

International Studies Department Four-Year Plan, From Classroom to Career

1A. Freshman Year, International Studies Department:

- **Academic Advising**
Use your [academic adviser](#) and the [peer advising program](#) to explore International Studies and other potential majors, minors, programs and courses, given your interest. What core courses fit best with your career goals? Work them into your schedule.
- **Real world experience**
The International Studies program, a collaborative effort of the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Dolan School of Business, offers a major and minor in International Studies, and a major in [International Business](#) with a complimentary major or minor in the Dolan School of Business. The program offers you the flexibility to integrate courses in both schools into your plan of study, and reinforces multidimensional learning with real-world experience through [Service learning](#), [The Eurasia Project](#), [Internships](#), [Model United Nations](#), [Study abroad](#) opportunities, Advanced [language](#) training, [Academic Partnerships](#), and [International Scholarships and Fellowships](#)
- **What to do with an International Studies degree?**
Do some Internet research at sites like http://www.ncsu.edu/majors-careers/do_with_major_in/showmajor.php?id=97
- **Dream Job**
What is your "dream job" after graduation? What are you passionate about? Talk to your faculty adviser and other mentors. As an International Studies major, how can you use your time at Fairfield to prepare for it through class work, internships, volunteer activities, summer jobs, leadership positions with clubs and organizations, and other relevant out of class experiences.
- **Use the Core wisely**
Consider a variety of possible language options, including Portuguese, or critical languages such as Mandarin Chinese and Russian, both of which are connected to the [Eurasia Project](#).
- **[Model UN](#)**
Get started early with a student club that operates under the United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA USA) and is open to all undergraduates in any major. A minimum of three conferences per year (two national and one international) enable selected members to compete with peers from all over the world, while feeding their interest in current events, increasing their public speaking skills, and opening up their minds to the political, social, and economic landscape of other countries.

1B. Freshman Year, University wide

- **Hear From The Experts**
Attend lectures on campus and hear from professionals and experts in your field of interest. Start with the [Open VISIONS Forum](#) and look for other events listed in the university calendar. In choosing [FYE events](#) to attend, include those most related to career interests

- **Seek Out As Many Experiences As Possible**
Not sure of a career path? Use extracurricular activities to help you expand, or narrow, your choices.
- **The Core: Start Exploring**
Talk to your faculty adviser about how to choose core courses that will encourage you to explore new areas and supplement your areas of interest and career goals.
- **Showcase Your Material**
Start collecting materials you put in a portfolio to market yourself and help show your experience. Create a blog or e-portfolio to both present the work (newspaper stories, poetry, well-crafted essays, videos) and to offer reflections on them. Contact CAS Associate Dean Aaron Perkus for help in creating an e-portfolio.
- **Discover your passion!**
Take chances on different classes and majors. Find faculty members who can guide your journey here. Get plugged in and, along the way, discover what you are passionate about.
- **Summer Jobs**
Work with your faculty adviser to discuss options for a summer job that could give you experience and add content to your resume.
- **Campus Clubs and Student Organizations**
Invest your time in activities that give you experience in your field of interest and put you in touch with students who might have similar career interests.
- **Study Abroad**
- **Work, Work, Work**
Look for a relevant job on or off campus to gain work experience. Consider volunteer opportunities, often tied to your academic interest, to give you experience and provide information on potential careers, especially with non-profit organizations. Look for summer internships and jobs so you can apply classroom lessons to the professional world.
- **Living and Learning**
Make plans for sophomore year to team up and network with other students who share your career interests.
- **Lead On**
Look for chances to begin building your leadership skills. Take advantage of New Student Programs that bridge the classroom with the residence halls. Network with students in your residence hall who are enrolled in the same Cornerstone classes and participate in the First Year Experience (FYE) program. This will help you to make friends who share your passions and interests.

□ **Preparing for graduate school, early**

A large percentage of Fairfield students further their academic careers after four years at Fairfield. Fairfield's pre-law program has a full-four year agenda of recommended activities. For freshman year, interested students should concentrate on attaining high grades in your University Core classes; develop good study habits; attend St. Robert Bellarmine Society Events; and follow the Pre-Law website for events and tips on applying to law school. Talk to your academic adviser about preparing for graduate school options.

□ **Ask A Librarian**

The DiMenna-Nyselius Library has resources to help you to discover, begin and manage your career. If you would like assistance in using any of these resources, contact a librarian.

Start Career Planning. Now

Make an appointment with the Career Planning Center (CPC) to meet with staff, talk about your goals and aspirations, and how to best utilize your next four years of college. Read about jobs in which you might be interested. Attend Career Fairs and ask employers what they are looking for in new hires. Look at the CPC's online Career Planning Advisor Videos and Research Tools

2A. Sophomore Year, International Studies

☐ **Learn from other students**

Check out the many [student blogs](#) from current and former IUS students.

☐ **[Fulbright tradition](#)**

More than 60 Fairfield University graduating seniors have been awarded a Fulbright - a year-long scholarship that supports post-graduate study, research, work, or teaching in another country. Established in 1946 by Congress, this government-sponsored program funds the studies and research of more than 1,450 U.S. graduating college seniors, graduate students, young professionals, and artists in over 155 foreign countries annually. Here are details on the [2012 winners](#).

☐ **More Advising**

Use your faculty adviser and [peer advising](#) to choose the best courses, given your interest. Be prepared for your annual meetings.

☐ **Keep Dreaming**

What happens after Fairfield? What would be your "**dream job**" – and how do you get there? Talk to your faculty adviser and other mentors: How can you use your remaining time at Fairfield to prepare for it?

☐ **[Honors Programs](#)**

Qualified International Studies students participate in the Honors Program at Fairfield University and, for students with an exceptional academic record of achievement, the opportunity to be elected to the country's premier honor society, [Phi Beta Kappa](#).

☐ **[Internships](#)**

Talk to your faculty adviser and start planning now for potential internships. Think about "trying out" a career, gaining work experience, marketable skills, potential mentors and a competitive edge. Look for potential matches between an [internship](#) with your career.

☐ **[Study Abroad in Brazil](#)**

Fairfield University, in coordination with the Departments of Education and State, offers study abroad opportunities in Brazil. Fairfield students are eligible to study at our partner institutions, participate in all university-sponsored events, and benefit from the expertise of well-recognized faculty abroad. Each Fairfield student studying in Brazil will work closely with our hosts on tailored curriculum, internship or independent study projects.

Also take a look at [International fellowships](#).

☐ **Line Up References**

Start to look for 3+ professors in International Studies and elsewhere who might serve as professional references for you. Discuss your future plans with them and ask for guidance. Stay in touch with them so they can speak about your successes in an informed way.

2B. Sophomore Year, University wide

- **Hear From The Best**
Look for lectures on campus when professionals in your field come to speak and often meet with students
- **Career Readiness**
Want to get a jumpstart on your future? Sophomore Success is a series of casual dinners developed to help you figure out such questions as: Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter – do they really matter? Will my posts impact my future? How do I write a resume? How can I make myself stand out in the job market? Should I study abroad? How do I get an internship? What about grad school? Should I do service? Have I really given enough thought to my major based on my career goals? Networking Skills? Business etiquette - what the heck is that? Students meet over dinner with Career Planning staffers and discuss topics. Look for sign-up information early in the year.
- **Yes, employers look at GPA**
Keep your eye on the goal of academic excellence.
- **Leadership Skills**
Consider a leadership role with a student club or organization to help give you leadership and management experience.
- **Service Learning Courses**
Look for Fairfield courses that give you a chance to interact with the off-campus community, gain experience, and maybe pick up a resume credit.
- **The Study Abroad Fair**
The Study Abroad Fair will give you tips to use in finalizing any travel plans for junior year. Talk to faculty and other students on how the experience could help further your career goals.
- **Build A Portfolio**
Consider creating a blog or e-portfolio to collect materials that you can use to promote yourself in the future. Build a blog.
- **Relevant Summer Job**
Talk to faculty and Career Planning to increase your chances of securing a summertime job (after sophomore year) that is related to your career goal, can give you some experience, and serve as a credit on your resume. Use Facebook and LinkedIn to present yourself to the world in a professional manner.
- **Career Planning**
Don't wait! Make another appointment with a Career Planning Center counselor. Consider taking a "self-assessment inventory" test to help you get a better handle on where your strengths might be directing you. Update your resume. Look for workshops that can sharpen skills in writing resumes, networking, and mock interviewing. Register with Experience, Fairfield's online recruiting system, and get familiar with how it works. Students can search for jobs, internships, information on career fairs, and submit resumes to jobs and internships of interest.

□ **More Career Planning**

Attend Career Fairs and ask employers what they are looking for in new hires. Make an appointment with the Career Planning Center to meet with staff and talk about your goals and aspirations. Look at their online Career Planning Advisor Videos. Look at the Research Tools for Careers.

3A. Junior Year, International Studies

□ **Options After Fairfield**

How can you best use your remaining courses and free electives to both round out your education and prepare for a career? How about possible graduate school work in International Studies ... or scholarships like a Fulbright Fellowship ... or Teach for America? How about places where recent grads work, such as Action Against Hunger, Jesuit Volunteer Services, Millward Brown, NBC Universal, US Secret Service, and the US State Department. Talk to your faculty adviser. Here are some [student-generated options](#).

□ **Graduate work**

Students also pursue graduate degrees at leading institutions, including recently at Brooklyn Law School, Cambridge University, New York Law School, Seton Hall University, and the University of Connecticut. Talk to your adviser about how to best position yourself, early!

□ **Supervised Research**

Talk to favorite professors about possible supervised research projects you might do in your area of interest, in the summer or during the school year. On-campus [summer housing](#) is available.

□ **Independent Studies**

Interested in a research area but there is no course offered in the catalog? Talk to a faculty member or department chair about a possible independent study

□ **CAS Awards**

International Studies has department awards for outstanding students every spring; they are honored at the College of Arts and Sciences award night in April. Attend the event and look for projects that might earn you this honor. With your faculty adviser, gain experience in entering such a competition and learn how to effectively package and present your work-and yourself. Non-seniors are often singled out for their great work.

□ **[Internship Plans](#)**

Talk to your faculty adviser about the two internships for credit that are allowed at Fairfield. Remember that summer jobs, not for credit, can be just as useful in gaining experience and building a resume.

□ **References**

Look for three professors, in and out of the department, who can speak about your successes in an informed way.

3B. Junior Year, University wide

- **Shadowing**
Fairfield is expanding its program for students to shadow alumni, where the student can take an inside look at a career, get an overview of a company or industry, explore individual career options and goals, and receive advice from a professional. Students in biology and psychology are among those who benefitted in the past. Contact Alumni Relations
- **Study Abroad**
Use a Study Abroad trip to gain a cross-cultural perspective, move toward becoming a global citizen, and think more broadly about your studies and career possibilities.
- **Resumes**
Continue to polish and hone your resume. What's missing? How can you use your remaining time at Fairfield most effectively?
- **Working with professors**
Talk to your academic adviser and other professors in your department about what else you can do to build on classroom learning.
- **Leadership**
Gain management experience - and give something back - by taking as leadership position in a campus club or student organizations.
- **Networking**
Begin networking by connecting with Alumni Career Services and its Fairfield Alumni Network (FAN) program. Look for relevant information in the Alumni Career Webinar Series, focusing on such issues as the job search and professional development. Look at the Fairfield Alumni groups on LinkedIn and join those that are relevant. Look at the Jobs Board and Internship Board.
- **RCADE workshops**
These free, mini-courses can strengthen technical and computer skills. These days, to compete, you must be proficient in Excel, PowerPoint and Word, plus programs you might need for specialized jobs such as Photoshop and In Design. Beyond RCADE, how can you use any final elective courses to gain additional skills needed for your dream job?
- **Summer Jobs and Internships**
Work with your professors to help find relevant summer jobs and internships that can give you more experience and add a credit to your resume.
- **Service Learning**
To learn about paying careers with non-profit organizations, make room on your four-year course schedule for a Service Learning course.
- **Civic Engagement**
As you add to your resume, what other opportunities can you choose to give you applied experience and civic engagement beyond the classroom? They might include summer jobs, internships, leadership roles in campus clubs, or mentoring other students. Work to become a leader and an explorer, through engagement with the broader community.

- **Hit The Library**
The DiMenna-Nyselius Library has a large array of resources to help you to discover, begin and manage your career: If you would like assistance in using any of these resources, please contact a librarian.
- **Hear from the professionals**
Attend lectures on campus when professionals in your field come to speak and often meet students. Start with the Open VISIONS Forum and other events at the Quick Center.
- **Leadership**
Gain management experience - and give something back - by taking a leadership position in a campus club or student organization.
- **Your Portfolio**
Consider creating a blog or e-portfolio to collect materials that you can use to promote yourself in the future. (Build a blog.)
- **Volunteer Opportunities**
Look for a relevant job on campus to gain work experience. Consider volunteer opportunities, often tied to your academic interest, to give your experience and provide information on potential careers, especially with non-profit organizations.
- **Career Planning Counselor**
Have a counselor review your updated resume to develop it further and add your summer activities. Upload your resume on Experience for summer internships. Practice interviewing techniques with Counselors and take advantage of Mock Interview opportunities with real employers. Attend workshops. Participate in the Career Fair so you can see what it is like, begin meeting employers and researching who you might want to work for.

4A. Senior Year, International Studies

- **Capstone Courses/ Independent Study**
Use the Capstone Course to integrate what you have learned and reflect upon how you have grown at Fairfield and where your path will lead you next. The course also is usually a chance to also sharpen research skills, strengthen any Portfolio, and make fresh connections among courses and experiences.
- **Research**
Start to narrow your interests and look for ways to use classwork, internships, summer work and potential independent studies to further your interest.
- **Final Internship**
Use your final internship(s) to try out careers, sharpen your resume and cover letter, develop a portfolio, make contacts, and take classroom skills and apply to real world.
- **Line Up References**
Finalize 3+ professors from International Studies and elsewhere who might serve as professional references for you. Discuss your future plans with them and ask for guidance.
- **Grad School?**
Talk to a favorite professor about possible graduate school work in IS.
- **Fulbright tradition**
More than 60 Fairfield University graduating seniors have been awarded a Fulbright - a year-long scholarship that supports post-graduate study, research, work, or teaching in another country. Established in 1946 by Congress, this government-sponsored program funds the studies and research of more than 1,450 U.S. graduating college seniors, graduate students, young professionals, and artists in over 155 foreign countries annually. Here are details on the [2012 winners](#).
- **Service Learning Associates**
Housed in the Office of Service Learning, the Service Learning Associates (SLA) program engages 8 to 10 undergraduates each semester as student leaders to their peers in service-learning courses. Each Associate works intensively with one professor to support a service-learning course which aligns with the Associate's academic background and interests. The Associates meet regularly with both faculty and fellow Associates throughout the semester and attend professional development trainings facilitated by the Office of Service Learning. Contact [Danielle Corea](#), Program Coordinator.

4B. Senior Year, University wide

- **Final Work With Career Planning**
Fine-tune your resume by adding summer jobs and senior classes. Hone your interviewing techniques. Read the Experience calendar daily. Network with alumni through the Fairfield Alumni Network (FAN). Attend the fall and spring Career Fairs. Update your resume on Experience. Apply for specific jobs by uploading your resume to that job description. Participate in real interviews. Look at the employment information and [online job board](#).

- **Learn While Doing**
Look for learning opportunities where you also gain useful experience. They might include internships, **Service Learning** courses, volunteer positions, and campus leadership roles. Become a leader of a campus organization or club and gain management experience
- **Preparing for law school and graduate programs**
About half of CAS students further their academic careers after four years at Fairfield. Fairfield's pre-law program has a full-four year agenda of recommended activities. For senior year, the program encourages interested students, in the summer before senior year, to narrow the list of law schools in which you are interested. Work on your personal statement and application. Line up your letters of recommendation from faculty members and others. Have your application and supporting materials ready by late summer of your Senior year and apply as early as possible. If you were unable to take the LSAT in June of your junior year, plan to take the October exam in the fall of your Senior year. Apply as soon as possible after getting your scores. Attend St. Robert Bellarmine Pre-Law Society Events. Let the Pre-Law Advisor know of your progress in getting accepted. Other students will be anxious to learn from your experience!
- **Research**
Look for opportunities to publicly present your research at academic conferences or on-campus poster sessions.
- **Capstone? Internship?**
How can you most effectively tie together what you have learned? Your final courses allow you to reflect upon how you have grown at Fairfield and where your path will lead you next.
- **Role Models**
Look for lectures on campus when professionals in your field come to speak and often meet students. Start with the Open Visions Forum.
- **Technical Skills**
Attend workshops (sponsored by RCADE and others) to strengthen technical and computer skills. How can you use your remaining courses to gain additional skills needed for your dream job?
- **Non-Profit Sector**
Look for a relevant job on campus to gain work experience. Consider volunteer opportunities, often tied to your academic interest, to give your experience and provide information on potential careers, especially with non-profit organizations.
- **Library Help**
The DiMenna-Nyselius Library has a large array of resources to help you to discover, begin and manage your career: If you would like assistance in using any of these resources, please contact a librarian.

□ **Final Work With Career Planning**

Fine-tune your resume by adding summer jobs and senior classes. Hone your interviewing techniques. Read the Experience calendar daily. Network with alumni through the Fairfield Alumni Network (FAN). Attend the fall and spring Career Fairs. Update your resume on Experience. Apply for specific jobs by uploading your resume to that job description. Participate in real interviews. Look at the employment information and online job board.

□ **View Your Contacts As A Network**

Do you have faculty references lined up? How about classmates who can help inform you about jobs they hear about. Network!