



CROSSING BORDERS

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY



HARRY I. CHERNOTSKY AND HEIDI H. HOBBS



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Preface

The proliferation of international studies majors at colleges and universities across the United States has created both a new frontier for understanding the world and a problem for those of us who are expected to identify the key concepts associated with these programs. We are asked to structure distinct disciplines into a coherent multidisciplinary major, where learning outcomes and objectives are most often in the eye of the beholder. Not only is this difficult intellectually, it is challenging administratively as well. International studies is the intersection of anthropology, political science, geography, culture, language, science, technology, art, health, and so many other disciplines. Historically, it has lacked an integrative framework. This eclectic scheme of organization is reflected in the way international studies has developed in colleges and universities. While the growth of majors and minors has been fueled by an increasing interest in all that is “international,” it is the “studies” aspect that has varied from one academic institution to the next. As a result, it has become quite difficult to define a core curriculum.

This book addresses this challenge by providing a framework for students that is built upon an understanding of the many borders that define the international system. In adopting this view, we are able to address the many different fields that constitute international studies and provide instructors a starting point from which they can pursue their own disciplinary interests. The challenge for students majoring in international studies is less about what anthropology, political science, or sociology *is* and more about what each of these disciplines *does* to contribute to their understanding of the world.

The notion of global citizenship as an organizing concept for international studies is critical to our perspective. Whatever the focus of international studies may be at your college or university, we are dedicated to the belief that students must have a greater understanding of the world around them and the role they will play in it. This sense of cosmopolitanism will be critical as they navigate their daily lives and consider the range of career opportunities available to them. We have designed this work to provide a dialog between academic frameworks and to include practical components that suggest how students can put an international studies degree to work. The book is organized to reflect these goals by including chapters on both the various disciplines that

address international studies and the global challenges we must all confront. The book concludes with a how-to guide for students that offers suggestions for study abroad, internships, service learning, and future training. We hope it will serve as a road map for students to better understand the world and to become important actors in it.



Acknowledgments

The broad nature of this subject matter has been difficult to capture in a text, and we are very grateful to the people who have played important roles in this process. First, we must thank Darin Van Tassell for his many intellectual contributions to this manuscript, most notably that fated conversation in Starbucks that really laid out the borders theme we would subsequently adopt and his contributions to Chapter 1. Thanks to those who have thoughtfully worked on the conceptualization of international studies and to the participants in the many International Studies Association (ISA) panels on this topic, especially Ann Kelleher, Rob Blanton, Barron Boyd, and Marijke Breuning. Thanks also to our academic homes, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and North Carolina State University, which have supported us through this endeavor.

Pulling from so many disciplines has been challenging. The work of several teaching assistants in the Master of International Studies program at North Carolina State has been critical from the early days with Shirreef Loza, Lisa Sands Shelton, and Carl Booksing, and on to include Sarah Cowles, Margaret Jackson, Chantell LaPan, Leah McManus, Chris Sawyer, Shari Tate, and Nicole Zapata. Most noteworthy is the input of Leah Gardner, who contributed significantly to the completion of the final manuscript and development of teaching resources.

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August 2012



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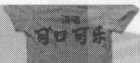
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Getting Your Global Bearings

Navigating the World

CHAPTER

1

"Don't panic."

—Douglas Adams's 1979 science fiction classic, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*¹

You can't escape it. The world has become smaller as the food you eat, the clothes you wear, and the products you use come from all around the globe. Your own daily routines are closely connected to the world beyond your doorstep. As distances shrink and traditional borders become fuzzy, we have to learn to think differently. In Douglas Adams's science fiction classic, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, the protagonist, Arthur Dent, is thrust into a tour of the galaxy and is relieved upon receiving his *Hitchhiker's Guide* emblazoned with the words, "Don't panic."