Course Description
The Independent Study Project (ISP) offers students a unique, interactive research opportunity in their field of interest global health. In most cases, topics of ISPs grow out of lectures, briefings and discussions from the thematic courses, activities, and field experiences. Students directly apply the concepts of experience-based learning and interactive research skills learned in the Research Methods and Ethics course. The ISP also includes a work journal and an interactive research log that identify the design of the project as well as the stages and the completion of the interactive research. Students contribute 120 field hours (equivalent to 60 classroom hours) to this course.

Course Objectives
The objectives for this course are to:
- provide broader access into the host culture, to enable participation in daily social life and to enhance interactive research;
- develop the students’ conversation and understanding skills;
- function easily in a variety of situation ranging, according to the class they are placed in, from routine social demands to discussions relating to particular interests;
- maintain face-to-face conversations in largely predictable situations.

Expected Learning Outcomes
By the end of the course, students should have attained the following:
- Competence in the processes of designing, executing, analyzing, and interpreting primary research
- Comprehensive knowledge of a specific academic topic having to do with global health
- Understanding of the ethical parameters involved in conducting global health research

Human Subjects Review
All ISP proposals must reflect a thoughtful and culturally appropriate consideration of the effects of the student’s inquiry on the participants in the project. To that end, you are required to submit an "Application for Review of Research with Human Subjects," which includes questions about any potential harm that might come from your study; appendices include interview and survey protocols. If
the academic director believes that you have not sufficiently addressed the concerns of this policy, he/she may ask you to revise your proposal. Standards for this review are developed in country and reflect local academic practice.

If a student’s research has been funded by a US government agency or if she/he plans to take this research back to his/her home school or community for further dissemination, then the student must follow more stringent standards, i.e., not only those of the host community, but also those of the Office for Human Resource Protections, with which SIT is registered. Any questions or concerns are forwarded to SIT’s Institutional Review Board for review.

Course Methods
Throughout the ten weeks of seminars, students identify primary and secondary sources related to the topic of their ISPs. Students meet the academic director regularly to evaluate and discuss their progress of ISP research. Students contact experts working in fields related to their ISP topic and will meet such experts at various international organizations in Geneva. During the last month of the program, students work exclusively on their ISP project that include data collection, synthesis and analysis, interactive research, interviewing experts, writing the ISP paper, writing in their work journal and interactive log, and preparing for their oral presentation. Students choose a project advisor and continue to meet with the academic director throughout the ISP period.

Course Requirements
1. At least three meetings with project advisor and three meetings with the academic director;
2. 120 hours of field-based study that applies methods of interactive research, for example extensive interviews, towards completion of the project; the ISP work journal accounts for the design of the project, the time periods of research, the research locations and the human resources/experts;
3. A 40 minute oral presentation and discussion of the ISP with an overview handout for the participants;
4. A 30 page (Arial 12, double spacing, 1” margins left and right) academic writing of the field study project. The paper includes: abstract, title page, acknowledgments, table of contents, theoretical framework of analysis, research methodology, critical subject development, recommendations, evaluations, conclusions, notes, and bibliography. This document must be submitted to the academic director on PDF, and also printed (double side) and stapled by the given due date;
5. The Work Journal and the Interactive Research Log must also be submitted to the academic director with the same deadline.

Student Evaluation and Grading Criteria
The evaluation of the ISP will be completed by the academic director with critical comments and evaluation from the project advisor. Assessment of the written project and the oral presentation is based on the accuracy of information conveyed, the clarity of the presentation, the use of hand-out material, the quality of analysis and argumentation, oral expression, clarity of answers to questions and civility of interaction. Special emphasis is put on the student’s ability to integrate primary sources and methods of interactive research and to present the findings in a clear, organized and well-synthesized format. The academic director assigns the final grade.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ISP Paper</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Presentation</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work Journal and Interactive Research Log</td>
<td>15%</td>
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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.