

# Final Assessment Report for the 2022-2023 Cyclical Review of the Honours Bachelor of Arts in Global Studies Program

## INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Laurier's Institutional Quality Assurance Procedures ([Policy 2.1](#)), this Final Assessment Report provides a summary of the cyclical program review process for the Honours Bachelor of Arts in Global Studies program, prepared by the Quality Assurance Office, along with an identification of strengths of the program(s) under review authored by the Vice Dean of the Faculty of Arts. All recommendations made by the external review committee in their report are listed, followed by a summary of the programs' response, and the decanal response. Recommendations prioritized are listed in the Implementation Plan, with those not being prioritized for implementation noted as well.

The Final Assessment Report is reviewed and approved by the Provost and Vice-President: Academic. Following completion of the Final Assessment Report, it is approved by the Program Review Sub-Committee and Senate Academic Planning Committee. Approval dates are listed at the end of this report. Final Assessment Reports are submitted to Senate as part of an annual report on cyclical reviews, and to the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance for information. Final Assessment Reports and Implementation Reports are posted on the public-facing page of the [Quality Assurance Office](#) website.

The Implementation Plan for the recommendations prioritized in the Final Assessment Report can be found at the end of this report. Units will submit their first Implementation Report two years following approval of the Final Assessment Report at Senate. The Implementation Report will include comments from the unit on actions taken toward the completion of recommendations, comments from the relevant Dean(s) related to the progress made, and comments from the Program Review Sub-Committee, which is responsible for approving the Implementation Report and deciding if further reports are required. The Implementation Report is submitted to the Senate Academic Planning Committee for information.

## SUMMARY OF REVIEW PROCESS

The last cyclical program review of the Global Studies program took place in 2014-2015.

The Self-Study was authored by Dr. Alicia Sliwinski, who was the Chair of the Department of Global Studies during the time that the Self-Study was being written, and Dr. Joanne Benham-Rennick, the Undergraduate Advisor. Dr. Ali Zaidi completed revisions on the document once his term as Chair began on July 1, 2022, and led the Department through the remaining stages of the review process. Full-time faculty in the program provided input on several sections of the document. In addition to the Self-Study (Volume I), the Department also submitted a copy of faculty curricula vita (Volume II), a volume of course syllabi, and a list of proposed external reviewers (Volume III). A draft of the Self-Study was reviewed by the Quality Assurance Office and the Vice Dean of the Faculty of Arts prior to submission of the final version.

Following Laurier's IQAP, the external review committee for the review consisted of two external reviewers from outside the university, and one internal reviewer from Laurier but outside of the unit. The review committee was selected by the Program Review Sub-Committee on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and a virtual external review took place between Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023.

The review committee consisted of **Dr. Margaret Walton-Roberts** from the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at Wilfrid Laurier, **Dr. Lisa Breglia** from the Global Affairs Program at George Mason University, and **Dr. Sandra Fahy** from the Global and International Studies Program at Carleton University. During the external review, the committee had virtual meetings with the following individuals and groups:

- Dr. Heidi Northwood, Interim Provost and Vice-President: Academic, and Dr. Mary Wilson, Vice-Provost: Teaching and Learning
- Dr. Gavin Brockett, Vice Dean of the Faculty of Arts
- Dr. Ali Zaidi, Chair of the Department of Global Studies (opening and closing meetings)
- Undergraduate students from the Global Studies Program
- Department of Global Studies full-time faculty
- Ms. Charlotte Innerd, Head of Collections and Acquisitions, and Mr. Peter Genzinger, Liaison Librarian
- Department of Global Studies Contract Teaching Faculty
- Dr. Alex Latta, International Education Studies Program Coordinator
- Dr. Alicia Sliwinski and Dr. Ehaab Abdou Social Entrepreneurship Option representatives, and Dr. Joanne Benham Rennick, Undergraduate Advisor
- Ms. Sally Heath, Manager: Academic Program Development and Review and Ms. Jessica Blondin, Executive Assistant

The review committee submitted their completed report on March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The executive summary from the report, and its recommendations, are provided below.

### **External Reviewers' Report Executive Summary**

Many of the recommendations suggested in this report are easy to implement; they involve rhetorical reframing of the mission statement; the inclusion of theoretically diverse course reading materials, and the insertion of hard skills training, already on offer at Laurier, into course hours.

These easy recommendations can be carried out as follows: We recommend a *gentle rethink* of the Global Studies mission statement to identify, as stated in Laurier's Strategy, that students will gain proficiency in hard skills and applied learning, a necessity for today's competitive world. The Global Studies mission statement should highlight existing strengths in the program and the university as a whole: highlight interdisciplinarity and ideological diversity; highlight that GS speaks to the existing strengths at Laurier: social entrepreneurship, local

and international education, global business, religions across the world, the International *in* Canada, global indigeneity, and contemporary world challenges (history, politics, government, ideology). In the mission statement, and in course content, a truly global perspective should be highlighted: realist, positivist.

The department articulated concerns over incoming student abilities for academic study. We believe these concerns could be mitigated by integrating a deeper *intentionality* of student support services through first year courses. Another area is in the realm of student [peer-to-peer support](#) to help solve problems of social isolation and university acculturation. The [academic skills certificate](#) offers a one-on-one appointment for students to get personalized direction on study skills development. Concern was mentioned over declining enrollments. We encourage faculty to engage in recruitment activities with the university - this was not mentioned in self-study or during the review process - in the interest of increasing student enrollments in the program. Given that many students choose to major in GS after taking the Introduction to Global Studies course, we believe it could be of interest to offer this course each semester. Another way that decreased enrollments could be mitigated is through combining GS with programs such as Global Health. As discussed, there would not necessarily be a need for excellence in the hard sciences for this.

Overall, we recommend a more thorough incorporation of existing resources at Laurier directly in course content. Perhaps each course could dedicate four hours of classroom time to these resources, or offer students incentives for engaging in these in after-class hours. The [academic skills certificate, previously mentioned, offers](#) a one-on-one appointment for students to get personalized direction on study skills development.

It was apparent that the IES students were not integrated into the GS program. We recommend pairing students in IES with students who are GS, as mentors and collaborators, to inspire some cohesion at least on the student-to-student level. In the self-study, students expressed interest in **more online** course options. This is also something that the University Administration is keen to expand and develop. A review of existing courses offered at Laurier would be useful for ensuring that all suitable courses, where possible, are cross listed with GS. This is particularly important for 4<sup>th</sup> year courses, and for advising. Consider the creation of a **new 400-level course** that combines professionalization and GS capstone experience. Free up teaching resources by reducing the number of tutorials. Implement interdisciplinary course availability (see recommendations above). Consider opportunities for reciprocal benefits in other schools/programs where GS faculty are teaching and even serving as administrators. For example: the [PhD in Global Governance](#) program or the [Balsillie School](#).

Long-term course scheduling/planning, in conjunction with hands-on advising, can assure the stability of teaching availability and assignments. Possible long-term coordination with other departments across FOA to ensure variety, complementarity (increasingly important in a budget constrained environment). We recommend increased availability of **academic advising** in-person or virtual. Consider assigning this duty to someone other than a tenure line faculty member, if possible. We strongly recommend streamlining the process through an online platform and student-led discussion page where they can share information between themselves.

Scale up **co-op opportunities and participation**. It is important that this not be undertaken entirely “in house” by GS. Scale down SE from an option into a new, more manageable, and appealing community engagement, possibly a first-year experience program. Work placements could definitely be seen as a more centralized role that does not belong in a single academic department. But, if there is a financial benefit for the placement work to be done on the local level, we would recommend that the AGX work be scaled up and a staff person be

assigned to the placement work and perhaps costs can be reduced by scaling up and thru the types of MOUs that are signed.

We recommend review of course content to ensure that it is ideologically balanced in terms of approaches to the global which de-centers the West material which inserts Western deconstructionist / poststructuralists (etc.) literature, should be contextualized as a product of leftist Western scholarship rather than as a standard Western or global approach to the contemporary. A positivist (realistic) approach to the study of the global is recommended.

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES

The External Reviewers' Report included 23 recommendations to improve the quality of the Global Studies program. All recommendations have been listed verbatim below, followed by a summary of the program's response, and the decanal response.

**Recommendation #1:** We recommend a gentle rethink of GS's concrete offerings (and mission statement) to more uniformly align with Laurier's Strategy in terms of ensuring students gain proficiency in hard skills and applied learning which all graduates need for today's competitive world.

**Unit Response:** We are supportive of the idea of preparing students for the changed economic realities that they are confronting.

While GS has always participated in the pre-existing Co-Operative education model, as of 2023-24 GS will be one of the first departments in the FOA to participate in the re-vamped accredited Co-Op model, which requires three work terms during their undergraduate degree program. Changes to the GS Co-Op model were approved by the department in Fall 2022 and subsequently passed Senate in Winter 2023. The incoming first year cohort of 2023 will be able to avail of this new accredited Co-Op model. We expect that this new model may provide more proficiency in applied learning and hard skills.

We are also in the process of re-configuring the Social Entrepreneurship (SE) Option so that it can be more flexible and serve a wider range of students. We anticipate reducing the total required credits for the SE Option from 4.0 to 3.0, and we expect that the changes will be passed in fall 2023 so that they can be implemented in time for fall 2024.

Furthermore, we have initiated discussions with the School of International Policy and Governance (SIPG) about integrating policy-oriented courses more directly into our undergraduate offerings. This is also part of re-thinking our offerings and getting students more job-ready.

**Decanal Response:** GS has made an important commitment to the new co-op program, and has been actively exploring how best to reconfigure SE. However, the recommendation is based on an assessment that suggests a reasonably comprehensive (what exactly does "gentle rethink" mean?) review of the program and mission statement is in order given the rapidly changing international environment and shifting needs of students. I would encourage the Department to undertake such a review.

**Recommendation #2:** We recommend a more inclusive ideological / theoretical frame in GS course content to encompass a range of perspectives and approaches: realist, positivist. The review committee members identified: deconstructionist, poststructuralist, and Marxist theories that trend Euro, North American. We recommend review of course content to ensure that it is ideologically balanced in terms of approaches to the global which de-centers the West material which inserts Western deconstructionist / poststructuralists (etc.) literature, should be contextualized as a product of leftist Western scholarship rather than as a standard Western or global approach to the contemporary. A positivist (realistic) approach to the study of the global is recommended.

**Unit Response:** We agree with, and take seriously, the recommendation to broaden the geographic scope of the department. Indeed, we recognize that while we have strength on Latin America/South America (e.g. Alex Latta, Joanne Benham-Rennick, Alicia Sliwinski) and to a lesser extent on Africa (e.g. John Ejobowah, Tim Donais, Ehaab Abdou) as well as the Middle East/North Africa (e.g. Ehaab Abdou), we are conscious of the lacuna in our offerings on the Far East or on South East Asia, especially since the departure of our colleagues Sheri Gibbings, whose research focus is Indonesia, and John Abraham, who has expertise in India.

Certainly, students benefit from exposure to a wide array of positions and theoretical perspectives on any given topic. Ideological diversity is expressed most concretely in our required theory course (GS201) which draws upon a range of European theoretical traditions (liberal, conservative, Marxist, poststructuralist), but also on postcolonial, diasporic, and Indigenous thought. The need for multiple theoretical perspectives in the required theory course was a decision reached by consensus in the department.

Having acknowledged the need for geographic and ideological/theoretical diversity, it needs to be recognized that there is a delicate balance between amplifying ideological diversity within the department and infringing upon a faculty member's academic freedom by requiring certain kinds of scholarship and teaching in the classroom.

While a number of our courses do appear to have a specific ideological orientation, the Report imputes an ideological unity ("Western deconstructionist/poststructuralist" or "leftist Western scholarship") to the department that, from the point of view of the vast majority of our faculty members, is not entirely accurate, or at least mischaracterizes the department. While some members of the department surely do identify with and draw upon the theoretical and political perspectives the reviewers have identified, other members expressly do not. We do not think it is fair or accurate to assume that all members of the department are, or the department *in toto* is, encompassed by the ideological unity that is posited.

Perhaps what can be said is that the ideological diversity that already exists in the department may need to be amplified so that it is more visible/audible to students. One way to achieve this may be to have brown-bag discussion/lecture series where our students can learn about the research that individual faculty members conduct and the theoretical perspectives they adopt.

**Decanal Response:** There does seem to be a disconnect between the intellectual diversity promoted on paper in the curriculum and what the reviewers have concluded is the thrust of GS through interviews with staff and students. I think that the review of the program proposed in #1 might lead to an overall redesign that could address this tension. That faculty hold divergent ideological perspectives can become a strength if it leads to compelling conversations and debates with students that focus on their learning and ability to critically evaluate rather than on whether they agree with any one perspective. Faculty should feel confident sharing their own

perspectives and critiquing the diversity of perspectives that are part of the field, knowing that they are modeling the best of intellectual inquiry at a time when the world is increasingly polarized.

**Recommendation #3:** We recommend that the GS reframe the Global Studies Mission Statement in terms of the existing strengths in the program and the university as a whole while highlighting interdisciplinarity and ideological diversity. For example, the existing strengths at Laurier and GS are: social entrepreneurship, local and international education, global business, religions across the world, the International in Canada, global indigeneity, and contemporary world challenges (history, politics, government, ideology).

**Unit Response:** Agreed. Re-working the mission statement remains a work in progress. Just as we revised it after the previous cyclical program review, we will do so again after this one, in order to better capture the growth, changes and strengths of the department.

For instance, as we revise our mission statement, we will aim to strike a balance between highlighting our pre-existing concentrations in Peace and Conflict, International Development, and Globalization and Culture and highlighting the newer developments in SE and IES at the undergraduate level and in Religion, Culture and Global Justice (RCGJ) at the graduate level.

**Decanal Response:** Again, it seems that revising the mission statement is tied to an overall evaluation of the program and determination of the best direction for the future in an era of very few resources and shifting global realities.

**Recommendation #4:** We recommend the department mitigate the challenges that newly matriculating undergraduate students are facing by integrating a deeper intentionality of student support services through first year courses.

**Unit Response:** We will continue to strategize about how the services of the Writing Centre or the Library can be better integrated with GS101 and GS102 and also in our required 200-level courses. We will also work on better communicating such services to all students.

In years past, GS101 incorporated the PASS (peer assisted student support) program, but it proved not to be very successful or popular with students.

One of the limitations in implementing this recommendation across the board is that GS101 in the winter term is offered only as an online course and it is difficult to revise that course to better incorporate student support services without more funding for a major overhaul. (We applied for but were not granted funds for a major overhaul in GS101OC this year.)

**Decanal Response:** This is an institution-wide challenge, and I am cognizant of the challenges encountered with the previous PASS program. We continue to work with other units of the university to identify the best ways to help equip students to succeed at their studies.



**Recommendation #5:** We recommend student peer-to-peer support be utilized to help solve problems of social isolation and university acculturation. The academic skills certificate offers a one-on-one appointment for students to get personalized direction on study skills development.

**Unit Response:** We agree that the pandemic aggravated the problem of social isolation and university acculturation and that this problem needs to be addressed as much as possible.

Peer-to-peer support is but one way to redress the problem. As indicated above, in years past, GS101 incorporated the PASS (peer assisted student support) program, but it proved not to be very successful or popular with students. Different faculty members have also incorporated workshops from the Writing Centre or the Teaching and Learning Commons into their syllabi. As have other departments, GS has also experimented with assigning students to faculty mentors, but with mixed success. Faculty have also enthusiastically supported the Global Studies Students Association in their development of a peer mentoring initiative. This too has had only mixed results.

One change that was made during 2022-3 was a weekly bulletin sent out to all GS and IES students that often noted the academic skills workshops or life-skills training that are available at any given time of the year. Given the plethora of information for different opportunities on campus for skills development, the bulletin serves as a bit of a clearing house to communicate such opportunities. In 2022-3, the bulletin also emphasized student health and well-being. We aim to continue with the bulletins for the years ahead. Similarly, another change that has just been instituted is that the Chair sent out a note of welcome in June 2023 to all first year incoming GS and IES students. This note also provided an attachment to introduce incoming students to such services.

Finally, one attempt to mitigate social isolation is the creation of a GS book club over the summer months. Currently, the book club comprises the chair, a contract faculty member and several students, who meet virtually every three weeks to discuss a book of interest. We hope this initiative will increase social connection during the summer months when students disperse. In the longer term, perhaps it can lead to the development of a residence learning community or similar initiative.

**Decanal Response:** As with recommendation #5, this is a challenge across the institution. Peer to peer support works in some contexts but not others and is much harder to implement successfully than one might like to imagine. GS is to be commended for regularly communicating with students, and the GS book club is an excellent example of the sort of engagement that can only benefit students. Ultimately faculty members have the greatest capacity to support students through their regular engagement in the classroom, and colleagues in GS are well known to be among the most compassionate and caring. GS students are fortunate to have them as their instructors.

**Recommendation #6:** We recommend year-round offering of the Intro to GS course to possibly draw in more majors. During our review, as we spoke of decreased enrollments, it was mentioned that there may be interest in combining programs such as Global Health with Global Studies. As discussed, there would not necessarily be a need for excellence in the hard sciences for this.

**Unit Response:** This is an excellent recommendation, and we agree with it wholeheartedly. We have already discussed with the Dean the idea of reducing the enrolment (from 350 to 250 students) in the Winter online offering of GS101 and adding a spring offering of GS101 online with enrollment of 100 students. We think that this has the potential to be a very popular springtime service course that could draw in majors. However, adding a spring course will require an additional stipend to the department so as not to cut a course from our fall/winter offerings.

**Decanal Response:** At present we face a perpetual challenge regarding adequate resources, including stipends for summer courses. We will take this into account as we work with GS and plan for the year ahead.

**Recommendation #7:** We recommend a more thorough incorporation of existing resources at Laurier directly into course content. Perhaps each course could dedicate four hours of classroom time to these resources or offer students incentives for engaging in these in after-class hours. The academic skills certificate offers a one-on-one appointment for students to get personalized direction on study skills development.

**Unit Response:** As noted above, some of our faculty members already incorporate workshops from the library or the Writing Centre into their courses. We have also made an effort, through weekly bulletins or through the GS or IES Advisors, to direct students to the Teaching and Learning Commons.

Given that faculty members already feel compressed to deliver substantive course content with 36 contact hours, it's not clear what the effect of devoting 4 hours to academic skills will have on course content. The idea of motivating students to pursue these opportunities after-class hours has more appeal.

Unfortunately, the pandemic led us to defer a thorough curriculum mapping exercise that had been in the making. We may need to engage in curriculum mapping so as to identify in which specific courses such resources are being employed and where there may be gaps and/or redundancies.

**Decanal Response:** There is a real tension between trying to incorporate skills-based learning in the classroom and ensuring the integrity of academic content. Skills-based learning includes both academic and life skills, and there is no guarantee that inclusion in course content will lead to the outcomes we all seek. At the same time, students make careful calculations as to what they will do with their time each day, and unless they themselves see the inherent value in investing in skills-based learning they will not allocate time for that. Curriculum mapping can indeed lead to carefully designed modules that push students to act on skills development, but this is not a panacea.

**Recommendation #8:** During our meeting with the faculty, it was apparent that the IES students were not integrated into the GS program. We recommend pairing students in IES with students who are GS, as mentors and collaborators, to inspire some cohesion at least on the student-to-student level.

**Unit Response:** This is an important recommendation that we agree with. We have been aware of this issue for some years and have begun to take steps to address it. One important step to redress this issue is that the Coordinator of IES for the period 2022-4 is a GS faculty member who better connects IES students to the GS



department. Previously, the coordination of IES occurred solely in the Faculty of Education and IES students only had interaction with the GS Dept in their GS courses.

Another step we have taken is to have strongly nudged the GSSA and the IESSA to run joint events. This moved the needle a little, but more needs to be done and we're hopeful the new GSSA and IESSA leadership teams for 2023-24 will pursue collaborative events more often.

The GS Chair has also begun to send out weekly bulletins to all GS and IES students highlighting events and common items of interest. Most recently, a note of welcome to all incoming GS and IES students was sent out so that both cohorts are aware of one another.

Perhaps the most significant step in bringing IES and GS students together is the realization that most IES students do NOT recognize that the IES degree is a joint degree between the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Arts. They mistakenly think that it is an FOE degree with some Arts courses thrown in. This insight came out in an IES committee meeting when the outgoing IESSA president indicated that it was only in her last term that she realized that the IES program is jointly run. This misunderstanding in the mind of IES students needs to be cleared up right from their first year. This means that both the Faculty of Education and the GS department have to do a much better job of communicating to IES students from the very beginning that they are part of a jointly run program.

**Decanal Response:** We are still figuring out the realities of the IES program, and while it has been successful in many respects, the Review has touched on a few tensions that need further thought. A peer-to-peer mentorship program is unlikely to do much, but concerted cooperation and messaging between GS and FoE will go a long way to shifting the perspective of students. I encourage ongoing examination of this matter to ensure that IES can be seen to strengthen GS rather than take away from it.

**Recommendation #9:** In the self-study, students expressed interest in more online course options. This is also something that the University Administration is keen to expand and develop.

**Unit Response:** We agree that adding GS101OC in the spring (see #6 above) will bring benefits for students and the FOA more generally. Adding the accredited Co-Op model may also lead to greater demand for online courses, which we are willing to consider. However, this has both development costs and stipendiary implications that need to be discussed with and approved by the Dean's Office. We also wish to ensure that too many online courses do not draw existing students away from our in-person courses. Here, too, it will be a question of finding the right balance.

**Decanal Response:** Students often express a desire for online courses, but in actual fact, only want so many as they really do value in-person engagement with faculty members. We continue to try to strike the right balance and to consider which courses should be developed as online offerings as resources allow.

**Recommendation #10:** We recommend a reconnaissance of existing courses offered at Laurier to ensure that all suitable courses, where possible, are cross listed with GS. This is particularly important for 4th year courses.

**Unit Response:** This recommendation deserves our careful consideration. Each of the concentration committees (i.e. peace and conflict, globalization and culture, international development) will convene during the summer and early fall of 2023 to identify courses in other units for possible cross-listing at each year level.

Here, too, there is a balance to be struck. To make the major more flexible by cross-listing courses in other units might increase our number of majors, but it could weaken the curricular integrity of our program and reduce enrollments in our classes.

It should be noted that cross-listing courses at the 400 level is much less feasible and desirable than at earlier levels. Most programs reserve spaces in their 400-level offerings for their own majors. Moreover, as the number of 400-level credits required of our majors is minimal (just 1.0 credit), we would hardly want them to take those courses outside the department.

**Decanal Response:** GS has struggled to fill its 400-level research seminar, and this is a concern that must be addressed. This particular matter must be a high priority, but whether it is a matter of cross-listing with courses in other departments is a moot point.

**Recommendation #11:** Consider the creation of a new 400-level course that combines professionalization and GS capstone experience. This course should be non-concentration specific and integrate skills/professionalization elements.

**Unit Response:** We have begun discussion of a capstone course and will deliberate on the potential content of such a course, as well as the costs and benefits of a concentration-generic course at that level.

One of the possibilities for this course is that it replaces the GS400 research seminar that has had declining enrolment. Alternatively, the capstone course could serve to replace both the GS400 and SE400 courses, especially considering that SE400 does integrate many skills and professionalization elements. In 2023-4, we will run GS400 and SE400 as a combined course to see how this will play out.

**Decanal Response:** A redesign of 400-level courses should be a high priority outcome of any curriculum mapping and program redesign that results from this Review process. Even combining small numbers of SE and GS students may not be adequate to justify GS400 in the long term.

**Recommendation #12:** We recommend increased availability of academic advising in-person or virtual. Consider assigning this duty to someone other than a tenure line faculty member, if possible. A person in this role can also serve as a point person on programming, which would answer students' expressed concern for lack of in-person presence and activities in the department. The review committee notes that student advising was a concern in the previous external review.

**Unit Response:** As noted in the introductory clarification note, the structure of academic advising is established at the Faculty of Arts level and is beyond the control of our department. We continue to be committed as a department to offer dedicated advising through a full-time faculty member; there may be merit to closer

collaboration with FOA staff advisors, though, in order to streamline the division of labour between the two levels of advising and reduce the burden on the faculty advisor. We will, however, strive to offer more face-to-face advising (either in person or virtually), especially now that the restrictions of the pandemic have been lifted.

**Decanal Response:** The Dean of Arts is actively considering how best to support advising in departments while also consolidating some advising activity in our office. There are clear benefits to students interacting with faculty advisors, while staff in the Dean's Office bring their own knowledge and skills to the work. We continue to look for ways to make advising as effective as possible.

**Recommendation #13:** Scale up co-op opportunities and participation. It is important this is not undertaken entirely "in house" by GS due to faculty overwork already. Co-op opportunities need not be "GS specific" given the multiple areas of interest for GS students. It is important for the faculty to not specifically and narrowly define what a GS specific placement would be for a student. Consider how co-op fits within GS degree requirements.

**Unit Response:** GS is one of the departments in the Faculty of Arts that has retooled in order to participate in the new accredited Co-Op model, which will be available to the entering 2023 cohort. We will continue to work with the Career Centre to procure relevant GS placements.

**Decanal Response:** We are grateful for the enthusiastic and constructive cooperation of GS as we have developed the new accredited Co-Op model and look forward to seeing how it benefits GS in the long run.

**Recommendation #14:** If GS decides to incorporate the recommendations on applied learning and skills training (mentioned above in recommendations) it would be useful to make clear assessment methodologies for these hard skills.

**Unit Response:** A number of GS faculty members already work with the Career Development Centre or Community Service-Learning (CSL) to incorporate different assessment methodologies for hard skills. Certainly, if more applied learning or skills training is incorporated, we will continue to work with these and other units (e.g. Teaching and Learning) to hone our assessment methods.

**Decanal Response:** We support faculty efforts to combine applied learning with the intellectual content at the core of GS courses, and trust that our faculty are best equipped to know how to go about this.

**Recommendation #15:** AGX recommendation. There are two options: (1) The work of placements could definitely be seen as a more centralized role that does not belong in a single academic department. Instead, this is work that more properly belongs in FOA at large or even in a centralized office of the University. (2) Alternatively, if there is a financial benefit for the placement work to be done on the local level, we would recommend that the AGX work be scaled up and a staff person be assigned to the placement work and perhaps costs can be reduced by scaling up and thru the types of MOUs that are signed.

**Unit Response:** We agree with this important recommendation to give careful consideration to the way the AGX is administered.

It is true that the AGX can place an inordinate service demand on the GS faculty member who coordinates it. Since the AGX evolved from a department specific opportunity to an Arts-wide opportunity, the administrative burden has potentially grown. However, due to the pandemic years, followed by a focus on integrating IES students into the AGX courses over the past two years, the program has yet to run with a robust Arts-wide cohort of students doing international placements.

One of the roles of the IES Program Administrator is to support placement planning for both IES and AGX students, though in practice her involvement in AGX placements has been limited. For the past two years, the majority of students taking the AGX courses have been IES students. These students have largely undertaken in-school placements abroad or locally, which have been procured through the contacts of the Faculty of Education. The coming year will be a good test to see if the AGX draws healthy interest across the Faculty of Arts, and to refine the administrative sharing of tasks around how those placements are managed.

**Decanal Response:** We will continue to work with GS and IES to try to support AGX placements, noting in particular that the majority of students benefitting from this program are in IES. Should there be strong interest among non-IES students in the AGX in the next two years then we will be able to determine how best to ensure their success and well-being.

**Recommendation #16:** Social Entrepreneurship recommendation: Scale down SE from an option into a new, more manageable, and appealing community engagement, possibly a first-year experience program.

**Unit Response:** We agree with the need to revise the SE Option. As noted above, we are actively deliberating on how to reduce the SE Option requirements from 4.0 credits to 3.0 credits, so as to make it more flexible and manageable for students. We are also looking into how to reduce the bottleneck that hinders students from progressing from the second year SE courses into the third- and fourth-year courses.

**Decanal Response:** The future structure of the SE program needs to be considered carefully given the difficulties encountered in terms of student enrolment.

**Recommendation #17:** Free up teaching resources by reducing the number of tutorials. Implement interdisciplinary course availability (see recommendations above). Consider opportunities for reciprocal benefits in other schools/programs where GS faculty are teaching and even serving as administrators. For example: the PhD in Global Governance program or the Balsillie School.

**Unit Response:** We do not concur with the recommendation to cut tutorials. In previous rounds of cuts, we have already removed all of the tutorials that were staffed by contract faculty members. The only remaining tutorials run by CTF are in the required GS102 and in the two required second year courses (GS201 and GS202). We think it is important to retain CTF-led tutorials in these courses, where they are foundational for developing both writing and oral engagement skills.

GS101 is staffed by Graduate TAs, mostly drawn from our joint-MA program, therefore it has no impact on our teaching resources.

As an alternative to cutting tutorials in 201 and 202, over the summer and early fall of 2023, the concentration committees will be identifying courses in other units that might be appropriate for cross-listing, which would provide more variety, while easing the pressure on stipends. The Chair will undertake discussions with other department chairs for the coordination of cross-listing efforts to share resources across the Faculty of Arts in a mutually beneficial manner.

**Decanal Response:** We encourage cross-listing as it makes sense and recognize the value of tutorials to student learning. The Dean of Arts will continue to try to allocate resources to tutorials taught by CTF as we recognize the value that these colleagues bring to them.

**Recommendation #18:** Long-term course scheduling/planning: in conjunction with hands-on advising, this can assure the stability of teaching availability and assignments. Possible long-term coordination with other departments across FOA to ensure variety, complementarity (increasingly important in budget constrained environment).

**Unit Response:** Agreed. Please see responses above to recommendations #17 and #10.

**Decanal Response:** Agreed.

**Recommendation #19:** Compensation for alternative roles for CTF: advising, placement coordinator (co-op, AGX), online course development, and other curriculum enhancements.

**Unit Response:** We agree that it could be beneficial to provide compensated service roles for CTF members in the department, both from the perspective of sharing the administrative burden more widely and in terms of recognizing currently unpaid forms of CTF service—as well as increasing CTF opportunities to be more involved in the life of the department. However, it is beyond the purview of the department to implement this recommendation. Regarding advising position, please see response to recommendation #12 and introductory clarification note.

**Decanal Response:** The Dean of Arts abides by the Collective Agreements when it comes to compensating full-time and part-time faculty. When resources are available, we look for ways to hire CTF to contribute in the important ways the review has identified.

**Recommendation #20:** In the area of course advising, we recommend that GS map out a year-by-year “recommended courses” for each year and for each concentration. Also, a dedicated document/ website which identifies broader opportunities and courses in FOA and across the university should be made available to students if they wish to develop their skills in statistics, mathematics, policy writing or analysis, or the sciences.

**Unit Response:** We agree. And we already do this. On our webpages, students are able to see a list of required and elective courses (including cross-listed courses from other units) for each concentration.

However, one of the challenges to mapping out a year-by-year list of courses is that, owing to cuts, we are not able to guarantee that specific courses will be mounted each year.

As for specific skill sets, we do already recommend that students in the international development concentration take micro and macro economics courses from LSBE. This is clearly mentioned in the undergraduate calendar.

We are now beginning discussions with the School of Policy and Governance to see how their International Policy Option could supplement the GS degree.

**Decanal Response:** GS works hard to guide its students as indicated, and we support their continued efforts.

**Recommendation #21:** We recommend review of course content to ensure that it is ideologically balanced in terms of theoretical approaches to the global.

**Unit Response:** Please see response to recommendation #2 above.

**Decanal Response:** As per above, it is important to promote intellectual curiosity and inquiry among students by promoting diverse perspectives and challenging established ways of knowing.

**Recommendation #22:** We recommend that the GS department consider the issue of student advising; we strongly recommend streamlining the process through an online platform and student-led discussion page where they can share information between themselves.

**Unit Response:** We agree and have already streamlined the process. The outgoing advisor has created a very impressive list of templates for streamlining inquiries and responses to the undergrad advisor on any given topic/issue. The templates have now been shared with the incoming advisor, but also widely in the Faculty of Arts for the benefit of all other FOA department advisors. FOA advisors have commented on how the templates make the task of advisors much more efficient.

As for the student-led discussion page, a work-study student was hired by GS in 2022-3 for social media advertising. This student also created a Discord page for GS students to share information amongst themselves. Similarly, the GSSA held an event in the spring to share information through their “grapevine”. Since the students manage these initiatives, it is not clear to us how effective Discord or the GSSA grapevine has been so far.

**Decanal Response:** We would be interested to know the efficacy of efforts undertaken by GS, and if they prove effective then we will encourage their adoption in other departments. In this rapidly shifting social media environment it can be very difficult to stay on top of and effectively connect with students.



**Recommendation #23:** We encourage faculty to engage in recruitment activities with the university - this was not mentioned in self-study or during the review process - in the interest of drumming up more interest in the program. If our recommendations are taken to a) teach hard skills by incorporating university wide resources in courses and b) reframing the mission statement to a positivist slant) the department might attract more students.

**Unit Response:** This recommendation appears to mix two different matters. We have already commented on the question of teaching hard skills and revising the mission statement. With respect to engaging in recruitment activities, we agree, and already engage extensively in such activities.

Indeed, GS faculty members regularly invest a considerable amount of time and effort into recruitment. Each year, many GS faculty members have attended Ontario University Fair, November Open House, March Break Open House, Arts High-Flyers events, etc. We would even posit that we punch above our weight as a small unit.

Pre-pandemic, some GS faculty members went to local high schools, along with AGX students, to give presentations to grade 12 world issues classes to promote GS. Plus, for a few years we also organized events (in collaboration with other departments), where local high school students came to Laurier to attend lectures, workshops and activities. It was difficult to measure if such efforts were successful, but we may consider undertaking such activities again.

**Decanal Response:** The Dean of Arts is immensely grateful to our GS colleagues for their enthusiastic and dedicated commitment to supporting recruitment efforts. They are always present at on-campus and off-campus events, and we know how important they are to communicating the GS and Laurier ethos to prospective students.

## PROGRAM STRENGTHS

**Vice Dean of the Faculty of Arts:** Global Studies is made up of colleagues who are deeply committed both to the success and wellbeing of their students and to finding constructive solutions that the Faculty of Arts faces. Full-time and Contract Teaching Faculty are leading scholars in their fields who bring a knowledge and acumen to their work that is to the benefit of all at the university. Over the past two decades, they have worked hard to define the field of Global Studies and to design courses and coherent curriculum that will appeal to students, provide them with rigorous opportunities to learn, and prepare them for the future upon graduation. Students really appreciate all faculty members and consistently speak highly of their experience. The department has been open to hosting subfields such as SE and IES, and this has enabled Arts to offer valuable programming to students.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT

**Vice Dean of the Faculty of Arts:** The challenge ahead is to determine how best to adjust curriculum to reflect the realities we face today as financial resources are increasingly constrained and as a changing world shifts priorities among students. GS would be wise to consider whether a name change might be suitable to help shape

a revised curriculum that responds to emerging realities, and to consider its mission statement in light of this. I encourage them to build as much flexibility as possible into the program, perhaps replacing concentrations with streams, possibly creating new streams that reflect current interest in humanitarianism and refugees. The opportunity exists to define a new, common vision for the department that will take it into the next decade as colleagues begin to retire. GS has always had the interests of students at its core, and that provides a solid foundation for whatever intellectual framework is decided upon in the coming years.

## SIGNATURES

Dr. Heidi Northwood

October 2, 2023



## APPROVAL DATES

Approved by Program Review Sub-Committee: December 7, 2023

Approved by Senate Academic Planning Committee: January 11, 2024

Submitted to Senate (for information): April 10, 2024

Implementation Report Due Date: April 10, 2026

## RECOMMENDATIONS PRIORITIZED FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND ACTION PLAN

*The following Implementation Plan was created by the Vice Dean of the Faculty of Arts as part of the Decanal Response.*

Recommendation to be Implemented	Responsibility for Implementation	Responsibility for Resourcing (if applicable)	Anticipated Completion Date	Additional Notes
<b>Recommendation #1:</b> We recommend a gentle rethink of GS's concrete offerings (and mission statement) to more uniformly align with Laurier's Strategy in terms of ensuring students gain proficiency in hard skills and applied learning which all graduates need for today's competitive world.	Department of Global Studies		September 2024	
<b>Recommendation #2:</b> We recommend a more inclusive ideological / theoretical frame in GS course content to encompass a range of perspectives and approaches: realist, positivist. The review committee members identified: deconstructionist, poststructuralist, and Marxist theories that trend Euro, North American. We recommend review of course content to ensure that it is ideologically balanced in terms of approaches to the global which de-centers the West material which inserts Western deconstructionist / poststructuralists (etc.) literature, should be contextualized as a product of leftist Western scholarship rather than as a standard Western or global	Department of Global Studies		September 2024	

approach to the contemporary. A positivist (realistic) approach to the study of the global is recommended.				
<b>Recommendation #3:</b> We recommend that the GS reframe the Global Studies Mission Statement in terms of the existing strengths in the program and the university as a whole while highlighting interdisciplinarity and ideological diversity. For example, the existing strengths at Laurier and GS are: social entrepreneurship, local and international education, global business, religions across the world, the International in Canada, global indigeneity, and contemporary world challenges (history, politics, government, ideology).	Department of Global Studies		September 2024	
<b>Recommendation #4:</b> We recommend the department mitigate the challenges that newly matriculating undergraduate students are facing by integrating a deeper intentionality of student support services through first year courses.	Department of Global Studies		September 2024	
<b>Recommendation #5:</b> We recommend student peer-to-peer support be utilized to help solve problems of social isolation and university acculturation. The academic skills certificate offers a one-on-one appointment	Department of Global Studies			This will be considered in program mapping but does not need to be a specific goal.

for students to get personalized direction on study skills development.				
<b>Recommendation #6:</b> We recommend year-round offering of the Intro to GS course to possibly draw in more majors. During our review, as we spoke of decreased enrollments, it was mentioned that there may be interest in combining programs such as Global Health with Global Studies. As discussed, there would not necessarily be a need for excellence in the hard sciences for this.	Department of Global Studies		September 2024	
<b>Recommendation #7:</b> We recommend a more thorough incorporation of existing resources at Laurier directly into course content. Perhaps each course could dedicate four hours of classroom time to these resources or offer students incentives for engaging in these in after-class hours. The academic skills certificate offers a one-on-one appointment for students to get personalized direction on study skills development.	Department of Global Studies		September 2024	
<b>Recommendation #8:</b> During our meeting with the faculty, it was apparent that the IES students were not integrated into the GS program. We recommend pairing students in IES with students who are GS, as mentors	Department of Global Studies / International Education Studies Program, Faculty of Education		September 2025	

and collaborators, to inspire some cohesion at least on the student-to-student level.				
<b>Recommendation #9:</b> In the self-study, students expressed interest in more online course options. This is also something that the University Administration is keen to expand and develop.	Faculty of Arts		Ongoing	
<b>Recommendation #10:</b> We recommend a reconnaissance of existing courses offered at Laurier to ensure that all suitable courses, where possible, are cross listed with GS. This is particularly important for 4th year courses.	Department of Global Studies		September 2024	
<b>Recommendation #11:</b> Consider the creation of a new 400-level course that combines professionalization and GS capstone experience. This course should be non-concentration specific and integrate skills/professionalization elements.	Department of Global Studies		September 2024	
<b>Recommendation #12:</b> We recommend increased availability of academic advising in-person or virtual. Consider assigning this duty to someone other than a tenure line faculty member, if possible. A person in this role can also serve as a point person on programming, which would answer students' expressed concern for lack of in-person presence and activities in the department. The review	Faculty of Arts		Under continual consideration.	



committee notes that student advising was a concern in the previous external review.				
<b>Recommendation #13:</b> Scale up co-op opportunities and participation. It is important this is not undertaken entirely “in house” by GS due to faculty overwork already. Co-op opportunities need not be “GS specific” given the multiple areas of interest for GS students. It is important for the faculty to not specifically and narrowly define what a GS specific placement would be for a student. Consider how co-op fits within GS degree requirements.	Department of Global Studies / Faculty of Arts		Underway.	
<b>Recommendation #14:</b> If GS decides to incorporate the recommendations on applied learning and skills training (mentioned above in recommendations) it would be useful to make clear assessment methodologies for these hard skills.	Department of Global Studies		September 2024	
<b>Recommendation #15:</b> AGX recommendation. There are two options: (1) The work of placements could definitely be seen as a more centralized role that does not belong in a single academic department. Instead, this is work that more properly belongs in FOA at large or even in a centralized office of the University. (2)	Department of Global Studies	Faculty of Arts	September 2025	

Alternatively, if there is a financial benefit for the placement work to be done on the local level, we would recommend that the AGX work be scaled up and a staff person be assigned to the placement work and perhaps costs can be reduced by scaling up and thru the types of MOUs that are signed.				
<b>Recommendation #16:</b> Social Entrepreneurship recommendation: Scale down SE from an option into a new, more manageable, and appealing community engagement, possibly a first-year experience program.	Department of Global Studies		September 2024	
<b>Recommendation #17:</b> Free up teaching resources by reducing the number of tutorials. Implement interdisciplinary course availability (see recommendations above). Consider opportunities for reciprocal benefits in other schools/programs where GS faculty are teaching and even serving as administrators. For example: the PhD in Global Governance program or the Balsillie School.	Department of Global Studies		September 2024	The dept is encouraged to consider this as it examines the curriculum.
<b>Recommendation #18:</b> Long-term course scheduling/planning: in conjunction with hands-on advising, this can assure the stability of teaching availability and	Department of Global Studies		Ongoing	

assignments. Possible long-term coordination with other departments across FOA to ensure variety, complementarity (increasingly important in budget constrained environment).				
<b>Recommendation #19:</b> Compensation for alternative roles for CTF: advising, placement coordinator (co-op, AGX), online course development, and other curriculum enhancements.	Faculty of Arts	Faculty of Arts	As resources allow.	
<b>Recommendation #20:</b> In the area of course advising, we recommend that GS map out a year-by-year “recommended courses” for each year and for each concentration. Also, a dedicated document/ website which identifies broader opportunities and courses in FOA and across the university should be made available to students if they wish to develop their skills in statistics, mathematics, policy writing or analysis, or the sciences.	Department of Global Studies		Already under way	
<b>Recommendation #21:</b> We recommend review of course content to ensure that it is ideologically balanced in terms of theoretical approaches to the global.	Department of Global Studies		September 2024	

<p><b>Recommendation #22:</b> We recommend that the GS department consider the issue of student advising; we strongly recommend streamlining the process through an online platform and student-led discussion page where they can share information between themselves.</p>	<p>Department of Global Studies</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation #23:</b> We encourage faculty to engage in recruitment activities with the university - this was not mentioned in self-study or during the review process - in the interest of drumming up more interest in the program. If our recommendations are taken to a) teach hard skills by incorporating university wide resources in courses and b) reframing the mission statement to a positivist slant) the department might attract more students.</p>	<p>Department of Global Studies</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>	