



Independent Study Project

ISPR3000 (4 Credits / 120 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:

Argentina: Transnationalism and Comparative Development in South America

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus represents a recent semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Course Description

The Independent Study Project (ISP) offers the opportunity for the student to deepen his/her knowledge on an issue or problem of his/her interest. This research ends with a research report of approximately 40 pages.

Characteristics of the Project:

The ISP is a 4 credit course, which means that the work load should be approximately 120 hours during four weeks.

The project should be mostly based on fieldwork. Therefore, primary sources of information will be prioritized. However, the ISP also includes a literature review that will be the theoretical and conceptual framework of the project. The project should be focused on issues related to regional integration, development, and/or social change. It should be a clear issue, specific and possible to be dealt with during a period of four weeks. It should fulfill/honor the ethical criteria defined by SIT.

The fieldwork should be conducted in Argentina. The specific place should be chosen according to SIT rules and it should be approved by the academic director. The student cannot go to the ISP site location until he/she has a local contact person that will support his/her social immersion and help him/her in case of emergency.

Before starting the fieldwork, the academic director should approve the research project. This should include an issue, the research problem, a methodological strategy, and a tentative work plan. The proposal should also define the place where the fieldwork will be developed. From day one of the program, the students should start thinking about their ISP.

During the fieldwork the student will be supported by a tutor. This tutor will be chosen by the student with the approval of the academic director, or vice versa. The student will also will receive the support of the academic director or program coordinator, if necessary.

The final assignment will have a research report format, of approximately 40 pages. It can be written in Spanish or English. The report should not be merely descriptive. It should include analysis of the information gathered.

The results of the research should be presented orally in Spanish in a 20-minute presentation.

All the fieldwork should be recorded in a Work Journal following the guidelines of the handbook.

Course Objectives

The ISP has an interdisciplinary and critical focus encompassing 120 academic hours (4 credits). Its main objectives:

The student should be able to:

- Define a clear, concise, feasible research question or problem.
- Define a methodological strategy related to the research question.
- Help find an adequate tutor for the elected issue of the project.
- Find a theoretical and conceptual framework that guides him/her in the research process.
- Carry out fieldwork with a certain level of autonomy.
- Prepare a clear, well organized, analytical, and in depth project.
- Present the project orally in Spanish.

Expected Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will have:

- A certain degree of autonomy and knowledge that allows them to develop a research project independently under academic supervision.
- The ability to develop a project in which they can apply their theory and knowledge acquired in other components of the program.

Course Requirements

The ISP should be developed during four weeks.

Students are supposed to:

- 1) Define a possible research question/problem
- 2) Deliver a research pre-proposal
- 3) Turn in a definitive proposal
- 4) Turn in a written report
- 5) Make a presentation

The ISP final report includes:

- a) Work Journal
- b) 2 printed copies of the written report
- c) 1 digital copy of the written report

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

ISP Assignments

Timely completion of all ISP assignments is expected. Late hand-ins will be penalized. All assignments are evaluated according to organization, analytical quality, depth of understanding, argumentation, and presentation of evidence.

Written Report	60%
Oral Presentation	20%
Work Journal	20%

Written Report

1) Content

The content of the report should be coherent with the research question, the methodology used, and the conclusion. Adequate use of primary and secondary sources. Evidence of effort made in and the quality of the search of information. Quality and size of the bibliography used.

2) Technical

Organization and inclusion of all the criteria asked for the report. Well use of written language, grammar, orthography, and quoting. Technical aspects are equally relevant in the case of Spanish and English. Therefore, it is strongly suggested that students who choose to write the ISP in Spanish make use of the corresponding tutoring.

Oral Presentation

1) Presentation

Clarity, adequate use of audiovisual support, level of enthusiasm, and capacity to keep the audience interested and participative.

2) Organization

Clear logic. Effective use of time. Effort made in the preparation and organization of information.

3) Questions and Answers

Clarity in the answers given after the presentation.

4) Assistance and Support

Assistance and support to other students' presentation will be graded as well as participation in other presentations through questions and comments that show interest in others students' ISPs.

Fieldwork, Work Journal, and Commitment

1) Organization

Clear organization of information. There is a clear criteria of organization that is legible and understandable for the AD or other person that should read the report. Guidelines suggested in the handbook are followed.

2) Quality of the Information

The report includes information collected in the interviews, bibliographic record cards, observations of the Work Journal. Information is not only descriptive but there also analytical.

3) Good Use of Time

It is possible to see the use of time through the Work Journal completed during the ISP period. The Journal shows commitment and organization. There should be a plan/schedule that should be followed.

4) Tutor's Evaluation

A tutor's evaluation on the commitment with the duty, responsibility in the periodic hand over of drafts, organization, and attendance to periodic meetings, will be taken into account.

5) Ethics and Relationship with the Field

The student should be able to develop a good relationship with the people he/she worked with and kept a good ethical behavior during the research.

Grading Scales and Criteria

Grades are given both fairly and rigorously and in accordance with the system below. They will reflect a combination of absolute quality of performance, progress made, and the ability to take into account and assimilate the academic director's and the teachers' advice in assessing the work done. An "A" letter grade reflects exceptional work, perfect combination of academic competences and personal research and analysis. It shows great ability to integrate field-based investigation and personal reflection into a structured and well argued paper. A "B" letter grade reflects serious and methodical work as well as a substantial effort at analyzing and understanding cross-cultural issues. A "C" letter grade shows the work meets the requirements but needs more in-depth reflection and personal involvement. A "D" letter grade is insufficient and clearly reflects lack of work or serious deficiencies.

The grading scale for all classes is as follows:

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+
84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
67-69%	D+
64-66%	D
below 64	F

Please see the SIT Study Abroad Student Handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, academic warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment, and the academic appeals process.

Student research (Independent Study Project) is a product of field work and as such students have an obligation to assess both the positive and negative consequences of their field study. Ethical field work, as stipulated in the SIT Statement of Ethics, results in products that are shared with local and academic communities; therefore copies of ISPs are returned to the sponsoring institutions and the host communities, at the discretion of the institution(s) and/or community involved. World Learning/SIT Study Abroad may archive, copy, or convert the ISP for non-commercial use, for preservation purposes, and to ensure future accessibility. World Learning/SIT Study Abroad may archive ISPs in the permanent collection at the SIT Study Abroad local country program office and/or at any World Learning office. World Learning/SIT Study Abroad has a non-exclusive, perpetual right to store and make available, including electronic online open access, to the ISP. Students retain all ownership rights of the ISP product and retain the right to use all, or part, of my project in future works. Please refer to the Student Handbook or the Access, Use, and Publication of ISP form.

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