**Question 4: Interdisciplinary Research and Teaching**

*Task: Describe the unit’s current interdisciplinary interests and where opportunities exist for expanding collaborations or initiating new ones.*

A vibrant International Affairs program is by necessity diverse in terms of disciplinary approach and world-region expertise. Given the unit’s relatively small number of core faculty members, there is considerable diversity in both academic disciplines and geographic area expertise. The 5 core faculty members (50 percent appointments in IAFS) represent expertise in history, political science, geography, economics, and women and gender studies. When the unit’s 14 additional affiliated faculty are included, anthropology, German & Slavic languages, ethnomusicology, and religious studies are also represented. The core faculty’s world-region expertise includes East Asia, South Asia, the United States, Europe, Latin America, and Africa. Affiliated faculty expand the unit’s geographic coverage to Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East. Thus, research and teaching in the unit is impressive in terms of both disciplinary and geographic coverage, especially given the relatively small size of its faculty.

The unit has benefited significantly in recent years through the addition of three junior faculty lines (50 percent each). The unit is now close to the critical mass of core faculty needed for it to function as a fully cohesive, interdisciplinary department. In recent years, undergraduate course offerings have expanded significantly, including many courses unique to the IAFS program. Given the limited number of faculty, there is still a lingering multidisciplinary, rather than truly interdisciplinary, element to the unit’s offerings. Expanding the core faculty would allow the unit to take the next step of collectively designing a cohesive and truly interdisciplinary undergraduate program. These issues will become increasingly important to the unit in the coming years now that it has added a graduate certificate.

Similarly, an expansion of the core faculty would significantly enhance opportunities for interdisciplinary research collaboration in the unit. While the scope of the core faculty is impressive, there has been limited opportunity for research collaboration. Adding core faculty who not only fill gaps but also provide overlap is critical for fostering greater interdisciplinary research work. Ideally, the unit could be a college-wide hub for research collaboration with several thematic foci. Possible research clusters that build on existing expertise in the unit could include gender and development, sustainable development and climate change, democracy and human rights, historical perspectives on international relations, and conflict and humanitarian assistance. Such research collaboration could be augmented by expanded graduate education through the unit, especially at the PhD level.