

American University of Central Asia
International and Comparative Politics Department
Department Development Plan
April 2011

Introduction

This report describes the department's progress towards implementation of plans summarized in the last department development plans and provides details on the plans and objectives set for the next academic year.

The chapter 1 reviews the Progress for 2010-2011 academic years. This chapter is divided in four sub-chapters: Curriculum development, Researches, Capacity building, Service to university. The chapter 2 is Plan for 2011-2012 academic years. This chapter is also divided in sub-chapters.

The department of International and Comparative Politics (hereafter ICP) remains committed to its mission to prepare young professionals with critical and analytical approach to learning, strong academic/research background in political science/international relations and commitment to serve the community. Starting from the 2010-2011 academic year graduates of ICP and other eight undergraduate programs will be receiving US-accredited degrees as part of partnership agreement over dual degree reached between AUCA and Bard College (New York State, USA) in March 2010. The partnership also seeks to develop collaborative projects aimed at integrating the best practices of liberal arts style of education into the curriculum of General Education courses. These moves are in line with the mission of ICP department and will expectedly strengthen its efforts to ensure academic freedom, foster critical and analytical thinking, and cultivate independent research skills among its students.

The ICP department stresses the importance of continued partnership with the Academic Fellowship Program (AFP), regarded as largely critical in sustaining its progress and in strengthening long-term local capacity, promoting research component and implementing curriculum reforms.

Progress for 2010-2011

Due to the partnership with Bard – College (USA), AUCA started homogenization of its academic standards with those of the Bard-College. The reform started in all AUCA departments as well as in ICP. These reforms touch all spheres of ICP professional activities, and also educational process.

Curriculum Development

1. ICP has finalized a chart of learning objectives with a list of undergraduate skills. This chart will serve the purpose of clarifying expectations and skills that each course will aim at depending on the level of complexity. The document with learning objectives is in the Annex 1.
2. ICP has analyzed its grade distribution. During his first visit to AUCA, IS Dr. Fumagalli has suggested to analyze the latest grades to determine the trend. He planed to share the experience of how ICP can deal with this issue during his second trip to AUCA in mid-May

2011. However, the analysis revealed that there is no “grade inflation” (the document with analysis is in the Annex 2).
3. ICP has elaborated list of writing assignments with clear rules for assessment. Moreover, ICP has adopted requirements for thesis papers in order to get better understanding between students and professors on what thesis paper is and what it is not. These are the rules for format, but also the content of the thesis papers. The document “Surviving your senior thesis” elaborated by Sarah Amsler has been taken as a guideline for the format of the thesis. Requirements for the content are in the Annex 3.
 4. ICP has worked out a recommended template of syllabus. In the past, there have been huge differences in the amount and quality of information and details (especially on learning objectives, grading assessment, department and course-specific policies and procedures etc.) provided in each syllabus. The template includes a set of detailed recommendations on designing syllabus. RS Alexandr Pugachev processed comments and feedback received by other faculty members and IS Dr. Cummings on his final draft. Recommended template is in the Annex 4.
 5. ICP has created web portfolio on <http://eportfolio.auca.kg>. Students can get all necessary information about ICP, its rules and requirements from this resource. They can download different documents. Web portfolio is permanently upgraded.
 6. ICP has worked out a “Major in ICP degree planning Worksheet”. This worksheet helps students to plan their education starting from the beginning till the end of education. The worksheet is in the Annex 5.
 7. ICP has elaborated Senior thesis assessment policy, which helps to grade senior thesis papers.
 8. ICP has elaborated a Handbook. All documents regarding the ICP, its rules, policies, study plans, faculties, etc. can be found in this handbook. This Handbook is available for students from the AUCA website, eportfolio, and hardcopies. The Handbook is in the Annex 6.
 9. ICP has created a Senior council. Senior council is a group of senior students which share their study experience with Juniors, Sophomores, and especially Freshmen. Thus, they help them to study.

Research

1. During this academic year, the department continued its collaborative project on elites of Kyrgyzstan. This year research project has accomplished the following goals: designed and completed a comprehensive database on parliamentarian elites of Kyrgyzstan since 1991; started to collect data on ministerial and local government elites; and produced working papers reflecting on the results of the initial survey. Two RS, Medet Tiulegenov and Alexandr Pugachev have been working intensively on identifying elites, and on developing conceptual and methodological framework for research. The project was supervised by IS Dr. Cummings, whose support, especially in setting the initial directions, has been extremely valuable. ICP students took active part in this research. ICP faculties do not have financial support for this project. They are supported by AFP, thus, they are able to dedicate some part of their time and energy to different research projects.
2. ICP has initiated another collaborative research project on “mass mobilization of April 2010” under the leadership of Sally Cummings. The research project has been divided on two parts. First part started in December 2010 and will end with a conference in Cambridge in October 2011. The second part starts after the conference and will end with a publication. ICP faculties do not have financial support for this project. They are supported by AFP, thus, they are able to dedicate some part of their time and energy to different research projects that in fact rise level of professional expertise.

3. On May 14-16, 2010, the department organizes a conference Studying Conflict and Violence in Central Asia, in cooperation with the departments of Anthropology and Psychology (announcement is in the Annex 7). Most RS will constitute the core staff of the organizing committee. It will gather over 20 scholars from AUCA, other Kyrgyz universities and abroad. The department has recently secured funding from the AUCA in the amount of 300 USD to cover expenses associated with the organization of the event.
4. In addition to collaborative projects, AFP fellows have been concurrently involved in other individual research projects.
 - a. RS Ruslan Jalil
 - a. Research project: Social attitudes towards Islam in Kyrgyzstan (supported by SRC)
 - b. Paper (yet unpublished): Islam in Contemporary Europe Perceived Threats and Debates
 - c. Conference (in May 2011): Regional Conference on Balkans. Paper on "Religious revival in post-communist countries of Europe and Central Asia. A comparative analysis.
 - b. RS Medet Tiulegenov:
 - a. March 9, University of St Andrews, UK, presented a paper *Social Movements in Kyrgyzstan and Framing the Unfinished Revolution*
 - b. March 10, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, UK, presented a paper *Path dependence of institutional trajectories: explaining transition in Kyrgyzstan*
 - c. March 16, American University of Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan, presented a paper *NGOs and the Public Policy in Kyrgyzstan*
 - d. March 25-27, Kyrgyz-Turkish Manas University, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, an International Symposium on Parliamentarism in Kyrgyzstan and Turkey, presented a paper *Twenty of Kyrgyzstan's Parliament – Institutional Development and the Study of Elites*
 - e. April 9-10, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey, Advanced research Workshop NATO, THE FIGHT AGAINST INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM IN AFGHANISTAN AND SECURITY SITUATION IN CENTRAL ASIA SINCE 9/11. presented a paper *Social Movements and Protests in Central Asia and Afghanistan: Diffusion and External Effect*
 - f. April 16, Academy of Management under the President of Kyrgyz Republic, research seminar series, presentation of a paper *the Role of NGOs in the Governance System of Kyrgyzstan*
 - g. April 22-23, Kazakh Institute of Management and economic Planning (KIMEP), Almaty, Kazakhstan, presenting a paper *NGOs of Kyrgyzstan in Public Policy: Historic and Institutional Analysis*
 - h. *Twenty of Kyrgyzstan's Parliament – Institutional Development and the Study of Elites*, Review of Academy of Management under the President of Kyrgyz Republic
 - c. Munara Omuralieva:
 - a. Munara was awarded AFP a Professional Development Fund to do a library research at CEU and to conduct consultations with CEU professors on March 16-19 of 2010 for her kandidatskaia dissertatsia at IUK.
 - d. RS Azamat Temirkulov:
March 2011 – April 2011

- “Center for Public Policy” (Центр Общественных Технологий) (Kyrgyzstan) for SDC, analysis of conflict sensitive program management for the project Civic participation and control of budget processes in the Kyrgyz Republic, local expert.
December 2010 – planed end August 2011
- “Center for Public Policy” (Центр Общественных Технологий) (Kyrgyzstan) financed by EU, research project “Poverty reduction in the most vulnerable migrants families”, local expert.
August 2010 – planed end May 2011
- PF “Social Alternative” (Kyrgyzstan) for UNDP (Kyrgyzstan), Research project Conflicts mapping of Kyrgyzstan: Creation a visual instrument for conflict analysis – Map of conflicts of Kyrgyzstan
August 2010 – planed end May 2011
- Research project: *Handbook: How to develop conflict prevention strategy?* UNDP-Kyrgyzstan. Presentation of the handbook was organized in the framework of SRC in February 2011.
- January – July 2011
Research project: *Methodology of conflict analysis: conflict volcano vs. conflict tree*, supported by AUCA 3 credits.

Capacity Building

Given that most faculty members have yet limited professional and teaching experience, the department continues to emphasize capacity building as one of its priority goals. These primarily include providing opportunities for holding workshops on teaching and support as part of post-graduate studies.

1. In November, 2010, ICP has organized a meeting with IS Dr. Fumagalli. IS Dr. Fumagalli has been reviewing current methods and trends used in teaching social science in the CEU, focusing particularly on lectures, seminars, and self-evaluation. The meeting also enabled participants to discuss challenging issues related to teaching and research at AUCA.
2. Throughout 2010-2011 academic year, AFP RS have been also working on their *aspirantura* (post-graduate) dissertation. As of now, three RS (Alexander Pugachev, Munara Omuralieva, Azamat Temirkulov) are enrolled with the post-graduate programs (Political Science or International Relations) at the International University of Kyrgyzstan. RS Azamat Temirkulov has already completed the interim exams (kandidatskii minimum) and has gained approval on his research theme. One RS Medet Tiulegenov studies at the CEU Modular PhD program. One more RS Ruslan Jalil studies at the University Hildesheim (Germany) PhD program.
3. In November 2010 ICP has organized round tables with Daniel Riggio, Information Officer for Afghanistan and Central Asia, Public Diplomacy Division, NATO HQ. In February 2011 ICP has organized video teleconference with NATO HQ. One more video teleconference is planed on May 6 2011. These events help scholars and students to get better understanding of NATO and its role in the global politics.
4. ICP faculties participated to “Effective Senior Thesis Supervision: Bard's experience” workshop that took place in April 5th and to “Senior Seminar Development” workshop that took place on April 6th. In June ICP faculties will participate to 5-day workshop on “The Academic Paper” for AUCA faculty (June 6-10th), which will be led by a guest faculty from Bard College.

Service to university

AFP RS commonly remain committed and engaged in the reform processes at the university level, at times leading special committees designed to reform General Education curriculum, university rules and regulations etc.

1. RS Munara Omuralieva participated and still participating in the syllabus development and teaching of pilot courses “Liberal Arts I” in the fall semester and “Liberal Arts II” in the spring semester of this academic year.
2. RS Alexandr Pugachev participated in developing a new course “First-year seminar”, which is mandatory for incoming freshmen of 2010. Interdisciplinary both in terms of content and instructors, the course seeks to promote the liberal arts style of education at AUCA. Alexander is teaching this course starting Fall 2010 semester.
3. RS Alexander Pugachev serves on the working group of liberal arts education.
4. RS Ruslan Jalil participated to the Research promoting committee.
5. RS Medet Tiulegenov and Alexander Pugachev participated in admission committee for 2011-2012 academic year.
6. RS Medet Tiulegenov participated in the university’s admission committee in February-April 2011
7. RS Medet Tiulegenov participated in the departmental hiring committee in April 2011
8. RS Medet Tiulegenov participated in the university’ working group on setting the Central Asian Studies Institute (since February 2011)
9. RS Azamat Temirkulov participated in Special Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities that worked out a new credit system which promotes research activities among AUCA scholars and improves the quality of teaching.
10. RS Azamat Temirkulov participated in the departmental hiring committee in April 2011

Plans for 2011-2012

In 2011-2012 academic year ICP department plans to accomplish the main curriculum development reforms, to complete ongoing researches and initiate new ones, and to continue further capacity building of the department.

Curriculum Development

1. The department will continue finalizing a chart of learning objectives with a list of undergraduate skills. ICP is planning to implement these objectives into each course syllabus. Assistance of IS Matteo Fumagalli will be very useful.
2. ICP will continue to implement common homogeneous requirements and assessments of writing assignments. Assistance of IS Matteo Fumagalli will be very useful in this task. These requirements and principles of assessment will be also communicated to students via website, webportfolio, and ICP handbook.
3. During his first visit to AUCA, IS Dr. Fumagalli has suggested to analyze the latest grades to determine the “grade inflation”. ICP analyzed and revealed that there is no “grade inflation”. ICP will provide IS Dr. Fumagalli with results on his next arrival in late April 2011. Plan on how to address the problem of assessment will be worked out during the meeting with IS Dr. Fumagalli.

Research

5. During 2010-2011 academic year, the faculty members will continue their collaborative project on elites of Kyrgyzstan. There is a possibility that the faculty members will be working on individual articles reflecting on the results of initial surveys and database. It is expected that the database will reveal interesting patterns and correlations, which have to be interpreted on the basis of qualitative analysis. At the moment, two RS involved in the project preliminarily expressed their interests to focus on the examination of the core segment of elites. ICP faculties do not have financial support for this project. They are supported by AFP, thus, they are able to dedicate some part of their time and energy to different research projects.
6. ICP plans continue its research project on “mass mobilization in April 2010” under the leadership of Sally Cummings. ICP faculties will participate to the conference in Cambridge in October 2011, which will result in collective publication by the end of 2011. This research is a comparative analysis of the events in March 2005 and April 2010. ICP faculties do not have financial support for this project. They are supported by AFP, thus, they are able to dedicate some part of their time and energy to different research projects.
7. ICP plans to initiate a new research “Security Issues in the Kyrgyz Republic. A New Framework for Analysis”. For this big research project ICP is seeking for a partner institution from Germany. In the framework of this research project ICP faculties will have a chance to increase their professional expertise and probably to defend PhD. IS Matteo Fumagalli will take a part in this research project and will assist ICP to find a partner in Germany. (draft proposal is in the Annex 8).

Capacity Building

1. Strengthening local capacity is regarded by the department as its particularly important task in forthcoming academic years. With this in mind and taking into account the important role played by AFP RS in continuing curriculum reforms, the department has decided to retain four RS. Additionally, the department will probably hire one full-time faculty members for the next 2010-2011 academic year.
2. Group of ICP faculties have been approved for participation to the conference in Cambridge in October 2011. ICP is planning to present results of its collective research project on “mass mobilization in April 2010”. ICP will have its own panel on this theme. ICP will apply for DDF in order to get AFP support for trip to the conference.
3. IS Matteo Fumagalli suggested to organize a series of teaching and research design workshops for ICP faculty at CEU or in AUCA. These workshops will train scholars on ‘how to develop a new course’, ‘how to write an effective research proposal’, ‘how to write a good research paper’. ICP plans to apply for DDF in order to organize these workshops. Therefore, ICP needs AFP support for the next year.
4. RS Medet Tiulegenov is planning to defend his *kandidatskaya* dissertation titled “NGO and Governing Systems in Kyrgyzstan” in autumn 2011. Also, he is planning to continue his study at the CEU PhD Modular Program.

5. RS Munara Omuralieva is planning to continue her kandidatskaya dissertation titled “Ethno politics in Kyrgyzstan after independence”. She also plans to complete and publish an article connected to the topic of her PhD dissertation after the library research and consultations at CEU. Munara will also apply for the promotion to “Assistant professor” status.
6. RS Ruslan Jalil will continue to write his PhD thesis “Islamic Activism in post-Soviet Central Asia. The Emergence of Muslim Civil Society with Turkish Origins: the Case of The Gülen Movement in Kyrgyzstan”
7. RS Azamat Temirkulov is planning to continue his kandidatskaya dissertation titled “The role of informal traditional institutions in local conflicts. The example of the Kyrgyz Republic” at the International University of Kyrgyzstan (IUK).

Conclusion

The department stresses that the progress noted over the last two years in building and sustaining local capacity, implementing effectively curriculum reforms and strengthening research potential has become possible as a result of continued and productive partnership with AFP. All ICP collective research projects are not financed, and possible only with the help of AFP. Yet, for the purposes of sustaining this progress and meeting newly emerging challenges, the department believes that continuing partnership with AFP remains critically important.