Step 2010 Projects 1 & 2: Integrated Proposal for the B. Arts (International Studies) Program

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Forward

The International Studies faculty has undertaken a significant curricular restructuring initiative in the STEP 2010 project, with a focus on innovation and applied training for professional careers. The revised International Studies Program curriculum will be highly effective in providing quality educational experiences for students. The Bachelor of Arts (International Studies) three-year degree program is designed to introduce students to political issues, institutions, theories, and processes. Consistent with standards in the discipline, International Studies degree requirements at UniSA ensure that students take courses built around a structured core curriculum along with integrated work through vertical structure. The capstone Professional Analysis project will promote student synthesis of knowledge at the culmination of their classroom studies.

This is an optimal time to make an investment in the long-term viability of International Studies at UniSA. The International Studies faculty have made a significant stride forward to strengthen their curriculum through the STEP 2010 program (Projects 1 & 2). One of the great enhancements to the curriculum is through the purposeful integration of programs such as Model United Nations simulations, the *South Australian Globalist* magazine, as well as quality training through professional experiences and internships. In addition, the school maintains a research, teaching and exchange partnerships in Asia, the United States, and Europe. Taken as a whole, this program addresses many important dimensions of globalization, culture, and identity in the 21st century. The new curriculum will enhance student educational experiences and increase the appeal and strength of the major for a new era.

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Executive Summary

"The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled"
Plutarch, c46–127 AD.

This proposal by the Step 2010 team promises to breathe new life into the international studies program to foster the teaching-research nexus and inject exiting new experiential opportunities for students.

Project 1 proposes the integration of UniSA United Nations society activities, such as mini-model United Nations simulations and *Meeting of the Minds* forums, as well as a synergy with the journalism program's internet radio platform, into the international studies undergraduate program.

Each international studies strand will feature one mini-model United Nations assessment task, one *Meeting of the Minds* assessment task, and one radio-based assessment task utilising the new internet radio platform of the School of Communication, International Studies and Languages.

Furthermore, Project 1 offers extra-curricular leadership opportunities through the internationally-affiliated *South Australia Globalist* student-run magazine and radio show, as well as the *Tomorrow's Leaders, Today: UN Society Leadership Program* integrated within in the MBIL career e-portfolio.

Project 2 proposes the insertion of greater practice-based learning activities into international studies courses. Specifically, this entails greater utilisation of case studies and simulations as class activities and assessment tasks.

Additionally, Project 2 champions the integration of audio-visual sources as in-class teaching aids and recommended texts in international studies courses. A library of audio-visual materials will be compiled to facilitate this.

Finally, Projects 1 and 2 will be integrated and given a career focus via student e-portfolios. Each student should be provided with their own e-portfolio via the university's *PebblePad* e-portfolio system, allowing them to compile a collection of skills and achievements, through which they can develop a strategic plan to position themselves in the employment market upon graduation.

These initiatives build on the strong foundation of teaching and research that already exists within the international studies program to offer an exciting new product to students, one which will differentiate the UniSA international studies program from competing programs at other institutions.

Step 2010: An Integrated Plan for the International Studies Program

Step 2010

Step 2010 is the University's project for the implementation of the new *Teaching and Learning Framework*.[1] The Framework was approved by Academic Board in June 2007 and will guide planning and activities in teaching and learning for at least the next five years.

The new Framework encapsulates the core concept of experiential learning as a means of increasing student engagement and assisting UniSA to distinguish itself in an increasingly competitive market. The Framework continues the centrality of the Graduate Qualities but seeks to improve the quality and quantity of student engagement through three components of experiential learning:

- Teaching-research nexus

- Practice based learning

- Service learning

The intention is to make what students do, rather than what staff do, the central focus of UniSA's approach to teaching and learning. This approach is based on research that indicates student who are undertaking active learning tasks perform better, enjoy their studies more and rate their overall satisfaction more highly.

The University has committed $4.7million to realising the new framework over two years. The majority of these funds are being injected directly into schools or groups of schools to fund program development and implementation of planned curriculum changes.

Given this investment, the University has an expectation that the initiatives proposed by Step 2010 project teams in each School be introduced and implemented in 2011.

International Studies Program: The Big Picture

The University of South Australia has an Undergraduate International Studies Program (UISP) encompassing the following components:

- The three-year MBIL Bachelor of Arts (International Studies) program at Magill.

- Seven double degree programs, combining the Bachelor of Arts (International Studies) program with other programs:
    - International Business (DBIL);
    - Journalism (MBJI);
    - Law (DBLD 424471);
    - Management (DBME);
    - Marketing (DBMT);
    - Social Work (MBSI);
    - And a generic combination of International Studies with all undergraduate degrees in the Division of Business and Social Enterprise (DBDD).

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[1] For more information on UniSA's *Teaching and Learning Framework*, see: http://www.unisa.edu.au/ltu/staff/start/framework/default.asp.

- An International Studies set of general studies courses available to students taking degrees requiring general studies programs (including an integrated suite of Asian Studies courses);
- Elective courses that provide an internationalisation component to other programs.

These components are not formally recognised as "nested" programs, but MBIL is in actual practices part of an undergraduate international studies program, not a stand-alone degree.

MBIL students must complete a minor of four international studies electives (in addition to the three completed as part of their international relations major) and may complete a submajor of six international studies electives. Double degree students must complete a minor or four international relations electives (in addition to the three completed as part of their international relations major).

1st Year	Peace, War & International Politics			International Relations & World Politics	
2nd Year	Contending Perspectives: IR Theories & Ethics			International Political Economy	
2nd & 3rd Years	Students have a choice of one of four strands of three international studies elective courses as IR major specialisations:				
	Asia & the World	Forces in World Politics	Peace & Security		Politics, Policy & Risk
	Globalisation & the Asian Region	European Union & World Politics	Global Security & Sustainability		Environmental Politics
	Contemporary Northeast Asia	Islam & World Politics	Peace, Justice & Reconciliation		International Risk
	Contemporary Southeast Asia	US Politics & Global Primacy	Transformation of Security: Contemporary Issues		Policy & Globalisation
3rd Year	International Relations Research Project (new capstone research course)				

Figure 1: Undergraduate international studies program (from 2011).

Currently, the number of new students coming into the three-year MBIL degree program is much lower than is desirable. Also, the number of school leavers who choose the MBIL as their first preference is poor. The 2009 data shows that 40 students selected the MBIL as a first preference, while 54 students began the degree. Unfortunately, these statistics have remained static for almost a decade.

New enrolments in the seven UISP double degrees are in better condition, but there remains substantial room for improvement all round.

The initiatives proposed in this document aim to remedy this problem. In the coming three years, along with a strong marketing program, we expect the MBIL to increase its load to a 25% share of the state load of international studies students. We also believe that a revitalised curriculum will help to push the MBIL degree tertiary entrance rank (TER) to 60, and to strengthen the double degrees within the UISP.

This Report

The initiatives presented in this document offer an exciting new direction for the UISP. The Step 2010 team is conscious that the integration of these initiatives into existing courses will require some front-loaded time and effort on the part of academic staff. With this in mind, this document attempts to itemise the tasks required of academic staff for each initiative. Where appropriate, it suggests options for assessment, ideas for online delivery, as well as documenting potential ongoing staffing requirements.

Some of extra initial and ongoing workloads may be absorbed by program support staff, or, could provide valuable experience for suitable postgraduate students.

It is hoped that the reader will come to see that although the overall proposal is quite extensive, the workload for individual teaching staff inherent in its implementation will not be onerous. The Step 2010 team believes that the projected benefits in terms of student engagement, learning outcomes, and popularity of the program as a first choice for incoming students will more than compensate for the initial investment of time in the implementation phase.

Online Delivery

The University of South Australia places great emphasis on flexible learning, within which online teaching delivery is an important component. Online materials contain information, which must be interpreted by students in some way to form knowledge. The "content" presented to students can be considered as "raw data" and is not sufficient to enable learning. Knowledge is developed by students through a wide variety of learning processes.

Successful online learning occurs at the confluence of three important components: (1) an environment that supports the development of critical thinking skills; (2) an environment fostering support and collaboration; and (3) an engaged teaching presence.[2] A more effective approach is to scaffold student learning through introduction to key concepts online and engagement with reflective activities, accompanied by active guidance from the teacher. Appropriately tailored to the online environment, the Step 2010 initiatives can be structured to satisfy each of these critical variables.

Forms of Online Engagement

There are a number of different activities that academic staff can utilise to engage students in the online environment, some of which are described below.[3] Each of these activities can be integrated with UniSA's incoming *Moodle* interface:

- *Discussion groups* allow students to interact with teaching staff and other students electronically and provide an opportunity to learn collaboratively with others. By exploring ideas with others, students can enhance their knowledge and understanding of relevant subject matter, and develop communication and critical thinking skills. Online discussions are an *asynchronous* form of communication between lecturers and students, which means that a posting is generally responded to at a later time. Messages can be viewed by all participants, allowing all class members the benefit of seeing questions and answers.

- Online *quizzes* are a useful method of encouraging student engagement in an online course. They can take a variety of forms and may be designed for a number of purposes, including helping students to focus on the key aspects of the course material, to test their knowledge and understanding of the course material, and as an assessment activity within the course.

- Online *surveys* provide an avenue of interaction between student and teacher initially (online collection of information from students) and then teacher to student (when the collated responses are reported and acted upon), allowing students to develop the skill of self-evaluation.

- *Blogs* are a form of online journaling which allow students to express opinions, interact with other students, and reflect upon topics brought up in the course.[4] They differ from a discussion forum in that each blog lies under the creative control of an individual student, with postings catalogued in chronological order.

- By contrast, *wikis* have no predefined structure; they can be updated and altered by anyone within the student group, making them an ideal tool for group assignments.[5] Each wiki is accompanied by

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[2] Alexander, Shirley, & Boud, David, "Learners still learn from experience when online," in Stephenson, John (ed.), *Teaching & Learning Online: Pedagogies for New Technologies*, 2001, Routledge, Abingdon, p. 6.
[3] For more information on UniSA's online teaching and learning platform, see: http://www.unisa.edu.au/ltu/staff/practice/online/default.asp.
[4] Bryant, Todd, "Social Software in Academia," *Educause Quarterly*, No. 2, 2006, p. 61.
[5] Bryant, "Social Software in Academia," p. 62.

a log documenting the identity and time of each alteration, providing a basis for teaching staff to monitor and assess student participation in group activities.

- *e-portfolios* allow students to collect, collate and document information on a given topic. Such information may include text, images, electronic and multimedia files, blog entries, and web page links. E-portfolios function both as a demonstration of a student's and as a platform for self-expression, which can be maintained dynamically over time.

- *Online role-play and simulations* are an example of a way that multiple interactive online tools can be combined in a single online learning experience. Learners can take on a role relevant to their profession. They may learn about this role by interacting with stored resources and by experiencing that role together with other participants. Simulations will be discussed in detail later in this document.

- *Podcasts* are audio/video recordings of lectures, seminar presentations, radio programs or other audio material that is made available for download from the World Wide Web. Students can listen to podcasts on their personal computers or portable devices (such as mp3 players or iPods). Because they can be downloaded and consumed at any time, and listened to repeatedly, they are a flexible form of information delivery that is perfect for online teaching, particularly with regard to delivery of lectures.[6]

- *Video conferencing* using software programs such as *Skype* is now possible, allowing online students to interact with one another in real-time ("synchronous engagement"). This makes possible activities such as class discussions and debates, as well as role-play and simulation.[7]

Academic staff are in the best position to judge which activities are suitable for each course, according to the course content and applicable time, resource and class size constraints.

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[6] Hew, Khe Foon, "Use of audio podcast in K-12 and higher education: a review of research topics and methodologies," *Education Technology Research Development*, Vol. 57, No. 3, June 2009, p. 334.

[7] Anderson, Terry, "Teaching in an Online Learning Context," in Anderson, Terry, & Elloumi, Fathi (eds.), *Theory and Practice of Online Learning*, Athabasca University, 2004, Athabasca, p. 278.

Integrating Projects 1 & 2

"I don't think it [the international studies program] develops workplace skills. It gives us knowledge and improves our writing and public speaking skills but nothing to do with being in the workforce."[8]

3rd Year MBIL student.

The University of South Australia has embedded graduate qualities into its pedagogy, across all of its disciplines and programs. However, it has not included definitions of discipline-specific or profession-specific professional competencies in its pedagogy.

One of the characteristics of the UISP is that it teaches students a unique body of professional knowledge. It is not a vocational program in the sense that other specialised degrees graduate students as qualified practitioners of a specific tradecraft. In this context, it is particularly difficult to craft the University's graduate qualities into a purposeful statement of abilities. There is a gap in the professional competencies that the graduate qualities do not adequately address for this program.

The UISP Program Director, in coordination with the Step 2010 team, has sought to complement the UniSA graduate qualities statement with a discipline-specific statement of professional competencies in politics and international relations.

The roles of a political analyst and international relations practitioner require the following professional competencies:

- Competence in explication, critique and appropriate analytical application of political and international relations theories and conceptual frameworks.
- Competence in the identification and assessment of contending interests and ideologies involved in political and international relations issues.
- Competence in the analysis of strategies for resolution of political and international relations disputes by the contending parties, whether by negotiation, incentives or disincentives, arbitration, coercion or force.
- Competence in the analysis of issues and factors affecting human security, human development, human identity and human rights, and strategies for improving human well-being.
- Competence in advocacy, critique and negotiation in relation to political and international relations issues.

In conjunction with these specific professional competencies, the Step 2010 team also recommends an increased emphasis on more generic workplace skills, such as those listed in *Appendix A*. Professional competencies and workplace skills must be integrated into the program in ways which boost the attractiveness of graduates in the employment marketplace. The experiential learning focus of the Step 2010 projects 1 & 2 aims to do just that.

E-Portfolios

E-portfolios will be the vehicle through which the other initiatives proposed in Step 2010 projects 1 & 2 will be incorporated into the international studies program. Students can record the professional competencies developed through experiential learning activities (along with other academic achievements, awards and experience) within their own individual e-portfolio and use this as the basis for their career development strategy.

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[8] Feedback obtained during a focus group with undergraduate students enrolled in the international studies program, Monday 1st February 2010.
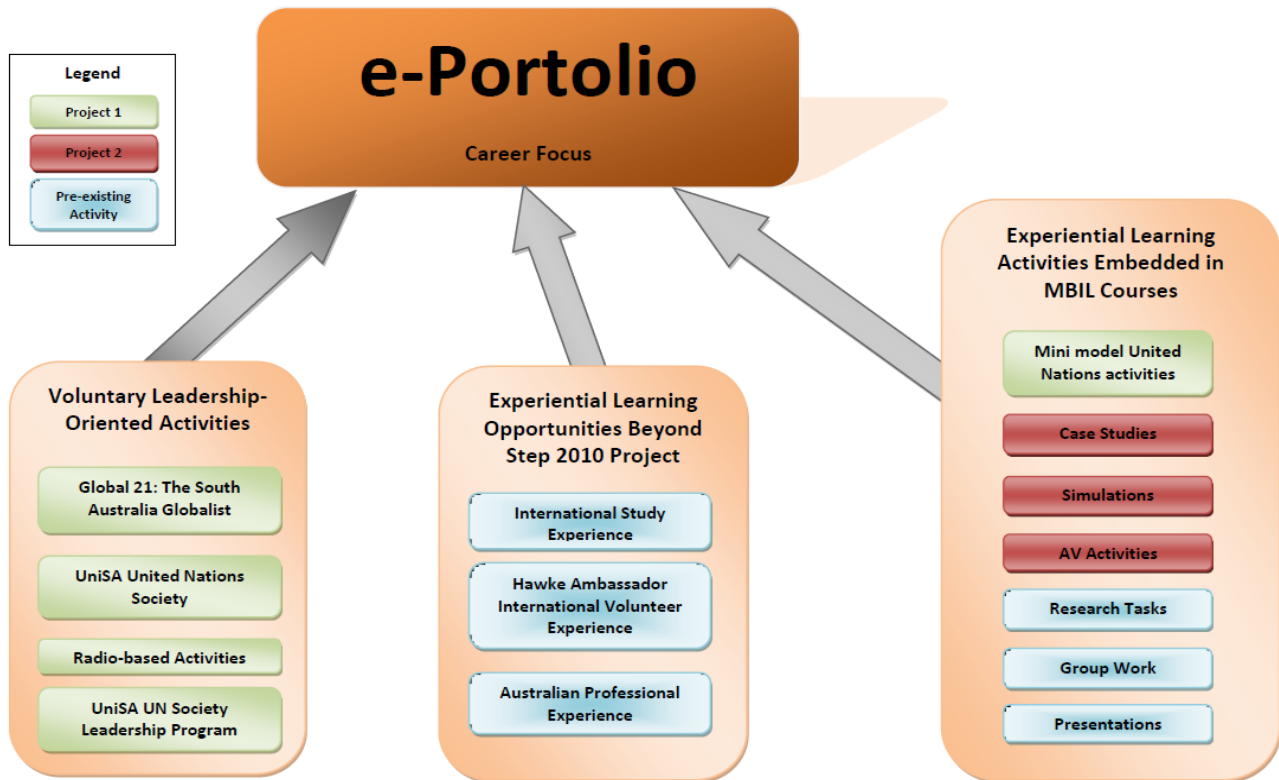
Figure 2: e-Portfolios as the umbrella for integrating Step 2010 initiatives.

Project 1 incorporates a number of extra-curricular activities designed to provide leadership opportunities for motivated students, which will provide these students with a forum to further develop professional competencies. These activities include the Global 21—*SA Globalist* student-run magazine, the internet radio platform, UniSA United Nations Society events, and the Society's *Tomorrow's Leaders, Today* leadership program.

In addition to these extra-curricular activities, Project 1 will incorporate a series of mini-model United Nations simulations as regular compulsory activities for all international studies students. The project also provides the foundation for the implementation of the e-portfolio process, which itself will be an important experiential process that will enhance student learning and career prospects.

Project 2 will embed a number of problem-based experiential learning activities as assessment tasks within each international studies course, including case studies, simulations, and opportunities to utilise audio-visual texts. In each of these activities, students will learn important professional competencies by applying academic theory to real-world situations and in turn learning the professional skills necessary to apply that knowledge in a workplace context.

Each of the initiatives in Step 2010 projects 1 & 2 will teach students tangible professional skills, and provide them with demonstrable evidence of these skills. Other activities already embedded within the international studies program—such as the *International Study Experience*, the *Hawke Ambassador International Volunteer Experience*, and the *Australian Professional Experience*—will also make valuable additions to each student's e-portfolio.

E-Portfolios and Career Development

The e-portfolio is the umbrella initiative for the Step 2010 projects 1 & 2 because it has value as both an outcome and a process. As an end product, an e-portfolio allows students to collate and present the evidence of their professional competencies which they have developed in the activities described above. They draw together examples of evidence of employability skills that can be used for job applications and at interview.[9]

In the process of creating e-portfolios students are required to think broadly about their skills and experience and how they relate to work contexts.[10] Through such reflection, students can come to appreciate how their university study contributes to their career development. They can then identify the strengths and weaknesses of their skill set and develop a strategic plan for improving their employability upon graduation. The Step 2010 initiatives described above provide one important avenue for such up-skilling.

E-Portfolio Proposal

The aim of the e-portfolio is to provide the means for students to pro-actively taking control of their career development. Each student is provided with their own e-portfolio via the university's *PebblePad* e-portfolio system, which will be integrated into the *Moodle* online interface. Students will attend a compulsory seminar at the beginning of their second semester of study. At the seminar they will be trained in the use of *PebblePad* and will set up their e-portfolio.

The description of the assessment tasks for each international studies course will include an outline of the professional competencies that will be learned from each task. Whilst the graduate qualities are an important part of course design for academic staff, they are not particularly meaningful to students as something they can market in job applications. The addition of professional competencies to the graduate qualities will make the assessment task and make the graduate qualities useful for students in a professional context.[11]

Students need to update their e-portfolios regularly to include recently completed assessment tasks. Once a year (mid-year for February-commencing students, end of year for August-commencing students), students should submit a copy of their CV, generated in *PebblePad*, documenting additions to the e-portfolio.

MBIL students will therefore present their e-portfolio for feedback twice during the program following the introductory seminar in first year.

Options for Assessment

Each submission will be assessed with a non-graded pass, providing they satisfy the following benchmark: at least one new entry for each international studies course. The emphasis is on the process of reflection on skill development, not on the academic content, hence the non-graded pass. However, a form of assessment is still necessary to ensure students take the e-portfolio process seriously.

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[9] *Graduate Employability Skills*, Business, Industry and Higher Education Collaboration Council, August 2007, pp. 1-76, URL: http://www.dest.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/E58EFDBE-BA83-430E-A541-2E91BCB59DF1/20214/GraduateEmployabilitySkillsFINALREPORT1.pdf, p. 41.

[10] *Graduate Employability Skills*, p. 41.

[11] For a list of professional competencies, see *Appendix A: Professional Competencies Rubric*.

Staffing Requirements

Sessional staff members to:

- Conduct introductory seminars.
- Monitor e-portfolio CV's.

These tasks could be assumed by program support staff or by postgraduate students employed as sessional staff.

Tasks for Academic Staff

Course statements need to indicate the specific skills, as well as the body of knowledge, that students will develop through completing each course.

In description of assessment tasks in course guides, list professional skills that will be learnt, along with graduate qualities, for each assessment task. This will make it easier for students to incorporate assessment activities into their e-portfolios.

Project 1

Aim: *Strengthening the teaching and research nexus in the Bachelor of Arts (International Studies) program.*

Tasks

The project builds the teaching and research nexus into the program through practice-based learning and applied research skills development opportunities. This objective will involve the following activities:

(1) Implement a learner centred, enquiry-based approach to the curriculum focussing on theoretical and applied research skills development.
(2) Embedding experiential learning into the program through a mix of practice-based and service learning including:
    a.   UniSA United Nations Society activities.
        i.   Annual South Australia Model United Nations Conference.
        ii.   *Global 21—South Australia Globalist* student-run magazine.
        iii. *Meeting of the Minds* project.
        iv.   UN Society Leadership program.
    b.   Collaborative projects with Communication students such as broadcasting activities with the School's internet radio platform, and with the *South Australia Globalist*.

Student Outcomes

(1) Curriculum renewal of the international studies program with significantly enhanced research and practice-based learning activities for students.
(2) A clearly defined international relations core, incorporating four distinctive strands which will offer choice to students without an increase in the overall number of students.
(3) The teaching-research nexus will offer students an opportunity to gain valuable research skills and engage in the research activities of staff.
(4) This project will result in a more competitive and attractive program for students.
(5) Improved learning outcomes for students by developing their critical and analytical skills, as well as their capacity to undertake research through practice-based and service-learning activities.
(6) The difference this project will make to student learning is significant. In conjunction with Project 2, it will deliver to students a new experientially focussed program which will be highly distinctive in South Australia. Students will find this a more interesting and dynamic award.

The Teaching-Research Nexus

There is a tendency in today's university system to view teaching and research as mutually-exclusive activities. This point of view overlooks the fact that universities in essence are communities of learners, bound by a mission to engage in the production, application and integration of knowledge.[12] A difference between teaching, on the one hand, and research on the other, is that participants are engaged in the process at different stages of development. By acknowledging this point of view, it becomes clear that

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[12] Lee, Peter, *Teaching—Research Nexus at the University of South Australia: Discussion Draft*, February 2007, University of South Australia, pp. 1-11, URL: http://www.unisa.edu.au/ltu/staff/practice/research/discussion.pdf.

teaching and research need not remain mutually-exclusive endeavours. This complementarily is known as the *teaching and research nexus.*

The goal of *Step 2010: Project 1* is to strengthen the teaching and research nexus in the international studies program, through the implementation of practice-based learning and applied research skills development opportunities. By redesigning the international studies award to improve experiential learning outcomes for students, the project aims to give students a very different approach to learning and teaching than they have been previously exposed to.

Several benefits are likely to accrue from revamping the international studies program to increase the teaching and research nexus. The Step 2010 team are enthusiastic about boosting the quality of the product offered within the MBIL and thus as a flow-on effect, increasing the marketability of the program. Research indicates that students who perceive the research activities of academic staff as an integral component of their teaching tend to see course content as current and intellectually stimulating. This in turn fosters student pride in their discipline, their department and ultimately the university.[13] These results are likely to be reflected in retention rates, student satisfaction datasets, and through reputation built by word of mouth through the wider student community. In addition, research-informed course content teaches students to keep up-to-date with new information in their professional field, fostering habits of lifelong learning that are prized in the University's graduate qualities.[14]

Figure 3: Strategic integration of Project 1 activities to encourage teaching & research nexus.

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[13] Jenkins, Alan, Healey, Mick, & Zetter, Roger, *Linking teaching and research in disciplines and departments*, The Higher Education Academy, April 2007, [accessed 1 December 2009], URL: http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/York/documents/LinkingTeachingAndResearch_April07.pdf p. 76.

[14] Stehlik, Tom, *The teaching-research nexus in the Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences: Final Report*, February 2008, University of South Australia, URL: http://www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/Resources/pd-ot/In%20a%20nutshell/Summaries/TRN%20Final%20report.doc p. 3.

UniSA United Nations Society

Formally launched in May 2006, the UniSA United Nations Society's primary objective is to enhance the relationship between academic knowledge and real-world experience, by connecting like-minded students and citizens from various disciplines and backgrounds to jointly advocate the principles of the United Nations.

In providing experiential learning opportunities for students, the Society believes that practical engagement in addition to regular study rapidly accelerates the development of students in utilising their academic knowledge constructively in the local and global communities, and advances the potential of students to educate, inspire and lead others to become responsible global citizens.

From the point of view of the international studies program, the value of the Society is that its members are deeply interested in international affairs. The Step 2010 initiative is therefore the perfect vehicle to develop the experiential learning dimension of the Society's activities and integrate them into a revitalised international studies program.

Four specific ideas have been advanced within Step 2010 Project 1:

(1) Establishment of a student-run magazine, providing international studies students with an outlet to publish written pieces on international affairs and to participate in the editorial process of a high-quality academic publication. The Step 2010 project team has colluded with the Global 21 program at Yale University in the United States to set up the *South Australia Globalist* magazine, which will fulfil this purpose.

(2) Integration of *mini-model United Nations* simulations as assessable activities in international studies courses.

(3) *Meeting of the Minds* forums to give students an opportunity to listen to and interact with leading figures in international affairs.

(4) *Tomorrow's Leaders, Today: UniSA United Nations Society Leadership Program*, which the Step 2010 project has integrated through the vehicle of e-portfolios.

The integration of these activities into the international studies program will also help to encourage students to participate in UniSA United Nations Society extra-curricular activities, such as:

- Local: Annual South Australia Model United Nations Conference

- National: Asia-Pacific Model United Nations Conference

- International: Harvard National Model United Nations

UniSA United Nations Society Activities: A Synopsis

International Studies Strands

- Peace & Security
- Forces in World Politics
- Politics, Policy & Risk
- Asia & the World

Each strand should contain...

- 1 *Meeting of the Minds* assessment task.
- 1 *radio-based* assessment task.
- 1 *Mini-MUN* assessment task.

Leadership Activities:
- South Australia Globalist magazine & radio program
- Tomorrow's Leaders, Today
- UniSA UN Society
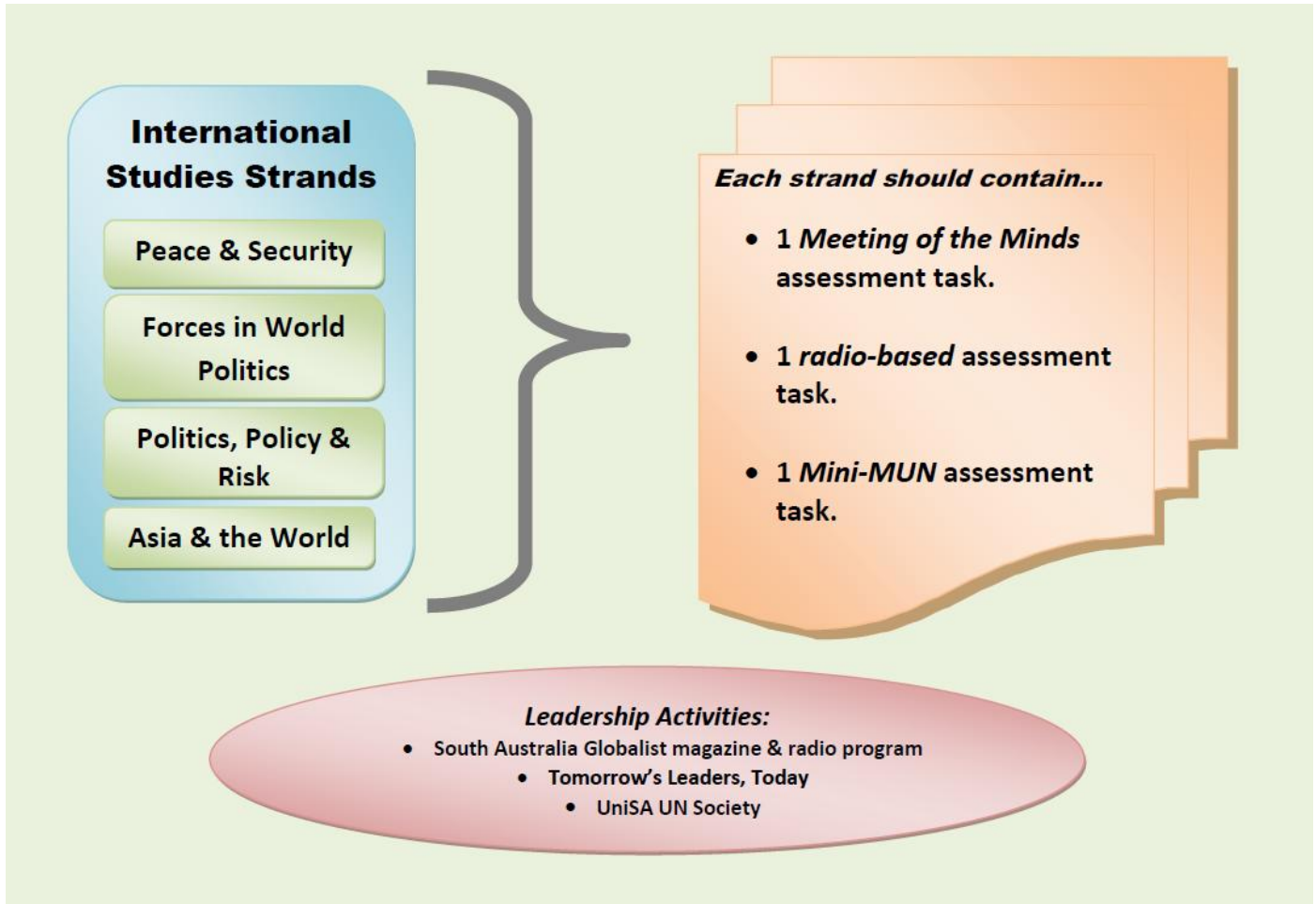
Figure 4: Expanded UniSA United Nations Society activities to be embedded in international studies strands.

The initiatives proposed in Project 1 feature compulsory components embedded in the international studies program, and extra-curricular leadership activities for outstanding students.

Embedded Components: Each international studies strand should feature one mini-model United Nations assessment task, one *Meeting of the Minds* assessment task, and one radio-based assessment task. Ideally, each of the three courses within each strand should feature one of these assessment activities.

Extra-Curricular Components: These include the internationally-affiliated *South Australia Globalist* student-run magazine and radio show, as well as the leadership certificate embedded in the career e-portfolio.

Activity	Substance [Body of Knowledge]	Process [Skills Learnt]	Modality [Type of Activity]	Product [Assessment Options]	
Meeting of the Minds Assessment Task	Course-dependent	Team dynamics; debating; critical thinking	Seminar / debate	Preparation:	Preparatory Briefing Paper
				Participation:	Audio Recording
					Performance Benchmarks
				Reflection:	Group Report
					Reflection Paper
					Blog
					Peer Assessment
Radio-based Assessment Task	Course-dependent	Media-literacy; framing complex issues for a wider audience	Radio presentation	Preparation:	Preparatory Briefing Paper
				Participation:	Audio Recording
				Reflection:	Group Report
					Peer Assessment
					Blog
					Journal
Mini-MUN Assessment Task	Course-dependent	Negotiation; team dynamics	Mini-MUN simulation	Preparation:	Preparatory Working Paper
				Participation:	Commentary Piece
					Performance Benchmarks
				Reflection:	Reflection Paper
					Journal
					Blog
					Peer Assessment
					Test

Figure 5: Pedagogical matrix for UniSA United Nations Society assessment activities to be embedded in each international studies strand.

The South Australia Globalist

The *South Australia Globalist*, as a member of the Global 21 network, will be a student-run magazine operated to provide experiential learning opportunities for elite international studies and journalism students within the School of Communication, International Studies and Languages at the University of South Australia.

The primary aim of this publication is to provide experiential learning opportunities to highly-motivated international studies and journalism students. It will provide an outlet for the publication of articles on international affairs, as well as an avenue for students to get involved in the editorial process of a print media publication.

The *South Australia Globalist* will be a colour magazine featuring articles on international affairs, written predominantly by international studies students but open to contributions from students throughout the UniSA student body.

The Step 2010 team envisages the *South Australia Globalist* sourcing content from outstanding academic essays produced by students in their coursework, as well as independently created papers written specifically for the magazine. A special section will also be devoted to short opinion pieces, which will provide a forum for students from across the broader UniSA community to contribute to the magazine should they not wish to publish an article.

The magazine will consist of approximately 40 pages per issue, publishing 3-4 issues per year. Each issue will be available online, as a PDF document hosted on a dedicated *South Australia Globalist* website, and as hard copies that will be prominently available on each UniSA campus.

The attraction for participating students will be the opportunity to publish in a high quality student-run publication (great experience for those aspiring to postgraduate study and a career in academia), skills development, career networking opportunities, and the chance to market themselves as outstanding achievers. In a focus group held on Tuesday 19th January, 2010, participating students identified the following factors that made the South Australia Globalist an attractive extra-curricular activity:

- Opportunity to gain experience & professional skills.
- Something concrete to put on their resume.
- Outlet to publish articles on international affairs issues that interested them.
- Build up their portfolio (response from journalism students).

The *South Australia Globalist* will be marketed locally to UniSA students and alumni, as well as social science students at Adelaide's other universities. Nationally, it will be directed at other international studies students within the Australian higher education sector. Internationally, it will be made available to students at other universities within the Global 21 network, as well as UniSA's partner institutions. Members of the Global 21 network include *Yale University* (United States), *University of Toronto* (Canada), *Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris* (France), *Peking University* (China), *Boğaziçi University* (Turkey), *Hebrew University* (Israel), *University of Cape Town* (South Africa), and the *University of Sydney* (Australia).[15]

As a chapter within the Global 21 network, the *South Australia Globalist* will also collaborate with other Global 21 chapters in the following ways:

- *Global 21 Intranet*: A private web resource that will become a main venue for communication between chapters and serve as a database for articles, photographs, and contact information. Private online forums will also be available to chapters seeking advice from their counterparts around the world.

- *The Global Six*: A yearly compilation magazine in all four official languages of Global 21 chapters, which was then distributed to each chapter for distribution.

- *Special Reports*: The Global 21 website has a variety of special reports with contributors from all around the world. Topics have included the United Nations, education, and the Middle East.

- *Journalism Contest*: In 2008, in collaboration with the Tony Blair Faith Foundation, the Global 21 network hosted a journalism contest, taking submissions from all of our chapters. Celebrity judges included Tom Herman from the Wall Street Journal and P.R. Chari of the Institute for Peace and Security Studies, South Asia's largest think-tank.

- *Exchange Articles*: Magazines often reserve space for writers from other chapters. It is not uncommon for a Chinese writer to contribute to the Cape Town chapter, for instance. The Step 2010 team is currently negotiating with the Hebrew University chapter to have two articles from UniSA published in their magazine, in exchange for two articles produced for their magazine to be published in the *South Australia Globalist*.

- *Global 21 World Conference*: Up to four editors and staffers from each chapter are invited to participate in the three-day discussions and as attend lectures by various keynote speakers on subjects related to globalization.

- *The Global 21 Blog*: Started in the autumn of 2009, the Global 21 Blog (blog.Global 21online.org), engages students in real-time discussion on international events.

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[15] See: http://www.global21online.org/

Background: Global 21 Network

Global 21 produces insightful, provocative publications that give students a platform to debate the contemporary international problems. Global 21 strives to create an international network among those high-achieving students who are most likely to assume leadership roles in business, media, the non-profit sector, academia, and government. By targeting this select demographic, the network hopes to provoke an international dialogue—and provide a venue for personal relationships—that will ultimately lead to greater international cooperation and understanding.

By operating within campuses, Global 21 provides an opportunity for local students to discuss foreign policies and foreign affairs with fellow students and professors. Since each chapter's primary audience will be its respective campus, our publications will also educate local student bodies about pressing international affairs issues.

International linkages are created through Global 21's international website, quarterly article exchanges, and communication between editorial boards. Ideas developed within national settings can be tried, tested, and enriched through the input of colleagues in other countries. These exchanges will allow future leaders to engage intellectually with their peers around the world.

By sending publications to embassies, academics, think tanks, and prominent members of academia, Global 21 creates the third level of social interaction, between government and the academic world. Writing for Globalist-affiliated publications will serve as training for future diplomats, academics, and other international leaders. In turn, the leadership in countries that have Globalist-affiliated student publications will benefit from reading the work of these student journalists.

Implementation

The South Australia Globalist will be overseen by an advisory board of students and academic staff within the UniSA United Nations Society. The student editorial team will exercise ultimate control over the content and direction of the publication, however, when assistance or troubleshooting is required, the advisory board will be the editorial team's first port of call. The advisory board should also maintain jurisdiction over the appointment of students to the editorial team.

To move the *South Australia Globalist* from the drawing board into publication, the Step 2010 project requires funding to cover printing costs and to obtain minor journalistic hardware such as digital Dictaphones for interviews.

All the other variables to enable the publication to succeed are in place. The magazine will have its physical base in the School of Communications, International Studies and Languages at Magill campus. Publishing software and expertise are available in-house within the school. Staffing of the magazine will be filled by volunteer student from the international studies and journalism programs. There is already strong interest from the student body with 26 submissions of interest registered from student to mid-December 2009.

The magazine will also be promoted through the *South Australia Globalist* radio program, hosted on the new School of Communications, International Studies and Languages online radio platform. The radio show will expand the audience for the wider *South Australia Globalist* project and provide further opportunities for synergy between the communications and international studies sections of the School.

Tasks for Academic Staff

Include a brief statement with description of assessment tasks in each course information booklet and course home page that outstanding written work may be published in the *South Australia Globalist*. They should also recommend to students who have produced outstanding written assignments that they submit their work to the *South Australia Globalist*.

Mini-Model United Nations Simulations (Mini-MUN's)

Demonstrating how international relations topics are relevant to the everyday lives of students is a difficult task. Even when this is achieved at an intellectual level, students may still lack a sense of how it feels to be a decision-maker in international politics. The pressure of representing an often divided constituency, combined with the complex interplay of bureaucratic process and the competing interests of other actors is something that the ordinary classroom environment cannot replicate. Mini-Model United Nations simulations (mini-MUNs) are a valuable teaching tool in this regard, because they can provide students with a taste of these pressures.

Mini-MUN activities can simulate the operation of the United Nations General Assembly, the United Nations Security Council, or any other multilateral negotiating forum. These can be simulated in anything from a single class session up to an extended, multi-day conference.

A number of critical components should be in place in order for Mini-MUN activities to be successful. First, the educational objectives should be made explicitly clear to participating students. Relevance of the activity to course content should be emphasised, along with the professional skills that students will develop in participating in the activity. Second, students need clear rules to structure their participating in the activity. They should be provided with a rules-of-procedure handout well in advance of the scheduled activity, in addition to the going over these rules in a prior class. Third, students need to be well-prepared to participate in the activity, with a confident general understanding of the topic and the position of the country/organisation which they will represent in the simulation. Four, teaching staff need to make appropriate logistical arrangements for the simulation. A formal conferencing area is required, along with adequate space for informal caucusing (an adjacent room or hallway). This will allow students to experience the parallel formal and informal negotiating tracks of a multinational conference.[16]

Implementation

The Step 2010 team recommends that one mini-MUN assessment task be incorporated into each of the four international studies strands. Teaching staff within each strand should negotiate which course is most appropriate for a mini-MUN assessment task. Once this is finalised, the topic for the mini-MUN remains at the discretion of the course coordinator.

Assessment of mini-MUN activities can be divided into two parts. First, preparation and reflection can be easily graded through written work submitted by each student. To prepare for the simulation, each student must write a short briefing paper outlining the position of the country/organisation they will represent (approx. 1,000 words). After the simulation, each student should submit a short opinion paper (approx. 500 words) in which they reflect on the mini-MUN.

Second, participation in the mini-MUN should be assessed based on the satisfaction of a series of performance benchmarks. Participating in mini-MUNs allow students to experience complex negotiating procedures. The aim here is to learn the process. The performance benchmark will serve as an incentive for students to actively participate in the simulation.

The Global Problems Summit simulation pioneered by Jeffrey Lantis provides an excellent model for simple implementation of a mini-MUN activity that will fit within the time constraints available for international studies courses at UniSA.[17]

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[16] McIntosh, Daniel, "The Uses and Limits of the Model United Nations in an International Relations Classroom," *International Studies Perspectives* (2001) Vol. 2, No. 3, p. 271-73.

[17] Lantis, Jeffrey S. "Simulations as Teaching Tools: Designing the Global Problems Summit." (1996) *International Studies Notes* 21 (1): 30-38.

Options for Assessment

(1) *Preparation*: A preparatory briefing paper on the topic at hand written by each individual student.
(2) *Participation*: Participation benchmarks (each benchmark carries percentage weighting).
(3) *Reflection*: Class debriefing. This can be a non-assessable informal class discussion, or can be expanded into an assessment task such as a reflection paper, a test, blog, or journal.

Staffing Requirements

This activity requires a staff member who is well-versed in the procedural rules of mini-MUN's. This person should chair the mini-MUN to ensure its smooth running. Where regular teaching staff are unable to act as chair, a postgraduate student with prior experience in the UniSA United Nations Society would be ideal for this role.

Tasks for Academic Staff

Specific times/dates should be set aside for the scheduling of mini-MUN activities, such that they do not conflict with other international studies and language course classes. In addition, academic staff should:

- Negotiate a relevant course for a mini-MUN activity in each international studies strand.

- Choose a mini-MUN topic and issue for debate.

- Alter instructions for assessment tasks in course approval statements and course information booklets to include participation in mini-MUN activities as specified or optional assessment tasks.

- Distribute mini-MUN procedural rules handout to students.

Meeting of the Minds

The *Meeting of the Minds* platform is an extension of our Forum Program. In previous years we have presented a number of forums on a range of global issues. The general concept has been to invite a speaker, create a panel or present a debate with student questions following those proceedings.

Meeting of the Minds goes beyond that. It is a two-step follow-up forum. Students are invited to participate in an interactive discussion with speakers and experts present so they can critically analyse and debate the global issue at hand. A follow-up forum will occur soon after but the focus will be more on students constructively developing recommendation papers, resolutions or solutions to specific global issues. These will then be placed on our website for public viewing.

Once again this is encouraging students not only to take an interest in global issues, but to experience and engage with it as well in a positive responsible manner. As we can hone in topics related to the relevant courses involved we may potentially require moderators and speakers with professional knowledge and experience. Academic staff would obviously be the first point of call for assistance in this regard.

Implementation

The Step 2010 team recommends that one *Meeting of the Minds* assessment task be incorporated into each of the four international studies strands. Teaching staff within each strand should negotiate which course is most appropriate for a *Meeting of the Minds* assessment task. Once this is finalised, the topic for the *Meeting of the Minds* remains at the discretion of the course coordinator.

The structure of this activity within each class will depend on the size of the student group. This will influence the length of time allotted for the guest speaker to talk, as well as the mode of questioning and debate employed to generate interaction between the speaker and the class.

In smaller groups, individual students may all have an opportunity to question the speaker. In larger classes, it may be more practical for small groups to devise questions to the speaker. In this context, one potential option is for teaching staff to assemble students into groups and assign each group member a specific role in the activity. Rather than attempt to compel every student to actively participate in questioning and debate with the guest speaker, a division of labour between and within groups may be more practical.

For example, students within each group could assume the following roles:

- *Note-taker*: compiles detailed notes on the guest speaker's presentation.

- *Presenter*: presents the group's position on the topic at hand to the rest of the class.

- *Questioner*: prepares and delivers questions/comments to the guest speaker.

- *Rebuttalist*: formulates agreement/rebuttal of positions of other groups.

The division of labour in this particular assignment of roles need not assume this exact form. What is important here is to demonstrate that the assignment of roles can assist in making the *Meeting of the Minds* activity logistically feasible for larger classes. Academic staff are encouraged to develop a format for this activity with which they feel most comfortable.

Options for Assessment

The Step 2010 team suggests that this activity should be broken up into three distinct phases, each with its own assessment output (see Figure 5):

(4) *Preparation*: A preparatory briefing paper on the topic at hand written by each individual student.
(5) *Participation*: This may be an audio recording of the group's contribution, or a short piece by each student documenting the evidence/information collected in fulfilment of their assigned role.
(6) *Reflection*: Any task which compels students to reflect on what they have learnt by participating in the activity. This could take one of several forms, including a short reflection commentary, a group report, a blog entry, or peer assessment of group participation (see Figure 7).

The final shape of the assessment tasks will remain at the discretion of course coordinators.

Staffing Requirements:

Relevant guest speakers are required, preferably from outside of the School of Communications, International Studies and Languages. International relations and political practitioners, and members of professional organisations would be preferable candidates as speakers. Academics from other institutions may also offer relevant professional expertise.

The challenge here will be to ensure that high quality speakers are available. Potential sources of guest speakers could include UniSA alumni, members of the *Network Now* program, and personal contacts of academic staff.

Tasks for Academic Staff

Secure guest speaker for *Meeting of the Minds* forum.

UN Society Leadership Program

While all students will compile an e-portfolio through their degree, the Step 2010 team believes that high achievers should be encouraged to develop new skills and gain experience in developing key professional competencies.

To that end, we propose the implementation of *Tomorrow's Leaders, Today: The UN Society Leadership Program.* This initiative is a natural extension of the e-portfolio proposal, which will encourage motivated students to seek out and participate in experiential learning opportunities that will provide them with the professional competencies and experience necessary to find employment at the United Nations.[18] The UN-focus also provides the leadership program with an attractive brand which should attract great interest from the student body.

Module	Leadership	Management	Teamwork	UN Careers	Networking
Level 1	Publish article in SA Globalist magazine - *or*- segment on SA Globalist radio program	Attend conference/seminar	Group assessment task	Opportunity scanning: identify 10 desirable jobs in UN system, giving reasons for the choice.	Oral assessment task (presentation, simulation activity etc)
Level 2	Community volunteer work	Organise NGO fundraiser on campus	Mini-MUN assessment task	UN Personal History Profile	SAMUNC
Level 3	Hawke program -*or*- international exchange -*or*- internship	Organise seminar featuring external guest speakers (Meeting of the Minds)	Organise Leadership program information session with other candidates	Completed simulated job application	Conduct/record interview with external figure: academic, industry representative, media personality etc.

Figure 6: Criteria for satisfactory completion of *Tomorrow's Leaders, Today: The UN Society Leadership Program.*

Tomorrow's Leaders, Today is specifically tailored to provide and document experiential learning opportunities, academic achievements and professional competencies for graduates of the international studies program. It differentiates itself from initiatives run by other schools in the university through its substantive requirements, its international affairs focus, its linkages with UniSA United Nations activities, and its strong connection to the goals and ethos of the United Nations itself. Overall, this program is an exciting new experiential leadership opportunity for international studies students.

Implementation

The leadership program should be introduced to students during the opening e-portfolio seminar, including distribution of relevant documentation. Interested students should lodge an application to participate in the program.

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[18] See *United Nations Information Centre for Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific*: http://www.un.org.au/Home.aspx?element=1&category=1

Staffing Requirements

Tomorrow's Leaders, Today will require a dedicated general staff member to administer the program. This would be task ideally suited to program support staff.

Tasks for Academic Staff

Teaching staff should place a small advertisement for leadership program in course information booklets and course homepages.

Internet Radio: South Australia Globalist Radio Program

Another option for expanding the audience of the *South Australia Globalist* will be to develop a cross-promotional linkage with the new internet radio station run by the School of Communication, International Studies and Languages. The radio station, which is as yet unnamed, is an integral part of the journalism program in the school. While journalism students will provide the bulk of the station staff, it is not exclusively for journalism students, and is available to other degrees that want to broadcast their own programming.

This option is consistent with the Step 2010 team's goal of integrating the radio platform into the structure of the international studies program. The *South Australia Globalist* could host a weekly radio show analysing contemporary issues in international affairs. It would be run by students and could feature content including student field reports, interviews with prominent figures, or broadcasts of Hawke Centre events, as well as course assessment content (see Figure 7 below). This will appeal to highly motivated international studies / journalism double degree students.

The *South Australia Globalist* radio program will provide experiential learning opportunities for international studies students in various roles, including radio program hosts, guest contributors, interviewers, researchers, and technical staff. It will also provide motivated journalism students with an opportunity to assist in the technical production of the radio program. This type of synergy was one of the rationales for the merger of the communications and international studies schools.

Tasks for Academic Staff

For all international studies courses: Place small advertisement for the *South Australia Globalist* radio program in course guide.

Staffing Requirements

This will require one academic staff member to maintain oversight of the *South Australia Globalist* radio program, to make sure that it is continually staffed by students and to recruit and groom new students to run the program. They should also assist in facilitating contact with relevant journalism staff members. Other than that, they should not assume a hands-on role for the operation of the radio show.

Using Radio for Assessment

"This is great as it is different than any other assessment task."[19]

3rd Year MBJI Student.

The School's radio platform can also provide a vehicle for international studies academic staff to utilise radio-based activities as assessment tasks. Indeed, teaching staff at other Australian universities have found student production of radio broadcasts to be an advanced and effective experiential learning opportunity.[20] The Step 2010 team recommends that one radio-based assessment task be incorporated into each of the four international studies strands. Teaching staff within each strand should negotiate which course is most appropriate for a radio-based assessment task. Once this is finalised, the topic for the assignment remains at the discretion of the course coordinator.
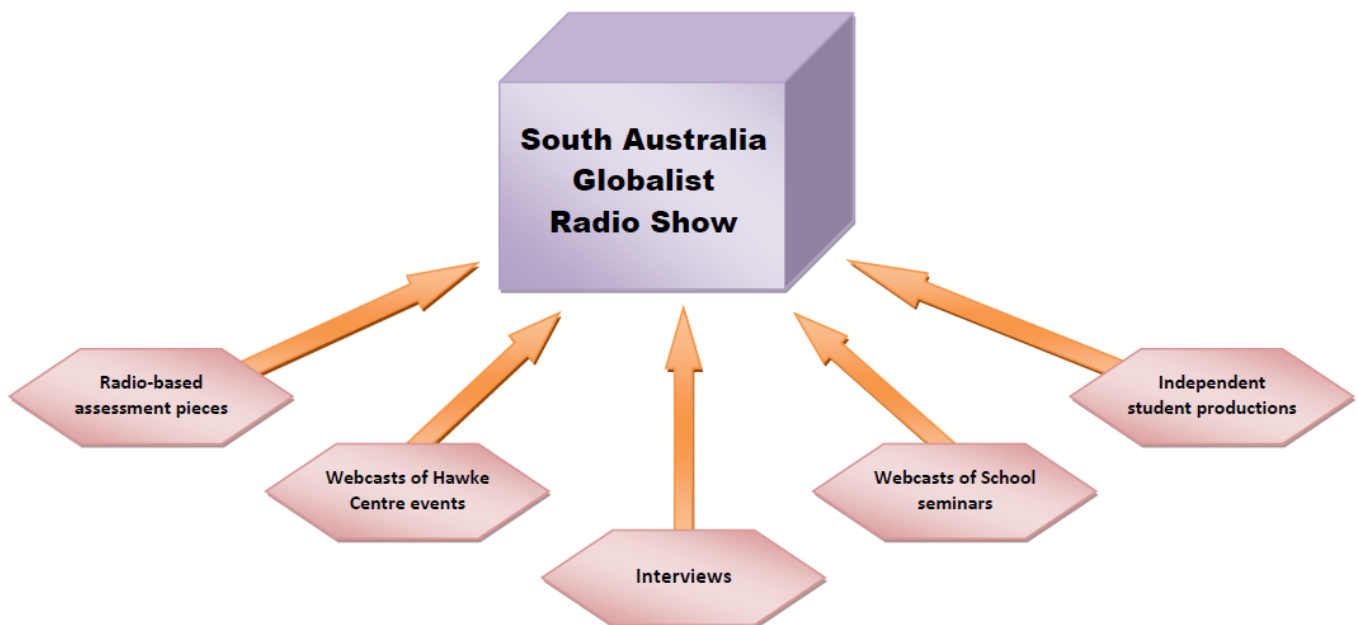
Figure 7: Potential sources of content for *South Australia Globalist* radio program.

Implementation

The Step 2010 team favours the integration of course assessment into the radio platform via the *South Australia Globalist* radio program. Recorded assessment pieces could be aired within the *South Australia Globalist* radio program. This will be an exciting experiential learning opportunity for students and is likely to enlarge the audience of participating students—as well as their friends and families—at which to market the *South Australia Globalist* magazine.

Options for Assessment

A radio broadcast can be thought of as an assessable text in the same way that an essay is an assessable text. Most of the same criteria apply in the assessment of content. Differences arise in assessment of the presentation of this content. The assessment criteria utilised by academic staff in the journalism program for grading radio-based activities offers a useful guide to international studies teaching staff on how to

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[19] Feedback obtained during a focus group with undergraduate students enrolled in the international studies program, Monday 1st February 2010.

[20] Hawtry, Kim, "Using Experiential Learning Techniques," *Journal of Economic Education*, Spring 2007, Vol. 38 Issue 2, p. 146-47.

approach the assessment of the radio presentation component of the activity.[21] Patrizia Furlan, from the journalism program, is available to field any practical questions international studies teaching staff may have about the integration of radio-based assessment tasks into international relations courses.

As with the Meeting of the Minds and Mini-MUN activities, the radio-based assessment tasks should be broken down into three components (see Figure 5):

(1) *Preparation*: A preparatory briefing paper on the topic at hand written by each individual student.
(2) *Participation*: An audio recording of the radio broadcast.
(3) *Reflection*: Any task which compels students to reflect on what they have learnt by participating in the activity. This could take one of several forms, including a short reflection commentary, a group report, a blog entry, a journal, or peer assessment of group participation (see Figure 7).

The research phase is necessary for students to acquire the information and understanding necessary to present the content of the radio presentation. This can be undertaken as an ordinary research essay, which each student completes individually.

As for the radio presentation component, participating students will prepare and delivery content. Journalism staff require that any broadcasts made on the radio platform meet a high level of technical quality. To ensure this, the journalism program will provide dedicated technical staff to provide radio training for students and take care of the technical aspects of the radio production in the recording studio.

The radio presentation should ideally be completed by students in small groups. This will be more practical, given that radio-based tasks are likely to be more complex than standard essay tasks. The division of labour within a small group (four is optimal) will help to ameliorate this issue. Also, group activities provide an avenue for students to acquire professional skills in teamwork and problem solving, which they can cite in their e-portfolios.

The radio presentation could take the form of a regular group oral presentation, a short skit, or an interview with a prominent person. The exact formulation of the activity remains the prerogative of course coordinators. The key proviso is that group members have equal input into the final presentation. Academic staff may choose to include peer assessment criteria, such as those listed in Figure 6, as a means of ensuring equal participation within student groups.[22]

	Peer Assessment Criteria	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent	Outstanding
Workload	Completes assigned tasks					
	Adheres to deadlines					
	Produces high quality work					
Contributes Ideas & Solutions	Provides ideas & solutions					
	Focussed on achieving team goals					
Values contributions of others	Encourages ideas					
	Gives constructive feedback					
	Works hard					
	Good listener					
	Good communicator					
	Makes others feel good about their contribution					

Figure 8: Peer assessment criteria for radio-based group assignment.

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[21] See: *Appendix B: Assessment Criteria for Broadcast News Assignment (Journalism)*.

[22] David Skidmore notes: "in group projects of this sort, students often worry that negligence on the part of their group partners will result in an inequitable distribution of burdens or that their own grade will suffer if the contributions of others to the overall project lack in quality. To lesson these concerns, I asked each student to fill out a detailed questionnaire in which they assessed their own contribution to the group as well as those of other members. Using these evaluations, I adjusted individual grades upwards or downwards from the group norm." See: Skidmore, David, *Group Projects and Teaching International Relations*, Drake University, October 2001, URL: http://www.drake.edu/artsci/PolSci/activelearning/groups.html.

With regards to assessment weighting, academic staff may wish to replace one of the smaller assessment tasks with the radio presentation and structure the research essay and the radio presentation as an integrated activity. Moving the deadline for the research essay forward to a point earlier in the semester will allow time for students to work on their radio presentation, and will have the added bonus for students of alleviating some of the deadline pressure for written assignments that tends to build late in the semester.

Tasks for Academic Staff

Academic staff should embed participation in radio presentations as an alternative assessment task in relevant international studies courses, with agreed parameters to be consistently applied across the program.

Additional practical tasks include:
- Integrate research essay and radio presentation as an integrated task.
- Include instructions and criteria assessment in course information booklets and course homepages.
- Organise time in audio recording suite for training and presentation recording. Ideally, each group should record their presentation on the same day/week.
- Organise air time on an episode of the *South Australia Globalist* program to play audio presentations from your course. Journalism staff will be on hand to provide training to students and ensure that broadcast recordings meet a high standard of technical quality.

Project 2

Aim: Embedding problem-solving through practice-based learning in the Bachelor of Arts (International Studies) program.

- Provide professional development to the teaching staff on the use of simulations.
- Develop case studies to improve the capacity of staff to use these resources in practice-based learning exercises.
- Develop problem solving skills in the student experience.

Tasks

(1) Engage an internationally recognised expert (Associate Professor Jeffrey Lantis) in applying experiential learning techniques to the study of international relations to run a series of workshops on applying simulations, case studies and other techniques to teaching international relations.
(2) Develop customised simulations and case studies to enhance students' problem solving skills through practice-based learning.
(3) Identify and embed a range of new electronic and film resources into the MBIL award.
(4) Provide professional development of teaching staff to enable them to incorporate a range of Web 2.0 and 3D simulation technologies such as vodcast, podcast and Second Life into the curriculum.

Student Outcomes

(1) Curriculum renewal of the international studies program which will incorporate significant problem-based learning through simulations and case studies.
(2) The incorporation of problem-based experiential learning activities will result in a more competitive and attractive program for students.
(3) Improved learning outcomes for students by developing their problem-solving skills and opportunity to engage in simulated real-world international relations practice.
(4) Develop the teaching team's skill in the use of innovative teaching and learning pedagogies.
(5) Be able to engage students in new and exiting ways.

Problem Solving & Practice-based Learning

The purpose of STEP 2010 is to as best possible embed practise-based learning into the international studies program. Practice-based learning allows students to learn specific professional skills through the experiential process. It has been shown that teaching techniques which engage students in collaborative learning practices—*experiential learning*—raise the level of student excitement about learning activities and better engage students in the class environment. Experiential learning promotes a deeper conceptual understanding of subject matter by allowing students to "play with ideas", which thus helps them to make linkages between theory and real-world examples. Furthermore, active student engagement during the learning process has been shown to increase long-term memory retention of subject matter.[23]

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[23] Jeffrey Lantis, "Ethics and Foreign Policy: Structured Debates for the International Studies Classroom," *International Studies Perspectives*, 2004, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 119; Gibbs, G.. *Improving the quality of student learning: Based on the Improving Student Learning Project funded by the Council for National Academic Awards.* 1992. Bristol: Technical and Education Services.

Problem-based learning is a specific style of experiential education that requires students to take responsibility for their learning by addressing specific, concrete problems, either individually or in groups. The underlying premise of PBL is that most students tend to incorporate information more readily when they need it; need arises as they try to solve problems.

Such problems are context-specific and thus prompt students to immediately apply the knowledge they discover and to explain it to others.[24] The application of theory in real-world situations is the essence of experiential learning and is thus the basis for the initiatives of Step 2010 Project 2.

Experiential learning activities that incorporate practice- and problem-based learning require a redefinition of the role of teacher and student. It is useful to think of teachers and learners as occupying positions on a continuum extending from teacher-control at one extreme to student-control at the other, where the deliberate surrendering of certain prerogatives by the teacher is accompanied by the concomitant acceptance of responsibility by students.[25] In such activities, the teacher abdicates some control in order to give students a degree of learning autonomy within the well-defined structure of a given problem, case or scenario. Students can assume greater responsibility for their learning in this context because they are required to make choices. Students make scholarly choices about *what* conditions exist in given problems, *why* they occur, and *how* to explore them. These questions and choices require students to brainstorm, explore, explain, and evaluate information. As individuals, students tailor their inquiry by researching issues that interest them and by focusing in the groups on the areas they understand least. As group members, they have to pay attention to social dynamics: being punctual, collegial, and mutually supportive, collaborating, fulfilling their roles, abiding by ground rules, and contributing to a collective endeavour.[26] This is the essence of the integrated experiential learning for which the Step 2010 project was designed to implement.

Problem-based learning can also be incorporated in written assignments as individual or group assessment activities, and have already been utilised in this way in some courses within the UISP at UniSA.

Guidelines for Implementation of PBL Activities & Assessment Tasks

There are some important issues to consider in the design and implementation of problem-based learning activities and assessment tasks with relation to constraints, preparation and assessment. First, activities will be necessarily bounded by constraints such as the available resources (supplementary materials, IT support), time, class size, and location (size of class room, furniture, AV hardware). Second, successful PBL activities are reliant on appropriate preparation by teacher and students. It is the teacher's responsibility to devise suitable and engaging problems, case studies or scenarios, which provide the over-arching structure of PBL activities. It is the responsibility of students to prepare for PBL activities by acquiring the necessary background information, either by reading a set text, or through a related research project. If preparation by either teacher or students is unsatisfactory, the PBL activity is not likely to be a success. Third, assessment must include mechanisms for monitoring and oversight of group activities to prevent lazy students freeloading on the hard work of more committed students. If the activity is set up well with monitoring mechanisms in place, the student workload will be shared equally and poor group dynamics will become less of a problem.[27]

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[24] Burch, Kurt, "A Primer on Problem-Based Learning for International Relations Courses," International Studies Perspectives, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2000, pp. 31-32.

[25] Candy, P. (1991). *Self-Direction for Lifelong Learning: A Comprehensive Guide to Theory and Practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, p. 9.

[26] Burch, "A primer on Problem-Based Learning for International Relations Courses, p. 34.

[27] Lantis, "Ethics and Foreign Policy: Structured Debates for the International Studies Classroom," p. 123; Burch, "A primer on Problem-Based Learning for International Relations Courses," p. 40.

Case Studies

Case studies provide students with a method to investigate real-world issues with great detail. They are a research strategy aimed at conducting an empirical analysis of an issue, incident or actor through the lens of a specific analytical framework.[28] Case studies encourage students:

- To undertake intensely focused research into a specific issue, area, group or problem.

- To identify contemporary literature conducive to developing an understanding of the key issues presented by the case study.

- To develop, support, or challenge various theoretical approaches.

- To engage with the full spectrum of research: subject analysis, issue identification, interests and actions of key actors, and domestic, regional and international relevance.

- To analyse a number of different topic areas within the context of a single case.

The employment of an appropriate analytical framework is the key issue in the design of case studies. The framework assists students in filtering useful information from data that is not relevant to the educational objectives of the activity. The analytical framework can be provided explicitly, such as a list of key issues to consider, or be supplied to students in a text, which they have to comprehend. The latter is an advanced skill which is employed at the postgraduate level and above in the construction of literature reviews and annotated bibliographies. This approach should be reserved for more experienced undergraduate students.

Case Study Design & Implementation

Embedding case studies into existing courses need not require substantial refinement of course content, but rather a reframing of (not necessarily all) existing material. Lectures do not require a case study focus, but can provide the theoretical tools—the analytical framework—for students to utilise in examination of relevant case studies. Textual material (written, audio/visual) will be the primary vehicle through which students prepare for case study activities.

Case study design should adhere to the following guidelines:

- A basic summary of the case study identifying the topic area, the focus of the case study, and a problem for analysis.

- Provision of basic compulsory reading material.

- Provision of access to extended research material for students to engage with independently.

- An explicit analytical framework.
    - o *Basic*: A basic set of questions concerning the case for students to reflect on.
    - o *Advanced*: Provide a text from which students derive an appropriate methodology.

- Statement of purpose, outlining educational goals of the activity and responsibilities and requirements for the students in their analysis of the case.

- A desired learning outcome in line with both the topic focus and the graduate qualities.

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[28] Lantis, "Ethics and Foreign Policy: Structured Debates for the International Studies Classroom," p. 121.

Beyond this, the opportunities are available for teaching staff to embed case studies into the general course structure in whatever way they see fit, both as assessable and non-assessable activities. Possible case study assessment formats may include the following:

- *Individual case study* (analysis): Examine case using appropriate analytical framework.

- *Briefing paper* (analysis + recommendation): Examine case using appropriate analytical framework, and present policy recommendations on a problem specified in the case.

- *Comparative analysis* (multiple case studies): Draw conclusions comparing two or more different case studies. The purpose of the comparison will need to be made explicit.

- *Group work*: Students work on any of the above, in small groups (4 is optimal).

Figure 5 illustrates a template for case study design. This simple model will assist course coordinators to construct tailored case study activities simply and quickly, while maintaining a common design framework across international studies courses. Note that the assessment activities need not be confined to the ones listed in Figure 5.
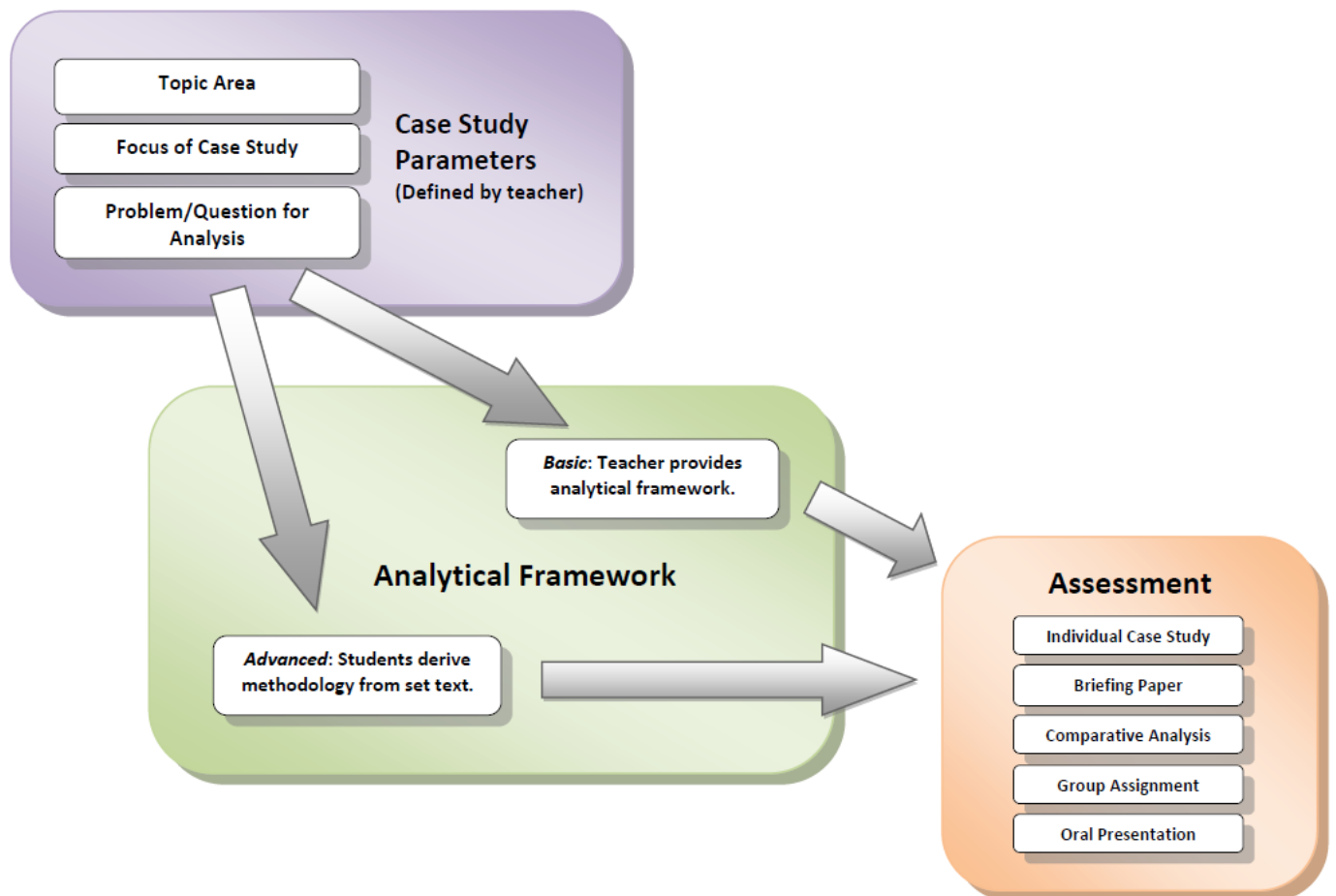

Figure 9: Template Case Study Design.

Implementation: Tasks for Academic Staff

- Use template to develop relevant case studies for an assessment task in your course, if applicable. This task could be delegated to casual staff if necessary.
- Add short description of purpose of case study in topic guide.

Simulations

Simulations are the second practise-based learning approach STEP 2010 seeks to implement and adapt more effectively within International Studies professional majors. Simulations encourage students to utilise research and knowledge in a multi-faceted manner. This includes making decisions based on their research, defending their research against other students and engaging students in a process of negotiation in seeking realistic solutions to the core problem outlined in the simulation.

In a simulation, students must adopt the personality and position of various stakeholders in relation to a chosen issue. They are often conducted as structured games ranging from simple role-playing exercises to more complex decision-making activities involving negotiations, strategy and allocation of scarce resources.

Indeed, negotiation scenarios are particularly suited to simulation due to the inherent focus of diplomacy on process, something that can be readily modelled in the classroom.[29]
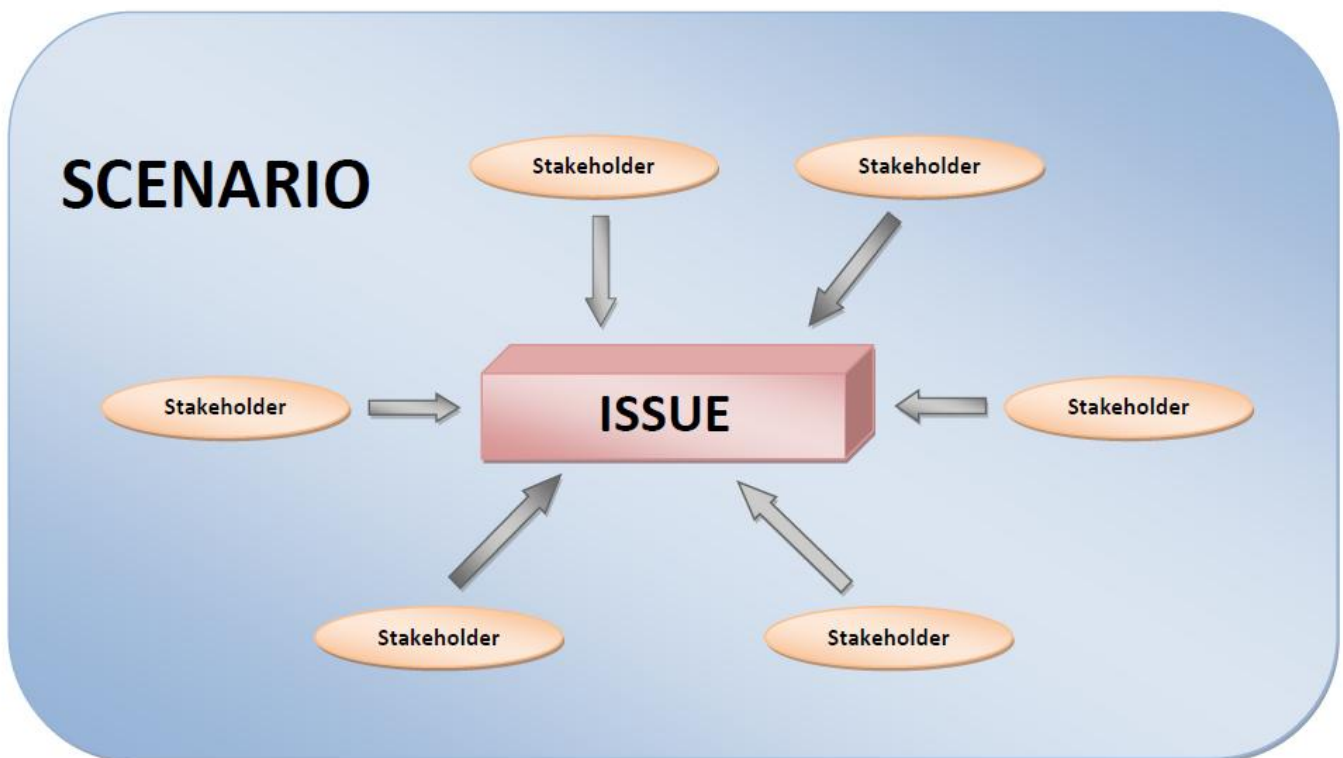
Figure 10: Basic visual representation of a simulation activity.

Simulations can be used to help students to understand the way the international system works and to apply decision-making theory to the solution of real world problems.[30] One of the clear strengths of the international studies program is a focus on enhancing the students' role as critical observers of the international community. The Step 2010 project team seeks to expand upon this in order to enhance student ability to critically dissect an issue, region or problem from a number of differing perspectives.

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[29] Starkey, Brigid, & Blake, Elizabeth, "Simulation in international relations education," *Simulation & Gaming*, Vol. 32, No. 4, 2001, p. 539-40.

[30] Starkey & Blake, "Simulation in international relations education," p. 537.

Simulations can assist student to:

- Productively experience the decision-making processes inherent in international relations, on a range of issues.

- Promote critical thinking, decision-making, analytical and communication skills.

- Improve student retention of acquired knowledge.

- Engage with the politics of consensus, conflict and competing interests.

- To display and continually develop innovative solutions both in group and autonomous environments.

- Develop capacity to constructively engage in problem-solving techniques and work well in an individual or a team environment.

- To be motivated to engage with various issues, theoretical approaches and concepts beyond current knowledge (Lantis 2004, 120).[31]

Reflecting the ideals of the STEP 2010 experiential learning initiative, simulations pose an excellent opportunity for teaching staff to instil a stronger focus on independent research at an early stage of student progress and presents a framework for developing practical understandings of theory and concepts. This represents an opportunity to invigorate our student populous within the degree with exciting new learning and teaching methods and improve the skill capacity and thus employment prospects of our graduates.

"I think this is a great task as it involves a different way of thinking and I believe that students would remember a lot more information this way."

2nd Year MBIL Student.

"I would choose to do this task as it would help me remember and understand information that could then be used for other subjects and assessments."[32]

3rd Year MBJI Student.

Implementation

The STEP 2010 project team wants course coordinators to be the creative centre of simulation development, as the best judges of what is most suitable to their courses and professional disciplines. As with the case studies, the intention is not to interfere or change the content or delivery of course material and recommends only minimal changes to the focus of some of the reading material (some simulation-focused readings). Lectures are beneficial in providing the theoretical basis and tools for analysis, identifying how they can assist in our understanding of global issues and international relations. They should not explicitly refer to the simulations themselves.

The success of a simulation activity hinges on the willingness of students to participate in their adopted roles seriously. This can be accounted for with good simulation design. The following questions are useful to consider when designing a simulation activity:

- What are your educational goals (process vs. content)?

- Will you use a real or fictional case?

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[31] Lantis, "Ethics and Foreign Policy: Structured Debates for the International Studies Classroom," p. 120.

[32] Feedback obtained during a focus group with undergraduate students enrolled in the international studies program, Monday 1st February 2010.

- What is your level of complexity?

- How many participants will you have and how will they be organized?

- What will the decision-making process be (intra-team and between teams)?

- How will you use actions? Will they change the negotiation environment?

- What kinds of outcomes will you have, structured or open-ended?

- Will there be any constraints on participants? If so, what kind?

- What kind of time and technological limitations will you face?

- How will you assess the simulation?[33]

The simulation design builder depicted in Figure 5 is a powerful tool for constructing simulation activities quickly and easily. It provides maximum autonomy for simulation design in the hands of course coordinators, while maintaining a common design rubric across the international studies program.

Alternatively, teaching staff can utilise online simulations such as the *Brynnania Peacebuilding Simulation* or *WebDiplomacy*; alternatively, they could purchase more complicated simulation programs from institutions such as the *ICONS Project*, based at the University of Maryland's Centre for International Development and Conflict Management.[34]

Tasks for Academic Staff

- Use the simulation design builder (below) to develop relevant simulation activities and assessment tasks for your course, if applicable. Alternatively, academic staff may wish to obtain simulations for use in class activities and assessment tasks. Several freeware and purchasable simulation programs are available, including:
  - *WebDiplomacy* (http://webdiplomacy.net/index.php);
  - *ICONS Project*, University of Maryland (http://www.icons.umd.edu/highered/home);
  - *Nations: A Simulation Game in International Politics* (http://www.abebooks.com/products/isbn/9781569271698/Michael+Herzig/Nations%3A+A+Simulation+Game+in+International+Politics/).
- Add simulation explanation and instructions in course guide.
- Ensure necessary resources are available when you require them for a simulation.

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[33] Asal, Victor, & Blake, Elisabeth. (2006) "Creating Simulations for Political Science," *Journal of Political Science Education*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2006, p. 12.

[34]

	Component	Purpose
Design Worksheet	*Goals*	What are you trying to accomplish with the simulation? Specify whether your primary emphasis will be on content or process and what the role of research should be.
	Structure	Who are the participants? Specify how they will interact with each other.
	Limitations	What time limitations and technological constraints apply? Specify your plan for allocating time and utilising available technology.
Required Elements	*Title*	A descriptive name for the simulation.
	Scenario	What is the professional context of the simulation? Specify the context for the simulation and frame the issues to be covered.
	Game Mechanics	How will the simulation operate? Explain the rules and procedures to be followed during the simulation.
	Participants	Specify the stakeholders within the simulation.
	Issues	Specify the topics that stakeholders will discuss/negotiate over in the simulation.
Optional Elements	*Outcomes*	What are the desired outcomes of the simulation? They can be explicitly defined or open-ended.
	Role Sheets	Information for participating students about the personality, interests, and background of each stakeholder in the simulation. For assessable simulations, students will research this information in their briefing paper. For non-assessable class activities, students should either research this information in their weekly reading, or, the teacher can provide a pre-prepared role sheet.
	Time Controls	How long will the simulation run for? How long will each student have to participate in the simulation role?
	Resources	Any additional materials that the teacher may wish to make available to students to assist them in their role play.
	Assessment	How will this activity be assessed?

Figure 11: Simulation design builder.[35]

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[35] Adapted from the *ICONS Simulation Builder* illustrated in Asal & Blake, "Creating Simulations for Political Science," p. 12.

Audio/Visual (AV) Material

One of the key deliverables of the Step 2010 project is the compilation of a substantial archive of AV material for use in international studies courses. Research into the use of film as a teaching aid in international relations courses indicates that films and documentaries can help students to contextualised and improve their understanding of important international relations theories.[36] Indeed, many students arrive at university with under-developed textual analytical and writing skills, but with great capacity to comprehend and critique visual images. This is likely to be the result of the bombardment of visual imagery that young people encounter in their daily lives through television and internet media.[37] Films and documentaries, when used appropriately, can therefore be an effective medium for teaching complex international relations topics, especially to inexperienced students. They can also assist as preparatory material for case study and simulation activities and assessment tasks.

Incorporation of AV Material into International Studies Courses

During initial consultations, teaching staff expressed limited interest in expanding the use of AV material in their teaching practices. Those who are interested will be furnished with the resources they have requested. There is however an alternative way to incorporate further use of AV materials without intrusion into the teaching strategies of academic staff: a suggested text list of films and documentaries could be published in the course guide for each international studies course. This could be included as one set list, or as one or two suggested texts under the topic question for each week's tutorial, along with the list of suggested readings. A set of questions should accompany the list, providing students with an analytical framework for comprehending, analysing and critiquing each film, fulfilling the same purpose as the questions which often accompany compulsory readings.

All AV sources listed in suggested readings lists will be purchased under the budget of the Step 2010 project and will be made available for use by teaching staff and students. Students will also be able to find the listed AV sources independently.

Students may be more willing to access visual material rather than written text as suggested sources for further topic exploration beyond the compulsory readings. This is not to say that one should replace the other, but that provision should be made for both in course guides. The Step 2010 team will investigate this further in upcoming focus groups with international studies students.

There is substantial scope for increasing the usage of this audio-visual library in the future. Teaching staff may choose to crop short excerpts from films and documentaries for incorporation into lectures and class activities. Films and documentaries may be screened in full as a means of illustrating key points. Ideally, students should be prepared for active engagement by providing a list of questions to answer while viewing and to discuss as a class or in small groups after the showing. However audio-visual material is used, it is imperative that students are given an opportunity to analyse and reflect upon the content of material they have been shown.

Implementation: Tasks for Academic Staff

Teaching staff should include a suggested list of documentaries/films in course information booklets, either one or two per weekly topic, or as a block.

Prepare questions for discussion during class (if necessary).

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[36] Simpson, Archie, & Kaussler, Bernd, "IR Teaching Reloaded: Using Films and Simulations in the Teaching of International Relations," *International Studies Perspectives*, Vol. 10, No. 4, 2009, p 414.

[37] Weber, Cynthia, "The Highs and Lows of Teaching IR Theory: Using Popular Films for Theoretical Critique," *International Studies Perspectives*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 2001, p. 282.

Research Capstone Course

The *Research Capstone Course* has been developed as the culminating project for students finishing the MBIL degree or one of the double degree in the UISP.

Classes during the first four weeks of the program will be dedicated to the understanding of high-level research methodologies, which will inform how student approach their major research project (4,5000 word essay).

From week five, students will work independently on their major research project. Course coordinators from each of the four optional strands of the UISP will offer students a choice of one of twelve different research projects (three different research projects from each strand) as the theme for their major research project. Alternatively, students may propose their own research project (subject to approval).

From week five onward, the course will feature a bi-weekly class for peer exchange, in which students will have the opportunity to share ideas, compare methods and assist one another with their research projects. They will also have the opportunity to enlist help from the teaching staff during these sessions.

The *Research Capstone Course* will require two assessment pieces:

(1) Project Synopsis (500 words).
(2) Major Research Project (4,500 words).

Students will use the project synopsis as a means of obtaining detailed feedback and guidance during the process of producing their major research project. The major research project itself is the pinnacle of the course, and the degree program, reflecting the educational aims and objects listed below.

Aims and Objectives

The *Research Capstone Course* will provide students with an opportunity to:

- Manage and complete of a large research project.
- Enhance their independent research skills.
- Obtain a stronger understanding of research methodologies, building on the research skills they have acquired in prior MBIL courses.
- Experience the level of research and writing skills necessary for successful honours and postgraduate candidacy.
- Acquire a detailed body of knowledge in a specific topic area, in preparation for honours/postgraduate candidacy or professional practice.
- Engage in peer collegiality as a means of improving their research output.

Classes: Weeks 1-4

Introduction to Research
Methodologies

Choices for Major Research Project
[Students choose a topic—or—propose their own]

Asia & the World	Forces in World Politics	Peace & Security	Politics, Policy & Risk
Topic 1	Topic 1	Topic 1	Topic 1
Topic 2	Topic 2	Topic 2	Topic 2
Topic 3	Topic 3	Topic 3	Topic 3

Classes: Weeks 5-13 (bi-weekly)

Collegial Research Assistance
Sessions

Major Research Project
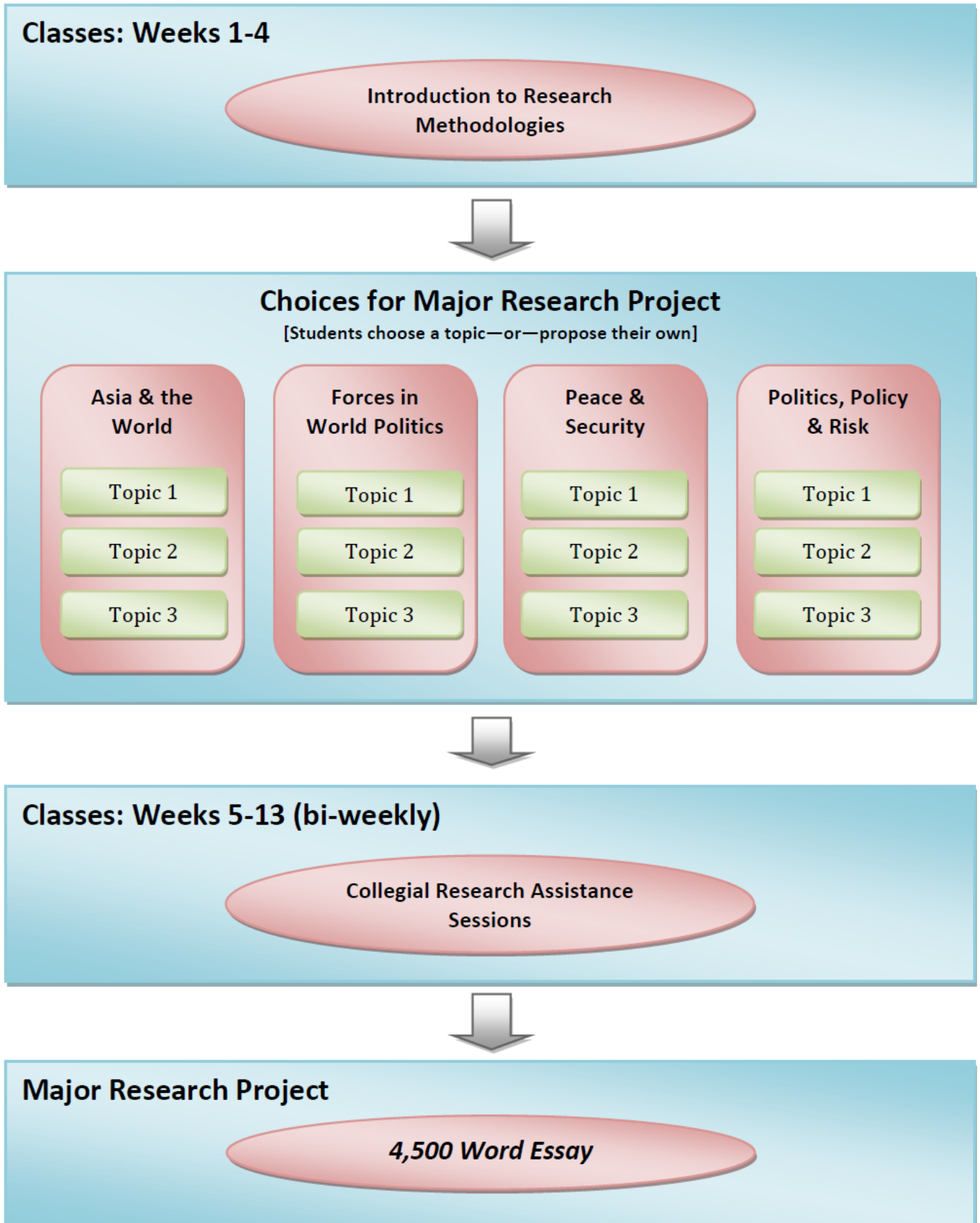
4,500 Word Essay

Figure 12: Schematic structure of Research Capstone Course.

Appendix A: Professional Competencies Rubric

Creativity & Innovation	Critical Evaluation	Ethical Behaviour & Social Responsibility	Information Literacy	Oral Communication	Problem Solving	Professional Skills	Teamwork	Written Communication
Original composition	Testing assumptions taking the context of data and circumstances into account	Evaluating personal values	Read widely	Listening and understanding	Developing creative, innovative solutions	Self-motivation	Working with people of different ages, gender, race, religion or political persuasion	Conveys a clear and unambiguous message to the reader
Conceptual modelling	Predicting – weighing up risk, evaluating alternatives and applying evaluation criteria	Knowledge of personal standards, community and universal principles	Develop an argument informed by varied sources and multiple perspectives	Speaking clearly and directly	Developing practical solutions	Self-confidence	Working as an individual and as a member of a team	Appropriate use of style and formatting
Adapting to new situations	Collecting, analysing and organising information	Choices, and the impact of these choices on others and oneself	Use evidence to back up an argument	Writing to the needs of the audience	Showing independence and initiative in identifying problems and solving them	Self-management	Knowing how to define a role as part of a team	Understand the role of writing in the professions
Developing a strategic, creative, long-term vision	Evaluating and monitoring own performance	Both short and long term consequences	Make connections between ideas and concepts	Negotiating responsively	Solving problems in teams	Self-promotion	Applying teamwork to a range of situations - e.g., futures planning, crisis problem solving	Write often in a variety of formats
Identifying opportunities not obvious to others	Coaching, mentoring and giving feedback	Accepting responsibility for the choices one makes	Synthesise and integrate information	Reading independently	Applying a range of strategies to problem solving	Meet deadlines	Identifying the strengths of team members	Word process
Translating ideas into action	Identifying opportunities not obvious to others	Recognition and acceptance of the consequences of each action and decision one undertakes	Cite and reference consistently and correctly	Empathising	Using mathematics including budgeting and financial management to solve problems	Punctuality	Coaching, mentoring and giving feedback	Use visual presentation software
Generating a range of options	Inquisitiveness about a wide range of issues	Caring attitude towards self and others	Evaluate the trustworthiness of information	Using numeracy effectively	Applying problem solving strategies across a range of areas			Communicate via email and electronic discussion boards
Initiating innovative solutions	Desire to become and remain well-informed	Sense of control and competence	Critique the quality of information in regard to bias, viewpoint and perspective	Understanding the needs of internal and external customers	Testing assumptions taking data and circumstances into account			Create websites
	Alertness to opportunities to use critical thinking	Recognition and acceptance of individual and cultural diversity	Explore and use primary and secondary sources	Persuading effectively	Resolving customer concerns in relation to complex project issues			
	Trust in the processes of reasoned inquiry	Recognition of basic human rights of self and others	Manage and organise data and information	Establishing and using networks				
	Open-mindedness towards divergent world views	The ability to be open to new ideas, experiences, and people	Collect and analyse data	Being assertive				
	Flexibility in considering alternatives and opinions	Understanding of the importance of volunteering in social and community activities	Contextualise data and evidence with regard to the relevant literature	Sharing information				
	Understanding of the opinions of other people	Ability to engage in experimentation with various adult roles	Use the web, library databases and catalogues	Speaking and writing in languages other than English				
	Fair-mindedness in appraising reasoning	Development of leadership, communication, and social skills		Manipulate and present images, video and audio				
	Honesty in facing own biases, prejudices, stereotypes							
	Willingness to reconsider and revise views where necessary							

Adapted from the *Griffith University Toolkits for Teaching Students Graduate Skills* http://www.griffith.edu.au/gihe/learning-teaching-resources/graduate-skills-student-outcomes/toolkits).

Appendix B: Assessment Criteria for Broadcast News Assignment (Journalism).

Assessment feedback – broadcast news/feature story						
Name:				Grade:		
Course:						
Assignment number/name:				Due date:		
Graduate Qualities assessed:						
Submitted by due date: Yes/No				Extension granted: Yes/No		

Assessment criteria	Level of achievement					
	HD	D	C	P1	P2	F
Structure • Effective introduction • Appropriate news structure using broadcast writing conventions relevant to either radio or TV • Relevance to topic/assignment criteria • Clarity of purpose • Appropriate conclusion						
Comments:						
Sources • Source/s of information identified • broadcast referencing conventions • Correct attribution style						
Comments:						
News judgment • Follows assignment criteria • Relevance to audience • Effective "angle" identified • Evidence of wider research (where relevant)						
Comments:						
Writing style • Fluency • Clarity of writing • Concise and precise expression • Spelling, grammar and punctuation • Phonetic spelling of difficult words (if relevant) for correct pronunciation • Broadcast writing conventions • For radio: writing 'for the ear' • For TV: writing to the vision						
Comments:						

	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Presentation • Signed cover sheet • Well set out • Required length		
Comments:		
Accuracy • Crucial errors of name/fact • Minor errors of name/fact • Ethical/legal judgment		
Summary comments:		

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