

Introduction to International Studies: Learning Objectives

1. Critical thinking: Students will be able to critically analyze academic texts, international news, maps, histories, and their own received ideologies and received wisdom for assumptions, political and cultural points of view, and stated and unstated biases.
2. Core concepts: Students will have a basic competence in the core concepts of each of the five disciplines, including an awareness of how these disciplines frame problems, and how the disciplines can complement one another.
3. Applying disciplinary contexts: Students will understand how to use historical background, geographical context, political systems, economic structures, and socio-cultural milieu to better understand regional and global developments.
4. Connections: Students will begin to see the connections between world events and the multiple contexts that inform them, and learn that these seemingly disparate factors are always already interconnected and in flux.
5. Skills: Students develop core liberal arts skills: reading unfamiliar information and making sense of it; thinking critically about what they're reading; synthesizing material; coming to a conclusion about it; and articulating that conclusion verbally and in writing.
6. Representation: Students develop a recognition that all acts of representation are always partial—that they are shaped by the questions asked and the perspectives of those creating the representation. Therefore, students will be more critical consumers of such representations in the future.
7. Living in the world: Students develop knowledge, skills, and attributes needed to live effectively in a world possessing limited natural resources and characterized by ethnic diversity, cultural pluralism and increasing interdependence.
8. Diversity: Students should gain an awareness of international diversity and learn to think about what the world, or specific issues, might look like from other points of view.