Learning Goals  
International and Global Studies Program  
Brandeis University

The International and Global Studies (IGS) Program is an interdisciplinary program that provides students with an opportunity to understand the complex processes of globalization that have so profoundly affected politics, economics, culture, society, the environment and many other facets of our lives.

IGS differs from many programs in international relations and global economics. IGS students recognize that a society’s culture and particular aspirations can shape its institutions even as global trends in politics and economics encourage some homogenization in these fields. Aware of how many factors can influence global affairs, IGS students look across disciplinary fields for answers to their questions. Why does democracy flourish in one society while it languishes in another? IGS students might ask political scientists for data on voting patterns, but would also study anthropologists’ accounts of different kinds of authority. Why does one country’s economy boom when another’s stagnates? IGS students will ask economists for data on capital formation, but will look to anthropological studies of how work in a society is organized – and may even study artistic portrayals of the society’s business life. IGS is built around intellectual curiosity, not disciplinary walls.

Knowledge: Students who graduate from the IGS program can be expected to:

- Know the historical foundations of contemporary globalization and draw connections between those roots and current events. For example, electronic currency speculation is heir to but different from the coin trade of the ancient Silk Road.
- Describe the principal political, economic, and cultural characteristics of the world’s most influential countries and ways in which the postwar order is shifting. Why isn’t Brazil on the U.N. Security Council? Will it soon be?
- Understand the degree to which the world’s cultures remain diverse despite the increasing similarity of political and economic institutions.

Core Skills: IGS Program graduates will:

- Master the language and culture of (at least) one society other than their own well enough to see major global issues from the perspective of the other society.
- Recognize how aspects of globalization –economic, cultural, political-- effect each other and, importantly, when they do not. Economic growth may well promote democratic government in some countries but cultural restraints may inhibit it in others. IGS students are skeptical of simple explanations.
- Formulate research projects that employ the tools and methods of different disciplines (e.g. anthropology, economics, political science) with intellectual integrity;
• Speak and write on global issues in an informed and thoughtful manner.

Social Justice: The IGS curriculum helps students understand how the rich interconnectedness of the contemporary world allows them to act as individuals across boundaries that might have once seemed insurmountable. In particular, IGS inculcates:

• Understanding of both the benefits and costs of a globalized economy;
• Awareness of both the prospects and limits of global institutions;
• Commitment to concerns beyond the borders of one’s own society.

Upon Graduating: Graduates of the IGS program are well-prepared to deal with the global dimension of a range of professions. IGS graduates have gone on to careers in diplomacy, law, investment banking, non-profit advocacy on international issues (e.g. human rights in Darfur), teaching and scholarship in fields such as international relations, economics and anthropology.