

Internship & Seminar

ITRN 3005 (5 credits)

Serbia and Kosovo: Virtual Internship in Transitional Justice, Human Rights, and Memory

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.

Description

This seminar is a five-week distance learning course that offers a month-long online internship engagement with a Belgrade or Prishtina based civil society organization, local community organization, research organization, or international NGO. The aim of an internship is to enable students to gain valuable experience and enhance their skills in a career field/professional environment related to the topics studied at the program (i.e. Peace and Conflict Studies, Transitional Justice, Human Rights, Refugee Studies etc.).

SIT will use its extensive network in Serbia and Kosovo to facilitate an online internship placement for students. The organization and the student's internship activities, including the Internship Learning Agreement, is set by the program, and must be approved by SIT's Academic Director. SIT will maintain oversight over internship placements in line with SIT academic policies and student health and security guidelines. Ultimately, each student will need to take responsibility for making optimal use of their time, the resources available at the organization and to be proactive in engaging with local experts to achieve internship objectives. More so, each student will be responsible to maintain ongoing communication with their mentor placed by the organization and the SIT internship coordinator. Students will attend online weekly reflection and assessment sessions with the Internship Coordinator to review the progress of the internship, learning associated with the internship experience, and to draw out broader issues related to program themes, positionality, culture and ethics in the context of the internship.

Each student will be required to submit a final paper in which they process their learning experience on the internship, analyze an issue important to the organization, and apply what they are learning at the internship organization to the core themes of the program. Approved by the Academic Director, SIT's Local Review Board (for ethical clearance purposes), and the internship coordinator, the internship paper may involve interviews and other data collection methods relevant to achieving internship learning goals. Students will also do a final presentation to demonstrate how the online internship experience enhanced their understanding of the SIT program theme. The paper should also briefly document a comprehensive schedule and the specific skills and knowledge acquired through the online internship experience. Rubrics for the focus project paper and presentation will be shared with students.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course students will be able to:

- Demonstrate awareness of the ethics involved in doing an online internship in the context of Serbia or Kosovo and the Western Balkans;
- Describe, analyze, and synthesize their learning experience in the online internship in the form of an internship paper;
- Articulate new learning from the online internship experience in the form of an oral presentation;
- Show understanding of themes related to transitional justice/human rights/memory processes in postconflict societies and particularly in Serbia and Kosovo;
- Assess the challenges of student's own positionality;
- Gain access to meaningful and practical experience in their chosen field and networking in civil society organizations in the Balkans.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in English.

Module 1: Welcome to Southeast Europe: to Serbia and Kosovo

This module occurs during the first week of the course, prior to the launching of the online internships, and entry to work with organization mentors. The aim of this module is to give students a crash course to the socio-political and historical context of the region in the last decades. Students will be introduced to the area of Southern Europe/Western Balkans, to the violent break-up of Yugoslavia (to include the wars of the 1990s) and the new successor states that have emerged from the former Yugoslavia. Emphasis will be given to societies and post-war processes in Serbia and Kosovo, as related to themes in transitional justice, human rights and dealing with the past/memory.

Module 2: Entering the Internship Site

This module occurs while students are preparing to begin their online internship. Critical and guided reflection will play a key role in student development and learning during this process. This module makes students aware of the professional working environments they will enter in their online communication with the organizations, norms and practices related to internships in Serbia and Kosovo. Moreover, students will get familiar with themes related to how to introduce themselves, how to communicate in a professional work environment, what are the working hours in their respectable organizations. Additionally, students will discuss their objectives during the internship.

Recommended Readings:

Switzer, Frederick and King, Mary (2013) *The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional and Civic development in Experiential Learning (4th Edition)*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole (chapters 1 and 2).

Module 3: Internship Month & Final Paper

This module occurs during the internship and focuses on ways of processing and articulating the online internship experience 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 diverse and challenging environment, and may change the student's perspective of life projects or professional goals. Students will submit three progress reports on their successes and limitations toward achieving learning objectives. Students will also meet with their internship coordinator and other internship students for reflection and discussion during the internship. The module discusses ways of acknowledging both the successes and failures of the internship and setting realistic goals for the future.

During the internship month students are obliged to attend 4 *reflection sessions*. These sessions focus on the review of, and reflection process on the overall internship experience. Prior to each session, students will submit their 3 *progress reports* to the internship coordinator.

Session 1: Norms, Ethics and Expectations

Keep notes on daily tasks performed, and write 3 progress reports on your learning experience. This session will also discuss the content of the internship final paper and presentation design.

Required Reading:

Sweitzer, F. and King, M. (2013). *The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional and Civic development in Experiential Learning (4th Edition)*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole (Chapter 6 and Chapter 7).

Session 2: Civil Society in the Context of Transitional Justice, Human Rights, and Memory themes in Serbia and Kosovo Expectations and Reality

Discuss new learnings: how has your understanding of the role and work of your organization improved – particularly in relation to what you have learned about the Balkans in the first module

Required Reading:

Simić O. and Volčić Z. (2013). "Localizing Transitional Justice: Civil Society Practices and Initiatives in the Balkans." In Simić O. and Volčić Z. (Eds). *Transitional Justice and Civil Society in the Balkans*. New York: Springer.

Kostovicova, D. and Bojicic-Dzelilovic, V. (2013). „Introduction: Civil Society and Multiple Transitions – Meanings, Actors and Effects.“ In Bojicic-Dzelilovic, V., Ker-Lindsay J. and Kostovicova, D. (Eds). *Civil Society and Transitions in the Western Balkans*. New York: Palgrave-macmillan.

Recommended Reading:

Spasić, I. (2003). Civil Society in Serbia after Milošević: Between Authoritarianism and Wishful Thinking. *Polish Sociological Review*, pp. 445-461.

Session 3: Balkanism & Orientalism: Standpoint & Positionality

- Discuss contemporary academic and journalistic research focused on the break-up of Yugoslavia;
- Reflexivity of a researcher: develop your standpoint (positionality): outsider/insider position and the ways it shapes research topic/research questions, data analysis and interpretation; your position as an undergraduate student, your citizenship, gender/racial/class identities, etc.;
- Definitions and terms: Southeast Europe, Balkans, Western Balkans, Orientalism, balkanization, “othering”, westernization.

Required Reading:

Goldsworthy, V. (2002). “Invention and In(ter)vention: The Rhetoric of Balkanization.” In Bjelić D., & O. Savić (Eds). *Balkan as Metaphor*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Session 4: Talking About the Internship Experience

This session allows students to 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 diverse and challenging environment, and may change the student’s perspective of life projects or professional goals. The session discusses ways of acknowledging both the successes and potential failures of the internship, of completing tasks, handing over projects to and sharing insights with colleagues on the internship site, and setting realistic goals for the future.

Session content includes:

- Processing the End of the Internship Experience;
- Closure with Colleagues and Supervisors;
- Articulating the Experience and Setting Plans for the Future.

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, 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.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

At the end of the internship period, students are expected to present their work to the group. 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

Discussion and Reflection Sessions (10%)

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 (10%)

The progress reports 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 (35%)

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

Oral Presentation (10%)

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 (35%)

Students are expected to submit a 15-20 page 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 summarizes the work and history of the organization and incorporates a number of 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 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 Reflection Sessions	10%
2 Progress Reports	10%
Internship Performance	35%
Oral Presentation	10%
Final Paper	35%

Grading Scale

94-100%	A
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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

Expectations and Policies

- Show up prepared, on time, and appropriately dressed for your internship. Comply with organization rules.
- Have progress report assignments completed on schedule and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions when in the field/office. Engage yourself in 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 onsite 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.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Student Handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, 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>.

RUBRIC: Internship Paper	
Category	Possible Considerations
Title / Abstract/Technical Aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The title is succinct and captures the essence of the internship experience -The acknowledgements are complete and professionally written -The abstract clearly summarizes the internship experience and learning outcomes -Table of contents, In-text citations, and reference list or bibliography are done correctly and completely -There are no mistakes in writing & grammar, spelling & punctuation -The paper is clean, legible, well-formatted, professional in appearance, and aesthetically pleasing
Contextualization and Organizational Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Important themes and background information are provided so reader understands the field in which the internship organization operates -The history and work of the internship organization, how its work relates to the program theme, and how it fits into the context of other similar organizations are all accurately described -The organizational structure, including division of responsibilities and the goals, objectives and activities of the organization are well elaborated -Care is taken not to harm by criticism, nor evaluate -The community served by the organization is described in sufficient detail
Internship Focus/Objectives/Justification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The paper specifies the focus area of the internship within the organization's broader work -The objectives of the internship are clearly presented and appropriate; how the objectives relate to the program theme and/or Critical Global Issue are clearly described. -The student's internship tasks/duties at the organization are presented and justified.
Work and Tasks Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A clear and complete description of the work undertaken is given, including dates and hours worked (put in an addendum).
Positionality and Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The paper acknowledges the intern's views, values, beliefs and other aspects of their personal background that influence their worldview. - The paper demonstrates ongoing self-reflection throughout the internship experience in relation to their positionality. -Human Subjects policies and ethical guidelines are adhered to and thoroughly discussed -Appropriate consideration is given to informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality of participants, in keeping with human subjects protocols and the LRB-approved internship learning agreement -The internship strengthens relationships and contributes to mutual trust between the author, the organization and its clientele in ways that are respectful, culturally appropriate, and collaborative -The internship project is responsive to host organization and/or host community needs, as applicable
Critical Reflection on Internship Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The description of tasks and responsibilities is clear. -The paper examines the extent to which objectives were achieved, how objectives changed or evolved over the course of the internship experience. -Key professional lessons learned through the internship experience are described with specific examples -A personal evaluation of performance in the internship is included with suggestions of how it could have been improved. -Ways in which student identity may have shaped their insights of the internship experience are described

Analysis of Critical Issues/Themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The manner in which the organization and its work are linked to the core themes of the program is described. -Analysis is given by comparing and contrasting the theory of the work/field studied throughout the semester with the practice of the work at the specific internship site. -Clear articulation of how the intern's knowledge and understanding of the core themes of the program were enhanced through the internship experience.
Conclusions & Recommendations for Future Interns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The main insights and lessons learned through the internship experience are detailed -Recommendations of opportunities or projects for future interns are described.
Effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Determinations of effort vary by program.