

**Action Plan
International Studies Program
Andrew Young School of Policy Studies
January 21, 2009**

The International Studies Program (ISP) submitted its Program Review on December 1, 2007. This Action Plan is based on the mission and goals of the ISP that were listed in the ISP Program Review completed by CAP on March 17, 2008. The Plan is also based on the goals and objectives of the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, and on the research objectives of the Department of Economics as stated in its Action Plan (August 2003) and the Department of Public Administration and Urban Studies.

The work of the ISP is an integral part of the goals and strategy of the Andrew Young School and Georgia State University. The primary goals of the School have to do with excellence and relevance in the classroom, and excellence and relevance in research.

GOALS

The International Studies Program has five primary strategic goals:

- Goal 1: Recruit top quality faculty and graduate students and engage them and those at other colleges and academic centers at GSU, and other institutions around the country in policy research through collaboration with international organizations, domestic agencies and donors, and foreign governments,
- Goal 2: Train government officials, providing short and long-term technical assistance services in developing and transitional countries,
- Goal 3: Host both short- and long-term visiting scholars from around the world to collaborate with GSU faculty and students on policy research,
- Goal 4: Promote policy research through holding conferences that bring policy experts worldwide to GSU and maintaining a working paper series to promote and make available the policy research outputs of faculty, scholars, and graduate students, and
- Goal 5: Promote synergy in research and teaching between the ISP and the rest of the Andrew Young School and other colleges and departments at GSU as well as other international organizations.

The ISP Action Plan is aimed at furthering these goals.

Review of Committee Findings

The Committee recognized the mission of the ISP to provide research and technical assistance of sound public policy and sustainable economic growth in transition and developing economies and the five goals as stated above. The committee ruled that the ISP is meeting its goals as set out in its mission and that “The Center has increased the productivity of all those involved” and recommended that the ISP continue as a GSU Research Center

The Committee also recognized that ISP listed financial support as the most important factor in fulfilling its mission. The Committee recommended that a committed Advisory Board might enhance operations.

Update of Accomplishments for the period (April-September 2008)

Fiscal Decentralization: A Review of Concepts and Application for DR Lao. The International Studies Program held training for government officials from the Lao People’s Democratic Republic March 3rd – 7th, 2008. The week-long course on Fiscal Decentralization: A Review of Concepts and Application for DR Lao provided an introductory overview of the theoretical dimensions of intergovernmental fiscal relations, with a focus on applications for fiscal policy and decentralization reforms in DR Lao.

Strengthening Local Capacity in Viet Nam. Ministry of Planning and Investment and the United Nations Development Program in Hanoi, Viet Nam on March 5-6 2008. Through its work in this initiative, the ISP is providing advisory assistance to the Government of Vietnam on the definition of efficient and equitable provincial fiscal frameworks.

Fiscal Decentralization Training Course in Peru. With the goal of building the capacities of rural municipal governments in the key pillars and strategies of fiscal decentralization, the ISP delivered a Fiscal Decentralization Training Course for local government officials in Peru. The first course took place between March 10th and 13th in Piura, a provincial capital in the Northwest of the country, while the second course was delivered in Cusco between March 15th and 20th. In total, 50 participants from several rural municipalities learned about the principles of fiscal decentralization and the Peruvian decentralization process. The ISP also held an open lecture on Fiscal Decentralization in the Universidad Nacional de San Antonio Abad del Cusco, with the assistance of more than 300 participants, including students, professors and political authorities.

Fiscal Decentralization: A Review of Concepts and Application for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The International Studies Program delivered a one-week training on “Fiscal Decentralization: A Review of Concepts and Application for the Democratic Republic of the Congo”, from March 31 – April 4, 2008. The course was

delivered by Andrew Young School faculty, including Professors Roy Bahl, Charles Hankla, Jorge Martinez-Vazquez, Mark Rider, Sally Wallace, Wayne Thirsk and ISP Research Associates Juan Gomez, Cristian Sepulveda, and Andrey Timofeev, and Guevera Yao. Three senior government officials from DRC attended the training program from the Agency of Non-Tax Division.

How Fast Can We Responsibly Leave Iraq? ISP co-sponsored “How Fast Can We Responsibly Leave Iraq?” Tuesday, April 15th with Dr. Michael O’Hanlon, a Senior Fellow and The Sydney Stein, Jr. Chair at the Brookings Institute. The program addressed the United States’ presence in Iraq and how to bring peace and stability to the war-torn country. Dr. O’Hanlon addressed principal policy options available to the next administration. The event was co-sponsored The Middle East Institute, The Department of Political Science, History, and Sociology, Pi Sigma Alpha, and Office of International Affairs.

Conference: What Role for Property Taxes? The International Studies Program co-hosted “What Role for Property Taxes?” Conference April 27-29 with the Lincoln Institute for Land Policy. The property tax continues to be among the most recommended choices for enhancing sub-national government tax autonomy in developed, developing and transitional countries, and in fact is one of the most important sources of sub-national revenue in many countries.

USAID Fiscal Policy and Management Training Program. As an integral part of USAID’s Fiscal Reform and Economic Governance Project, the International Studies Program delivered a week-long training program on Fiscal Policy and Management June 9-13, 2008. The course is designed for USAID practitioners and host-country policy planners and deals with the different aspects of fiscal policy and management and their implications for fiscal reform activities in developing and transitional economies.

IV Summer School in Public Economics. The International Studies Program held the IV Summer School in Public Economics July 7-11, 2008. The program is designed for young public finance professors from different universities in Spain. The Summer School is sponsored by the Rafael del Pino Foundation from Madrid and Spain’s Institute of Fiscal Studies (linked to the Ministry of Finance). The main objective of the course is to expose young Spanish professors to leading economists and to different areas of research in public economics.

Summer Training: Fiscal Decentralization and Local Governance. The International Studies Program held the Fiscal Decentralization and Local Governance (July 7-25, 2008) course as part of the Public Policy Summer Training Program. This course provides a detailed overview of the theoretical and applied dimensions of intergovernmental fiscal relations, with a focus on developing and transitional countries. All of the participants are employed by government agencies in their home countries.

Conference: Obstacles to Decentralization: Lessons from Selected Countries. The International Studies Program hosted the “Obstacles to Decentralization: Lessons from Selected Countries” conference September 21-23. The conference participants presented papers exploring the challenges to decentralization in specific countries and the lessons that could be applied elsewhere. The conference was structured to stimulate a high degree of interaction between the participants to facilitate the detection of several core themes that are obstacles to decentralization reform. Additional information regarding the conference, specifically the countries researched, can be found on the ISP Conference Website.

Conference: The reform of the assignment of taxes to Spanish regions: Challenges and Opportunities. Professor Jorge Martinez-Vazquez and Juan Luis Gomez Reino (Research Associate, ISP) represented the International Studies Program at a conference entitled “The reform of the assignment of taxes to Spanish regions: Challenges and Opportunities”. The conference, which was co-organized by Jorge Martinez-Vazquez and Santiago Lago (University of Vigo, Spain), and sponsored by the Galician Regional Government, was held October 15-17, 2008 at Santiago de Compostela, Spain. This high-level academic conference on fiscal policy allowed participants to debate proposals and scenarios for future reform of financing system of Spanish regional governments.

Macedonia: Financing equitable service delivery by local governments. The ISP was awarded a \$70K contract from UNDP to propose a system of financing equitable service delivery by local governments and identify capacity building needed to operate the new system. Andrey Timofeev, research associate (ISP) and Musharraf R. Cyan, research associate (ISP), completed a two-week mission in Macedonia in October. This was the first of the three missions under the project commissioned by UNDP. The inception mission and the initial workshop aimed to discuss and agree with all key stakeholders on the principles to be applied to the transfer system, thus building the basis early on for local ownership over the project’s results and assuring an inclusive research process.

Bihar Panchayati Raj Institution Finance Study. The World Bank commissioned the ISP to complete a study of Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) Finances in Bihar. This study aims to understand how PRIs in Bihar are currently financed and staffed, whether funds and functionaries match PRIs’ legal responsibilities, whether there is sufficient fiscal and human resource management autonomy for PRIs to influence development outcome at their localities, the expenditure priorities of PRIs and how these priorities are formally and informally determined, and the existing accountability framework for public finance at the PRI levels. It will also examine current revenue assignment to PRIs and collection effort.

HED- GSU/Cairo University Collaborative Partnership. The ISP was awarded an HED grant for \$400K to develop a partnership between Georgia State University’s (GSU) Andrew Young School of Policy Studies (AYSPS) and Cairo University’s (CU) Department of Economics, Faculty of Economics and Political Sciences (DOE-FEPS) with the goal of increasing the capacity of the DOE-FEPS faculty in economics research and to strengthen outreach capacity in order to serve as a regional hub for teaching and

research and as a provider of technical assistance in economics in Egypt and the Middle East region. This partnership will enhance the quality of economics teaching and research to serve a variety of stakeholders, including think tanks, development agencies, the Egyptian government, civil society, the private sector, and government policymakers.

Action Plan

To accomplish our goals and ultimately our mission, the ISP creates activities that overlap as many of our goals as possible. These activities can be divided into two primary funding focuses: (1) research faculty, associates, and assistants, and (2) research and scholarly activities. It is the additional funding for faculty, associates, and assistants that directly gives us the resources to perform the work on our current technical assistance and training activities successfully and secure further external funding. Our research and scholarly activities promote the further development and expansion of our academic work, technical assistance and training. Both of these activities draw mutually on each other and allow the ISP to expand its core work and external-funding. Each point of action requires substantive resources that will allow us to move forward with the given activities. The activities of our action plan reach beyond our own current resource capacity, but they give both the ISP and the University an idea about what it will take to both sustain the current level of activity of the ISP and take it to the next level of international prominence. The actions are listed in order of priority to the program.

1. Establish a Board of Advisors

Action: We will identify a group of 3 individuals to sit on a yearly advisory board. This will be a voluntary advisory board that will meet once a year to provide advice on the action plan of the ISP, evaluate whether it is meeting its goals, and provide guidance on how the center can better meet its goals and mission. Total funding request **\$0**

2. Increase the volume of individual and collaborative research and academic publications produced from the technical work performed on our externally funded research. Total funding request **\$80,000.**

Action: We have had considerable success in converting the research we have conducted from technical assistant projects into academic publications, but we can do better. Often some good fieldwork does not end in good publications, when in fact, with some additional resources, they could. In order to achieve the next level of externally-funded academic output, faculty need support for two tasks: (1) writing proposals, and (2) converting technical reports into more rigorous journal publications. To do this we need to budget for more faculty course releases. In any given semester, we can provide faculty with 1 course release which will buy them out of teaching one class. However, this release usually involves intensive travel that precludes them from teaching altogether. We would need support to buy faculty out for their

second course release so that for the given semester the faculty member will have the time needed to work not only on a current project, but also to convert project work into one or several publications. We are budgeting a total of \$80,000 total that will be implemented in \$20,000 amounts per year. In this manner, faculty that are doing sponsored research can be bought out by the ISP for a second release to turn sponsored research into journal publications in the given semester.

3. Expand the number of Research Associates supported through the ISP that are involved with securing externally funded projects. Total funding request **\$180,000**.

Action: The ISP also supports 4 Research Associates who perform some of the major work of the center. However, it is difficult to find 100% funding for these associates when 25-35% of their time is spent trying to secure new projects. We will provide 45% of the effort of 4 Research Associates which will give them the time they need to write proposals and deliver on their required pipeline of academic research. These associates will be responsible for securing the additional 55% of their salaries from external grants each year. This will cost \$45,000 per year over four years for a total of \$180,000. By Year 4, 4 research associates will be covered at 45%.

4. Expand the exposure of faculty, research associates, and graduate students to young, rising stars in public economics. Total funding request **\$120,000**.

Action: We will recruit a visiting fellow in public economics to join ISP activities and do research with faculty, research associates, and graduate students. This fellow will work with faculty, associates, and graduate students as well as help the center pursue its mission and goals. The per year cost is \$120,000. This will be implemented in Year 2.

5. Expand the number of graduate students and dissertations supported through the ISP that are focused on international public finance research topics taking advantage of our ongoing activities. Total funding request **\$80,000**.

Action: Graduate students are being attracted to more domestic public finance topics because they are funded. To promote international work, the ISP already contributes \$10K per year in ISP operating funds to attract new Ph.D. students who plan to pursue their dissertation and research in international public finance. This amount is a supplement to their standard GRA payment. We plan to increase the number of honor scholarships for

graduate students interested in international public finance to 8 scholarships over 4 years. This will allow the ISP to attract better quality graduate students into the field of international public finance.

6. Expand the number of ISP academic conferences which involve GSU faculty, ISP Research Associates, GRAs, and professors and professionals from external universities and international organizations. Conferences promote the policy work by increasing the visibility and recognition of research activity in the ISP among scholars at other universities and foreign government and international organization officials. ISP conferences also create publications for GSU faculty, research associates, and GRAs. They also provide an excellent forum for having our faculty and GRAs interact with outside policy professors and professionals leading to additional academic research projects. The ISP currently secures funding for 1 fiscal policy conference per year which results in the publication of an edited volume with academic publishers. Total funding request **\$56,000**.

Action: Hold two fiscal policy conferences per year in Atlanta, so that we have a policy conference in both Spring and Fall each year. The per conference cost is \$28,000. The first conference will start in Year 1 at a cost of \$28,000. We will phase in the second research conference in Year 3.

7. Increase our summer training programs and attract high-level government officials, who are becoming acquainted with our expertise, will look to GSU as the ideal provider of technical assistance on large policy reform projects. Total funding request

Action: We will accomplish this by (1) creating new training curriculum in such topics as project evaluation, and (2) creating a scholarship fund that would allow us to recruit and fund high-level government officials in strategically targeted countries to participate in our training program.

In Year 1, we will spend \$15,000 to do a thorough review and updated of our current curriculum our 4 training courses in order to attract more students. In Year 3, we will develop the curriculum for a 5th training course on Evaluation that will be offered in Year 4. Total funding request **\$30,000**

We will implement a total of 8, partial scholarships over 4 years in order to fund qualified government officials for our training programs. This will cost \$10,000 per year for a total of \$40,000. This will allow us to get government officials on campus that will be exposed to our programs and possibly direct future project work our way. Total funding request **\$40,000**.

BUDGET

Activity	Total
Course Releases for Faculty	\$80,000
Research Associates (4 @45%)	\$180,000
Public Finance Fellow	\$120,000
Graduate Research Support	\$80,000
Fiscal Policy Conference	\$56,000
Training Program Curriculum Development	\$30,000
Training Scholarships	\$40,000
4 Year Cumulative Total	\$586,000

TIME SCHEDULE

Activity	Yearly Increases in Budget				Total
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
Course Releases for Faculty	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$80,000
Research Associates (4 @45%)	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$180,000
Public Finance Fellow		\$120,000			\$120,000
Graduate Research Support	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$80,000
Fiscal Policy Conference	\$28,000		\$28,000		\$56,000
Training Program Curriculum Development	\$15,000		\$15,000		\$30,000
Training Scholarships	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$40,000
Cumulative Totals	\$138,000	\$215,000	\$138,000	\$95,000	\$586,000