in Fall 2017 – Spring 2018
<b>3a.Demonstrate an understanding of how scientific knowledge is generated.</b>	ISS 3300 students will develop research project proposals.  ISS 4935 students will develop research project proposals through a series of steps.	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on these assignments.  80% of students will earn 70% or higher on these assignments.	No data. This course was not offered due to lack of enrollment.  Fall 2016 RJ: Across six assignment steps, for 11 students (66 grades), only 2 grades were ever less than 70% (97% met the standard). Spring 2017 ES: across the assignments, no grades were less than 90%.	This assessment will be used in Spring 2018 for the first time.  This assessment will continue to be used.
<b>3b.Demonstrate sound critical thinking by applying the intellectual standards of the social sciences.</b>	ISS 4935: Students write a 13 to 15 page original research paper of high quality, meeting	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on these assignments.	Fall 2016 RJ: 100% of students met this standard; Spring 2017 ES: 100% of	This assessment will continue to be used.

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	<p>the conventions and standards of their specific disciplinary areas.</p> <p>ISS 3300 students write a research paper of high quality.</p> <p>ISS 3010 students engage in a series of oral debates OR write a short research paper.</p>	<p>80% of students will earn 70% or higher on these assignments.</p> <p>80% of students will earn 70% or higher on these assignments.</p>	<p>students met the standard.</p> <p>No data. This course was not offered due to low enrollment.</p> <p>Fall 2016 VGB: 71% of students scored 70% or higher on this assignment.</p>	<p>This assessment will be used in Spring 2018 for the first time.</p> <p>Student success in this assignment will be carefully monitored in the coming year and faculty will consider how to better prepare students to be successful.</p>
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\*Please include multiple assessments. For example: students perform well on classroom assignments, norm-referenced tests/surveys, and they get accepted to graduate school or are employed

**4. Civic Engagement (optional):**

Goals/Objectives	Means of Assessment/ Corroborating Evidence*	Criteria for Success	Findings	Plan for Use of Findings in Fall 2017 – Spring 2018
ISS is not assessing civic engagement at this time.				

\*Please include multiple assessments. For example: students perform well on classroom assignments, norm-referenced tests/surveys, and they get accepted to graduate school or are employed

Goals/Objectives	Means of Assessment/ Corroborating Evidence*	Criteria for Success	Findings	Plan for Use of Findings in Fall 2017 – Spring 2018
<p><b>5a. Students will exhibit sensitivity to and respect for diversity, and demonstrate a strong understanding of the impact of systems of inequality, power and privilege on groups and individuals as a function of their race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, economic status, and cultural background.</b></p>	<p>ISS 3010: students will engage in three debates about key social issues related to diversity OR write a short research paper engaging one or more of the dimensions of social diversity.</p> <p>ISS 1102 students will write a short paper engaging one or more of the dimensions of social diversity.</p>	<p>80% of students will earn 70% or higher on these assignments.</p> <p>80% of students will earn 70% or higher on these assignments.</p>	<p>Fall 2016 VGB: 71% of students scored 70% or higher on this assignment.</p> <p>Spring 2017 VGB: 90% of students met this standard.</p>	<p>Student success in this assignment will be carefully monitored in the coming year and faculty will consider how to better prepare students to be successful.</p> <p>This assessment will continue to be utilized.</p>

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**ALC GOALS ESTABLISHED FOR DATA COLLECTION: Fall 2017 & Spring 2018**

<b>1. Content / Discipline Skills:</b>				
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Means of Assessment</b>	<b>Criteria for Success</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Plan for Use of Findings Fall 2018 &amp; Spring 2019</b>
<b>1a. Identify an important social issue</b>	ISS 3010: students will identify an important social issue through the use of three structured debates or the development of a short paper	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.		
	ISS 4935: Students work to identify an appropriate social issue for their research project (Thesis Statement assignment)	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.		
<b>1.b. Students will analyze the macro and micro level causes at the root of an important social problem as well as the social economic and cultural structures that help perpetuate the problem</b>	ISS 4935: Students analyze causes of a critical social problem through the original research of their final paper.	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.		

## 2. Communication Skills:

Learning Outcomes	Means of Assessment	Criteria for Success	Findings	Plan for Use of Findings Fall 2018 & Spring 2019
<b>2a. Write clearly and effectively, producing well organized, logical, well-supported written arguments that reflect appropriate use of language and meet assignment objectives</b>	ISS 3010: students write three short papers on debate topics or one longer research paper.	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.		
	ISS 4935: Students complete a 13 to 15 page original research paper	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.		
	ISS 1103 students will complete three short analytical papers.	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on each paper.		
<b>2b. Exhibit functional oral communication and exhibit a willingness to share research results with others</b>	ISS 4935 students are expected to present their research findings to the class in a power point presentation or equivalent.	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.		
	ISS 3300 students will present their work orally at the end of the semester	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.		
	ISS 3010: students will engage in three oral debates of critical social issues.	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.		
	ISS 1103 students will present three short papers orally to their peers.	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.		

## 3. Critical Thinking Skills:

Learning Outcomes	Means of Assessment	Criteria for Success	Findings	Plan for Use of Findings Fall 2018 & Spring 2019
3a. Demonstrate an understanding of how scientific knowledge is generated.	ISS 3300 students will develop research project proposals.	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.		
	ISS 4935 students will develop research project proposals through a series of steps.	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.		
3b. Demonstrate sound critical thinking by applying the intellectual standards of the social sciences.	ISS 4935: Students write a 13 to 15 page original research paper of high quality, meeting the conventions and standards of their specific disciplinary areas.	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.		
	ISS 3010 students engage in a series of oral debates OR write a short research paper.	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.		
	ISS 3300 students write a research paper of high quality.	80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.		

#### 4. Civic Engagement (optional):

Learning Outcomes	Means of Assessment	Criteria for Success	Findings	Plan for Use of Findings Fall 2018 & Spring 2019
4.a. Students will engage in the community through a service learning project.	ISS 3010 students will complete a short internship/service learning project as part of their coursework.	80% of students will earn an 80% or higher on the final project write-up.		

**5. Multiculturalism / Diversity**

Goals/Objectives	Means of Assessment/ Corroborating Evidence*	Criteria for Success	Findings	Plan for Use of Findings Fall 2018 & Spring 2019
<p><b>5a. Students will exhibit sensitivity to and respect for diversity, and demonstrate a strong understanding of the impact of systems of inequality, power and privilege on groups and individuals as a function of their race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, economic status, and cultural background.</b></p>	<p>ISS 3010: students will engage in three debates about key social issues related to diversity OR write a short research paper engaging one or more of the dimensions of social diversity.</p> <p>ISS 1102 students will write a short paper engaging one or more of the dimensions of social diversity.</p>	<p>80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.</p> <p>80% of students will earn 70% or higher on the assignment.</p>		

\*Please include multiple assessments. For example: students perform well on classroom assignments, norm-referenced tests/surveys, and they get accepted to graduate school or are employed.