



RESPONSE TO

CYCLICAL REVIEW OF THE  
INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT

JANUARY 2017

Submitted to the Cyclical Unit Review Office by:  
Prof. Sonia Laszlo  
Director, Institute for the Study of International Development

We would like to thank the Review Committee for their site-visit and for providing such a thoughtful and constructive report. We have circulated the report and discussed it at our ISID Faculty Committee Meeting (Jan 13) and IDS Program Sub-Committee (Jan 18<sup>th</sup>).

We have been instructed by Dr Phil Smith from the Cyclical Review Unit to address any factual errors or places in which we might be in disagreement with the reviewers' recommendations.

Overall ISID members agree with the general recommendations laid out by the Review Committee. Some of the recommendations touched on areas in which ISID is already actively working and we felt it important to point that out. We also feel the feedback from the evaluators strengthens our mandates with respect to our ongoing efforts:

- On curricular matters, an IDS Program Sub-Committee has already started working on a program review. This Sub-Committee aims to provide short, medium and long term recommendations on improving our Undergraduate program offerings
- On faculty development, we are already in the process of trying to find ways to help support and fund opportunities involving our joint faculty who, for instance, now have the intellectual leadership on the annual conference
- On the quality of Professors of Practice (PoP), we have a new policy in place since September 2016 in which appointments and reappointments are adjudicated by the ISID Faculty Committee and the quality of the PoPs' profiles (CVs and contribution to development practice) and work plans feature more centrally in the approval process.

In addition, at our January 13<sup>th</sup> ISID Faculty Committee, we have taken action from the Reviewers' recommendation to set up a "SPP task force" to proactively work what a relationship between ISID and the new School of Public Policy would look like.

On the issue of hiring priorities, we wholeheartedly agree with the Reviewers' recommendation to have a faculty complement of 10-12 joint Faculty at ISID within 5-10 years. Counting the current recruitment efforts with Geography, this would be an additional 5-7 hires during this time frame. Given our undergraduate enrolments (currently 1400 students in IDS alone), we feel this is justified and possibly even on the low-end. However, ISID does not share the opinion of the reviewers with the recommendation to hire more in economics and political science before we fill the gaps in other core fields such as sociology, management, law and history, especially given some of the feedback received in the review concerning our teaching programs.

We wish to highlight to the University the main message from the Reviewers:

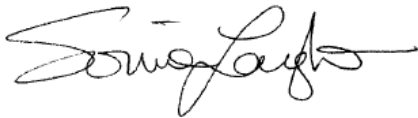
*"The principal weakness at ISID is, in a word, resources"*

We urge the University to heed the reviewers' comments to this effect and prioritize hiring in International Development, providing ISID with the required bargaining power to release Faculty from other units to teach INTD courses, and relaxing the very binding space constraint. These critical areas for improvement cannot be addressed internally within the unit and require investment on behalf of the Faculty and University.

Below we point out a few factual and typographical errors:

- P. 4 (first par): there are 4 streams, not 3.
- P. 4 (third par): only Geography and Management courses have “enrolment quotas” that give priority to GEOG/MGMT students
- P. 4 (fourth paragraph): there is currently no math or political science requirement. Regarding math, we expect only high school math, which is a McGill admissions requirement, not a program requirement.
- P. 5 (first paragraph): we are not sure what “better access to courses via Minerva” refers to
- P. 7 (last par): ISID, not ISIS.
- P. 9 (top): ISID and McGill faculty do already present at our speakers series (a Notes from the Field brownbag was set up a few years ago precisely with this in mind and this has now been absorbed by our regular speakers’ series).

In summary, ISID is very thankful for the thoughtfulness, thoroughness and positivity of the Review and the Reviewers’ recommendations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sonia Laszlo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Prof. Sonia Laszlo

Director, ISID