

## **Virtual Internship and Seminar**

### **ITRN 3000 (5 credits)**

### **South Africa: Social Justice and Activism Internship**

*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**

The internship placement and the internship seminar go hand in hand. The internship seminar is the academic aspect of the internship placement. A student completing the internship placement without the internship seminar does not receive SIT credits. The internship seminar runs throughout, with an intensive introduction week, followed by weekly seminars during the internship placement. Students will have the opportunity to deepen knowledge of social justice and activism in South Africa complemented by guided weekly online discussions, assignments, and reflection. Students will gain an in-depth understanding of social justice, analytical clarity, and cross-cultural sensitivity as they develop self-confidence and an understanding of these issues in the South African context. Also, an online internship enables students to gain valuable work experience and enhance their skills in a virtual international work environment. Students complete an internship and submit a paper in which they process their learning experience and the theory and practice of social justice and activism in South Africa more broadly, synthesizing the online internship and the online academic components of the seminar.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate awareness of the ethics of internship in the context of South Africa;
- Describe, analyze, and synthesize their online learning experience in the internship in the form of an internship paper;
- Articulate the output of the online internship experience in the form of an oral presentation;
- Show understanding of the complexities of social justice promotion and activism in South Africa more broadly; and
- Gain meaningful and practical international work experience albeit virtually in the context of social justice in South Africa.

#### **Language of Instruction**

English is the official language in South Africa and students should expect that English will be widely spoken in work settings during the internship. The pre-internship part of the course prepares students by introducing them to the work norms, practices, and ethics in the South African context, and is taught in English by the academic director and academic coordinator, assisted by other local experts as needed.

## **Instructional Methods**

The Internship and Seminar is comprised of 180 hours in class and at internship over six weeks, plus additional readings and assignments outside of class and the internship, broken down as follows: Ten (10) hours of online preparatory sessions on the broader social, historical and political context of South Africa, expectations of and ethics of the internship; 120 hours (over five weeks) at the internship placement and; 20-30 hours of seminars scheduled concurrently with the internship placement. The Internship Seminar, conducted in English, is taught by the SIT's Academic Director or Internship Coordinator assigned by SIT.

## **Required Texts**

Biko, Steve, 1944-1977. (2004). I write what I like: a selection of his writings: Johannesburg: Picador Africa

Msimang, S. (2018). The Resurrection of Winnie Mandela. Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball Publishers

## **Assignments and Evaluation**

### Assignment Descriptions 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. Grading rubrics will be provided for guidance.

### **Internship and Seminar Participation and Performance**

Discussion and reflection sessions take place weekly. Students are expected to share their personal experiences with the virtual internship and reflect on the professional learning process. These discussion and reflection sessions are key elements in the process of the learning experience and the student's professional achievements within the host organization. Also, the internship supervisor, advisor, and the Academic Director will submit an evaluation that assesses the student's internship experience, overall professional achievements, and self-growth. The student's Work Agreement Forms will be the basis for the evaluation.

### **Progress Reports**

The progress reports should document the progress of the student's professional and personal learning on the job. Using the reflection prompt questions, students reflect on the required readings and internship experience and what they are learning. These should be short 1-2 pages (800-1000 word), and fully referenced. Students submit two progress reports during their internship experience, after weeks three and five of the internship and seminar.

#### Internship 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, and the work is undertaken. You should demonstrate effective management of the discussion with the audience and attend to the aesthetic elements of the delivery.

#### Internship Paper

Students are expected to submit a final paper at the end of their internship experience. The final paper should include a title, a list of acknowledgments, and an abstract. The paper should also have an introduction that summarizes the work and history of the organization and incorporates several references, a detailed description of the work accomplished, and strong and innovative aspects of the organization. The paper should be well written, well organized, and aesthetically pleasing.

#### Assessment

- Internship and Seminar Performance 35%
- Progress Reports 20%.
- Internship Presentation 10%
- Internship Paper 35%

#### Attendance and Participation

Due to the nature of SIT Study Abroad programs, and the importance of student and instructor contributions in every class session, participation in all class events is required. Criteria for evaluation of student performance includes participation in program activities. Students must fully participate in all program components and courses. Students may not voluntarily opt-out of required program activities. Valid reasons for absence – such as illness – must be discussed with the academic director or other designated staff person. Absences impact academic performance may impact grades and could result in dismissal from the program.

#### Late Assignments

SIT Study Abroad programs integrate virtual lectures and discussions. The curriculum is designed to build on itself and progress to the culmination of the internship. Students must complete assignments on time to continue to benefit from the sequences in assignments, reflections, and experiences throughout the program.

Example: Students may request a justified extension for one paper/assignment during the semester. Requests must be made in writing and at least 12 hours before the posted due date and time. If the reason for the request is accepted, an extension of up to one week may be

granted at that time. Any further requests for extensions will not be granted. Students who fail to submit the assignment within the extension period will receive an 'F' for the assignment.

### Grading Scale

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

### **Program Expectations**

- Comply with organization rules.
- Have work journal and 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 doubt. Engage yourself in the everyday life of the organization and initiate interaction.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating).
- Respect differences of opinion (those of your internship supervisor and colleagues, classmates, lecturers). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across differences and consider other perspectives with respect.

### **SIT Policies and Resources**

Please refer to the [SIT Study Abroad Handbook](#) and the [Policies](#) section of the SIT website for all academic and student affairs policies. Students are accountable for complying with all published policies. Of particular relevance to this course are the policies regarding academic integrity, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), research and ethics in field study and internships, late assignments, academic status, academic appeals, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and misconduct, and the student code of conduct.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook and SIT website for information on important resources and services provided through our central administration in Vermont, such as [Library resources and research support](#), [Disability Services](#), [Counseling Services](#), [Title IX information](#), and [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) resources.

## Course Schedule

*\*Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs*

Each week of this course covers major themes in a virtual seminar setting through a discussion forum on a selected day of the week. Guided by SIT faculty, the discussion sessions are facilitated by students. Course readings are selected from the required reading lists for each class. Beyond what is listed in the syllabus, supplemental articles are also distributed to students based on current events and relevancy.

### Module 1: Introduction, Positionality, and Internship Ethics

Students will prepare for the internship with an introduction to the broader social, cultural, and political context of South Africa. Students also discuss the ethics of the internship, workplace norms in South Africa, and expectations of the internship, including the final paper.

Seminar content includes all online orientation and online lectures in week I. Class content will cover:

- Introduction – country context/history crash course/lectures
- Positionality and Internship Ethics/Awareness
- Introduction to Internship – develop an understanding of context and position of Non-Profit Organizations and Social movements
- Goals and objectives of the internship

Once the internship placements are allocated, 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 during the internship & seminars.

#### Online Classes

Students are required to participate in online classes. Students are also expected to review the website of internship sites and read some of the literature that is available for download on those sites. Drawing on the foundational texts for this course, you will have an opportunity to discuss your hopes, fears, and expectations before you start your internship.

#### Readings:

Kapoor, I. (2004). Hyper-Self-Reflexive Development? Spivak on Representing the Third World 'Other'. *Third World Quarterly*, 25(4), pp. 627-647.

Morton, K. (1995). The irony of service: Charity, project, and social change in service-learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 2(1), 19-32

### Module 2: Inter-Cultural Learning

This module occurs over the five weeks concurrent with the internship placement. Students will keep an internship journal responding to the questions/issues listed below. Journaling should be done daily, keeping in mind the learning objectives. Two progress reports on your virtual learning experience should be submitted at the sessions indicated below:

Journal prompt questions: How is working online different from in-person work? What are you learning about working collaboratively in this culture? How do you find yourself reacting to and adjusting to cultural practices that are different from what you are accustomed to? How does it feel to be a foreigner in this virtual working environment? The first progress report is to be submitted.

#### Online Class - The Theory of Practice: Digging Deeper

What theoretical underpinning influences or appears to influence the work of your internship organization? What factors hinder or support the organization's efforts to contribute to positive social justice outcomes in South Africa? How has the experience at your virtual internship challenged or affirmed your thoughts about and commitment to social justice more broadly and in settings such as South Africa?

#### Online Class – Learning Goals, Skills, and Experience

What has supported or hindered the achievement of your internship learning goals? Are you learning something important you did not anticipate and would like to add to your learning goals at this time? What insights into social justice have you gained through your internship? What skills are most valuable for this work and how have you improved these skills? How do you see this experience preparing you for future opportunities? The second progress report is submitted.

#### Online Class - Gender, Race, Class, and Social Justice Outcomes

What insights have you obtained regarding the influence of gender, race, and class on social justice outcomes? How does class vary by race and residence and how do these, in turn, affect access to social justice activism in South Africa?

#### **Readings:**

Bateson, M. C. (1993). Joint performance across cultures: Improvisation in a Persian garden. *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 13:2, 113-121

Call for Renewal of South African NGO Movement Activism, Thursday 3 May 2018. NGOPulse. <http://www.ngopulse.org/article/2018/02/08/call-renewal-south-african-ngo-movement-activism>

De Wet, J (2012). Friends, Enemies, or “Frenemies”: Development and Civil Society Organizations Relations with the State in a Democratic South Africa. *Working Papers in Development Sociology and Social Anthropology*, No. 370. Bielefeld University.

Kagumire, R. (2017). How Not to Have Six Horrible Months in Uganda. *Global Voices*. <https://globalvoices.org/2017/06/06/how-not-to-have-six-horrible-months-in-uganda/>

Kohls, Robert. "The Values Americans Live By."  
[www.claremontmckenna.edu/math/alee/extra/American\\_values.html](http://www.claremontmckenna.edu/math/alee/extra/American_values.html) (accessed 24 November 2010).

Marx, Elisabeth. (1999). "The Culture Shock Triangle." *Breaking Through Culture Shock: What You Need to Succeed in International Business* (pp. 3-18). London, England: Nicholas Brealey Publishing. ISBN: 978-1857882216.

Matthews, S. (undated). Privilege, Solidarity, and Social Justice Struggles in South Africa. Unpublished Paper.  
<http://www.ru.ac.za/media/rhodesuniversity/content/sociology/documents/Sally%20Matthews.pdf>

Ramaru, K. (2017). Feminist Reflections on the Rhodes Must Fall Movement. *Feminist Africa*. Issue 22. African Gender Institute. pp89-96

Robinson, W. (2003). Social Activism and Democracy in South Africa: A Globalization Perspective. Remarks for Idasa Conference, Cape Town, August 11-13, 2003.

### **Module 3: Processing and Maximizing the Internship Experience**

This module 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. Incorporating the final online class reflection session, final internship reports, presentations, and evaluation, this module 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 working in a diverse and challenging 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 virtual internship, of completing tasks, handing over projects to, and sharing insights with colleagues on the job, and setting realistic goals for the future.

Additional seminar content will include:

- Processing the end of the internship experience
- Closure with colleagues and supervisors
- Articulating the experience and outlining future plans (this final portion occurs in the final days of the program, as students plan their next steps, academically and professionally. Students discuss fears and strategies for building on this experience in other work settings, opportunities for professional growth, and how to make optimal use of the internship experience)
- How to include your internship on your résumé
- Next steps

**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.

**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](mailto: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>