

Internship and Seminar

ITRN-3000 (4 credits)

Cameroon: Virtual Internship in Women's Rights & Resilience in Conflict Situations

This syllabus is representative of a typical 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

This course is at the intersection between peace, security, human rights, and gender studies. It will explore the gendered dimension of conflicts by state actors and non-state actors. As a result of the ongoing Anglophone crisis in Cameroon, more than 700,000 people have been forced to flee their homes and live in dire conditions. The COVID-19 crisis has added another layer of difficulties to the lives of the affected women, and efforts to provide food, medicine, and other crucial needs are now compounded with the need for protective masks, gloves, and medical assistance. The course will provide students the opportunity to engage with the processes of conflict resolution in the ongoing crisis in Cameroon with a strong focus on the way these processes have affected thousands of women.

The total duration of the course is 12 weeks, the first week is dedicated to a seminar preparing students to dive into the internship swiftly. The remaining weeks, students are directly engaged with work in NGOs that operate in the conflict areas, providing primary emergency care to the affected communities and with some organizations that support internally displaced women in urban centers.

Students will therefore have the opportunity to have an immersive learning experience with rigorously constructed discussions, reflection and written assignments to review the progress of the internship. They will also contribute meaningful work by supporting organizations that are directly engaged in conflict and resettlement areas. Given SIT's existing strengths in experiential education, the internship will prioritize collaborative learning and engagement/relationships with host communities.

Each student is expected to choose an organization identified by the academic director as suitable and satisfying the program's requirements. Students will complete their internship and submit a final paper. In the final paper, students will process their

learning experience, analyze an important organizational issue, as well as their experience and observations, as related to the theme of the internship.

The final paper and presentation will demonstrate how the students' goals are achieved, how their experience links to the program theme and how the student intends to apply these skills and knowledge in their home country.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the internship and seminar, the student will be able to:

- Demonstrate awareness of the ethics of an internship in the context of Cameroon;
- Describe, analyze, and synthesize your learning experience in the internship in the form of an internship paper;
- Articulate the output of the internship experience in the form of an oral presentation;
- Show understanding of the complexities of the work of development and peace building organizations in supporting women in times of conflict; and
- Gain meaningful and practical work experience in the context of gender, security and peacebuilding.

Language of Instruction

English

Course Schedule

Students will be expected to devote 180 hours to this virtual internship and seminar course. This will include 12 hours per week “on” the internship site over the 12 weeks as well as weekly one-hour synchronous discussions led by the academic director. Students are expected to spend up to 20 hours writing the six progress reports and the final internship paper (minimum of 15 pages). Virtual attendance is required for all the discussions and at all the oral presentations, followed by a questions and answers period.

Module 1: Norms, Ethics and Positionality

Session 1 Setting the stage

This session reviews objectives for the internship. Students will meet with the academic director to confirm their internship placement and discuss expectations, timeframes and other logistics, structural components of the final internship paper, content, layout, and general guidelines.

Session 2: Positionality and Internship Ethics/Awareness 1

1. What do you bring to your role as intern that may influence how you perceive and engage in the internship experience?

a. Stereotypes and preconceptions about interning in Cameroon

b. What are your motivations? How do you imagine your role?

2.Introduction to Work Culture in Cameroon

Session 3: Positionality and Internship Ethics/Awareness 2

3.Introduction to Internship –visit and develop understanding of context and position in field/country

4.Ethics in Internships: This is an opportunity to discuss and reflect on the ethics of engaging in internships in an international context in general and in (country) in particular.

a. Local Review Board (LRB) and Institutional Review Board (IRB) process and the Internship Ethics Review Application.

Session 4: The Internship Learning Agreement

Central to a successful internship experience is development of the Internship Learning Agreement. The academic director will work with students individually and as a group to review the purpose of the Internship Learning Agreement. The academic director will discuss student strategies for collaborating with the internship supervisor to design the contents of the Internship Learning Agreement in adherence to internship learning objectives and in collaboration with the internship supervisor at the host organization. The agreement also helps to ensure a clear understanding of the objectives of the internship among the student, academic director, and internship supervisor. Once internship placements are confirmed, the students, together with the academic director will review objectives for the internship and discuss expectations, learning agreements, timeframes and other logistics, structural components of the final internship paper, content, layout, and general guidelines.

Required Readings:

AD will assign readings specific to the local context.

Recommended Readings

Recommended reading: Sweitzer, H. Frederick and King, A. Mary (2013) The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional and Civic development in Experiential Learning (4th Edition). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole (Chapter 12)

Module II: Contextualizing our Engagement in Cameroon

Session 1: The Anglophone crisis and women in Cameroon

Understand the origins of the Anglophone crisis, how the crisis has manifested and the consequences of the crisis on Anglophone women and on Cameroon.

Recommended reading: Okereke, C. N. E. (2018). Analysing Cameroon's Anglophone Crisis. *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses*, 10(3), 8-12.

Session 2: The Civil Society in Cameroon

Discuss new learning: how has your understanding of the role and work of your organization improved – particularly in relation to what you have learned about Cameroon throughout the semester seminars and in relation to the program theme

Recommended reading: Henry Veltmeyer. Democratic Governance and Participatory Development: The Role of Development NGOs. *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations*, Fall 2005, Pp 89-109.

Module 3

Module II: The Internship Experience: Review and Reflection

This module occurs after students have begun their internship. Critical, guided reflection will play a key role in student development and learning during the internship. Students will keep an internship journal in which they respond to the questions/issues listed below. Journaling should be done daily, keeping in mind the learning objectives. Students will submit six progress reports on their successes and limitations toward achieving learning objectives. Students will also meet with their instructor and other internship students for reflection and discussion during the internship.

Internship observations: How is the professional environment different from what you are used to? What are you learning about working collaboratively in this environment? How do you find yourself reacting to and adjusting to workplace practices that are different from what you are accustomed to? How does it feel to be an intern in this environment? Why?

Theory and Practice: Digging Deeper: How does the work of your internship site connect to important program themes? How has the experience at your internship challenged or affirmed the arguments in a reading or lecture from this semester?

Skills and Experience: What insights to this field have you gained through your internship? What skills are most valuable for this internship site and what opportunities have you had to improve your skills in this area? What has challenged you and how are you handling those challenges? How do you see this experience preparing you for future opportunities?

Learning Goals: How much progress have you made toward your learning goals? What experiences or activities have contributed to your ability to meet them? Are you learning something important you didn't anticipate and would like to add to your learning goals at this time?

Required Readings:

TBA

Recommended Readings:

Sweitzer, Frederick and King, Mary (2013). The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional and Civic Development in Experiential Learning (4th Edition). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole(select chapters)

Module 4: Processing and Maximizing the Internship Experience

Session 1: Looking back

The final module occurs toward the end or after the internship and focuses on ways of processing and articulating the internship as well as equipping students with practical tips and strategies for making the most of the experience personally, academically, and professionally. Students will reflect on the internship experience and process the learning that occurred in a safe and supportive context. The internship may have been a different experience than expected, may challenge the student's expectations of interning in a new environment, and may change the student's perspective of life projects or professional goals. The module discusses ways of acknowledging both the successes and failures of the internship, with an emphasis personal reflection, and setting realistic goals for the future.

Session 2: Internship Final Paper and Presentation Design and Content;

Talking about the Internship Experience This session focuses on the design and mechanics of the internship final paper.

Session 3: Personal Assessment of the Internship Performance and Including the Internship Experience in your Resume

This session provides guidelines for an assessment of the key learning milestones acquired during the internship experience, challenges faced, and a possible impact of the overall experience on the student's academic and professional career. The session also includes a reflection on the internship experience, including the output of the internship as it relates to the critical global issue central to the program theme. Students will also learn adequate ways of including their internship in their résumés and online professional platforms such as LinkedIn.

Ethics

The internship experience must reflect SIT's ethics policy and commitment to the values of reciprocity. The student intern should also abide by the policy and regulations of the host institution including dress code, punctuality, and employee behavior. Violations of SIT's code of conduct or employee conduct at the host institution will result in an immediate termination of the internship and can lead to further disciplinary sanctions by SIT.

Academic and Ethical Integrity

The internship experience must reflect SIT's ethics policy and commitment to the values of reciprocity. Students must respect, protect and promote the rights and the welfare of all those affected by their work by doing everything in their power to protect the dignity and privacy of the people with whom they work. The student intern should also abide by the policy and regulations of the host institution including dress, punctuality, and employee behavior. Violations of SIT's code of conduct or employee conduct at the host institution will result in an immediate termination of the internship and can lead to further disciplinary sanctions by SIT. Students must not represent as their own work, either in speaking or writing, materials or ideas, directly taken from other sources. They must give full credit in speaking or writing to all those who have contributed to their work. Academic penalties apply for deliberate plagiarism or other academic dishonesty.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

At the end of the internship period, students are expected to give an oral presentation of their work. Assessment of both written work and the oral presentation is based on quality, academic scholarship, and adherence to the highest ethical standards.

Description of Assignments

Internship Journal

Journaling is essential to the internship learning process. Students are expected to journal daily, starting before the internship begins, to reflect on internship goals, expectations, and experiences as a way to deepen individual, professional, and academic growth. While the journal is not graded, the journal serves as a foundation for weekly discussion and reflection sessions, progress reports, and the final paper and presentation.

Internship Learning Agreement

The Internship Learning Agreement, combined with the Internship Ethics Review Application, constitutes the internship proposal reviewed and approved by the Local Review Board (LRB) before the internship may begin. The Internship Learning Agreement asks students to develop a set of internship goals, consider their relationship to program themes, and sets forth the intern's understanding of the intern's role and responsibilities.

Discussion and Reflection Sessions

Discussion and reflection sessions take place on a weekly basis. Students are expected to discuss experiences in the internship, reflect on the professional learning process, and respond to any prompts assigned by the internship instructor. These discussion and reflection sessions are key elements for personal, academic, and professional development during the internship. Depending on the circumstances, these sessions may be held in person or virtually.

Progress Reports

The progress report should document the student's progress toward achieving their learning objectives during the internship. Students also document the challenges they face and how they try to deal with those challenges. Students submit two progress reports in the course of their internship experience.

Internship Performance

This evaluation by the Academic Director assesses the student's internship experience, overall professional achievements, and self-growth.

Oral Presentation

In the presentation, you should provide a succinct and clear description of the internship experience, a brief history of the organization where you interned, the activities undertaken, and key insights gained that are related to the core program themes. You should demonstrate effective management of the discussion with the audience and attend to the aesthetic elements of the delivery.

Final Paper

Students are expected to submit, at minimum, 15-20 pages final paper at the end of their internship experience. The final paper should include a title, list of acknowledgments, and an abstract. The paper should also have an introduction which describes the work and history of the organization and incorporates several references, detailed description of the activities accomplished, and strong and innovative aspects of the organization. The final paper must include thoughtfully articulated analytical writing that addresses positionality and ethics, and connects learning at the internship to the broader themes of the semester program and/or the investigation of one or more specific questions. The paper should be well written, well organized, and aesthetically pleasing. A summary of the final paper assessment rubric will be shared with students in advance. (Example at the end of syllabus.)

Assessment of the Internship

Discussion and Four Reflection Sessions 10%

Three Journal Reports 15%

Internship Mentor Evaluation [from the NGO] 20%

Oral Presentation 10%

Final Paper 45%

Grading Scale

94-100% A Excellent

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 Fail

Expectations and Policies

- Show up prepared, on time, and appropriately dressed for your internship. Comply with organization rules.
- Have the internship journal and progress report assignments completed on schedule and done according to specified requirements.
- Ask questions when in the field/office. Engage in the everyday life of the organization and initiate interaction.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (those of your internship supervisor and colleagues, classmates, lecturers, local constituents engaged with on-site visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

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>.