Independent Study Project

ISPR 3000 (4 credits / 120 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:

The Netherlands: International Perspectives on Sexuality and Gender

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. Please do not assume these are the exact lectures and readings for any subsequent semester.

Course Description

The Independent Study Project (ISP) offers the opportunity to study an aspect that falls under the umbrella of international perspectives on sexuality and gender in greater depth. In many cases, topics grow out of lectures, discussions and excursions during our semester. Students directly apply the concepts and skills of experience-based learning discussed in the Field Study Seminar, especially in their interviews and observations. The ISP also fosters greater understanding of course material through further immersion in the culture, presenting opportunities in some cases for further development of language skills.

Students are required to comply with the legal and ethical research standards as defined by SIT and are subject to SIT Institutional Review Board (IRB) policies as presented by the academic director and/or available in the SIT student handbook. Students are also strongly encouraged to review these policies at their own schools.

Course Objectives

To enable participants to:
- select, design and implement an individual study project which investigates a dimension of sexuality and gender in a Dutch, European, or broader international context;
- learn and utilize a field study report format effectively;
- develop self-confidence and an understanding of experience-based learning.

Expected Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:
- Conduct field research independently, ethically, and effectively
- Understand the importance of the logistical and ethical considerations when designing field research
- Identify the key impediments to and idiosyncrasies involved in conducting field research in the Netherlands

- Discuss the results of their field research and its application

Course Methods
Throughout the early part of the program, students refine their project proposal and identify primary and secondary resources. During the last month of the program, students will work exclusively on field investigation, data collection, analysis and synthesis, and on the culminating oral, written or alternative presentations of their findings and methodology. Students invest a minimum of 120 hours of work for a four-credit project. Students may choose to either complete a standard ISP (35-40 page investigative research paper) or an alternative ISP in which the data analysis is expressed in another format such as photography display, film, theater script, etc). An alternative ISP still requires an investigative research paper and must explain the reason for using an alternative format as an appropriate expression of the data analysis. Each student will work closely with a project advisor, as well as the academic director, throughout the ISP process.

Course Requirements
- Approximately four meetings with project advisors in addition to meetings with the academic director and ISP coordinator.
- Approximately 120 hours of fieldwork toward completion of the project.
- An oral presentation and Q & A.
- E-copy of your fully formatted ISP.
- ISP summary sheet (e-copy): abstract, advisor, and contact organizations.
- The ISP paper takes one of the following forms
  - The standard ISP academic paper is a 35-40 page (250 words/page) academic paper presenting findings of the field study project.
  - For alternative projects, the accompanying paper (15-20 pages) should compliment and complete the analysis presented in the alternative ISP.
  - If an ISP is the final product of an extended service learning experience, for example an official report for the service learning experience organization, the ISP criteria may be modified to fit the needs of the organization.
- One bound hard copy of your final ISP paper to be handed in prior to the ISP presentation for the SIT program library.
- Another copy for your ISP advisor (either hard copy or e-copy).
- Signed Access, Use, and Publication of the ISP form.

ISPs will be archived in the SIT program library available to future students and others who use the SIT program library (staff, hosts, guest lecturers, etc). Exemplary ISPs will also be archived in relevant public archives and may be listed in their on-line catalogue. The public archives include **IHLIA** (Internationaal homo/lesbisch archief) at the **Amsterdam public library** (www.ihlia.nl or www.oba.nl); at the **Aletta Institute for Women's History** www.aletta.nu; or at the **Rutgers-Nisso library** www.rng.nl. Exemplary ISPs may also be available via the SIT digital collection. http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/

ISP Guidelines
The final ISP paper should be between 35 - 40 pages (250 words/page).
1. TITLE PAGE and COPYRIGHT - including the title, Title page template is available on Moodle. Make sure you check the appropriate boxes and sign the copyright form. That form should be page 2 of your ISP.
2. ABSTRACT – Summary of your field project and conclusion. (One, two at most paragraphs.)

3. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS - to those people who helped you in the process of completing your project.
4. TABLE OF CONTENTS - include everything that will be found in your ISP and include page numbers.
5. INTRODUCTION - at least one page introducing the topic and major themes of your paper; how your paper is organized and what the reader can expect to find in your report. Make sure you explicitly state you *Research Question.* State it as a question so it is clear to the reader what you paper is attempting to answer.
6. LITERATURE REVIEW – previous studies/research on this topic area, how your paper is contributing to the research in filling a gap in the research. This section can be intertwined with the Introduction.
7. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK – (required for students in the *Critical Theory module)* - theoretical framework in which you will use to analyze your data. Have you revised your theoretical framework draft written at the end of the critical theory seminar?
8. ASSUMPTIONS - the assumptions you have before beginning to collect primary data. This can be included in the methodology section.
9. METHODOLOGY - one to three pages, generally explaining your sources of information and how you gathered your data. Discuss why you chose this methodology. You can include in this section the strengths and weaknesses of your methodology, any problems you see with the data (language, time, numbers of interviews, etc.) or possible sources of bias and how you dealt with them.
10. ANALYSIS - the report of your findings, presented in an organized, clear and logical manner. Do not include a full transcription of your data, only short concise quotes to back up your conclusions. Dividing the body into thematic subsections can help keep your paper organized. Each section should have an introductory paragraph which poses the general question or proposition that will be developed in that section, moving from there to the specifics of your study. The information you have gathered through living in a community or studying a group or organization, data gathered through interviews and observations, should be explicitly incorporated into your paper. Your paper should not be a series of unsupported conclusions. Make sure the information you include in the analysis is necessary and relevant to your theme and belongs in the section in which you have placed it. You may have to cut interesting information because it just doesn't relate to your thesis. (This information may be footnoted if you would still like it presented.) Be concise; avoid wordiness and proof-read!
11. CONCLUSION - one page presenting the conclusions resulting from your analysis of your data. Have you answered your *primary research* question? The conclusion should not include new information, but should summarize what has been reported, draw conclusions about it and suggest new questions (recommendations) for future study.
12. CITING/FOOTNOTES/ENDNOTES - all quotes, paraphrases, borrowed ideas or phraseology, statistics and figures should be cited, foot or end-noted. Check APA or MLA texts for appropriate formatting. Give credit where credit is due. It should be clear from where the information presented comes. Be consistent in your chosen citation style.
13. BIBLIOGRAPHY - include all interviews and other sources of information such as books, articles, videos, pamphlets, etc. Use APA or MLA formatting. Interviews should include name of interviewee (unless s/he wishes to remain anonymous in which case their pseudonym should appear), subject of interview, date and place in which the interview took place.
14. APPENDIX - Include your interview questions and any items that may be of interest or help in supporting your paper.

ISP Paper

The final paper should be neat, legible and error free! Poorly written and/or sloppy papers will not be accepted. Check your spelling. The use of British English spelling is okay. Be sure that all quotes or words in the local language are translated. Do not assume your reader is as familiar as you with local sayings, slang or idioms. The final paper should be typed, double-spaced on standard sized paper and bound with a hard cover (double sided printing is acceptable.)

Oral Presentation
Students will give an oral presentation of their project at the final evaluation. Presentations should be no longer than 20 minutes. Students should be prepared for a 10-minute Question and Answer period thereafter. Take the time necessary to organize a concise and informative presentation. Use visuals (photos, charts, maps, etc.) when possible and appropriate. Notes may be used, but you should not read your paper. Be creative and have fun with your presentation!

The ISP Summary Sheet
This should include your abstract, recommendations for future research and advisor and resource contact information. The abstract may be used for your grading narrative and recommendations and contact information will be available for future students.

Costs Incurred
Copying and binding of your ISP is your individual responsibility

Student Evaluation and Grading Criteria
The evaluation of the ISP will be by the academic director in conjunction with the project advisor. Assessment of the written work and oral presentation is based on the accuracy of the information conveyed, the breadth and appropriateness of sources, the depth of analysis and insight, the level of cultural sensitivity displayed, and the quality of expression. Special emphasis will be placed on the student's ability to integrate primary and secondary sources and to present the findings in a clear, organized and well-synthesized format. The academic director assigns the final grade.

Standard Academic Paper		Alternative ISP project	
Paper	80%	Written component	50%
Oral presentation	20%	Project & presentation	50%
TOTAL	100%	TOTAL	100%

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, 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 note: the syllabus, course content, lecturers, and readings may modified by the academic director in order to better suit the needs of the course and its participants. Should any change of class topics or lecturers be necessary, students will be promptly notified.

Student research is a product of fieldwork and, as such, students have an obligation to assess both the positive and negative consequences of their field study. Ethical fieldwork, 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 archives the ISP 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 the project in future works. Please refer to the Student Handbook or the Access, Use, and Publication of ISP form.

Academic Policies: SIT prides itself on providing students with an experientially based program; we hold ourselves, and our students, to the highest of academic standards. Students are asked to refer to the **SIT Study Abroad Handbook** for policies on academic integrity, ethics, academic warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and the academic appeals process.

Disability Services: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services at disabilityservices@sit.edu for information and support in facilitating an accessible educational experience. Additional information regarding SIT Disability Services, including a link to the online request form, can be found on the Disability Services website at http://studyabroad.sit.edu/disabilityservices.