

Project on International Studies and Multilateral Diplomacy

EURO 3060 (3 credits)

Switzerland: International Studies and Multilateral Diplomacy

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 Project on International Studies and Multilateral Diplomacy offers students a unique research opportunity in their field of interest in international studies. In this course students are introduced to recent research and become familiar with the methodologies employed in international and multilateral diplomacy studies. Students select and analyze relevant issues in consultation with program faculty. In most cases topics grow out of lectures, briefings and discussions of the International Studies and Multilateral Diplomacy course. Students directly apply experience-based learning and interactive research skills. The course 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. Each student integrates field research methods to produce an original academic paper. This course gives students the opportunity to engage more deeply with one of the topics covered in the seminar and to develop their academic skills. Support is provided throughout the project from program faculty, particularly by aiding students in finding resources in Switzerland.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Identify, describe, and analyze information relevant to their research topic;
- Apply a relevant research methodology learned in the program;
- Identify and integrate primary and secondary sources in a coherent interdisciplinary analytical framework;
- Identify an expert network and conduct interactive research to complete the research project.

Human Subjects Review

All 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.

Methods

Throughout the 3 weeks of seminars students identify primary and secondary sources related to the topic of their research. Students meet the Academic Director and/or Academic Advisor to evaluate and discuss their progress of research. Students contact experts working in fields related to the topic of their project and meet these experts at various international organizations in Geneva. During the last two weeks of the program students work exclusively on their project that include data collection, synthesis and analysis, interactive research, interviewing experts, writing the paper, work journal and interactive log. Students continue to meet with the Academic Director/Advisor throughout the research and writing period. Students might also choose an external project advisor.

Course Requirements

1. At least one face-to-face interview with Geneva based experts and two meetings with the Academic Director and/or Academic Advisor;
2. Student applies methods of interactive research, for example extensive interviews, towards completion of the project; the work journal accounts for the design of the project, the time periods of research, the research locations and the human resources/experts;
3. A 15 to 20 page (250 words/page) academic paper that includes: abstract, title page, preface, acknowledgments, table of contents, theoretical framework of analysis, research methodology, conclusions, notes, and bibliography (the 15 to 20 pages do not include the Work Journal and Interactive Research Log);
4. The original paper, Work Journal and Interactive Research Log submitted to the Academic Directors. The electronic version is submitted via e-mail to the Academic Director.

Project on International Studies and Multilateral Diplomacy Written Format— Organization and Presentation

I. Introduction

- a. Explain why you chose this topic
 - i. Points of interest (i.e., thematic courses, personal observations, previous research interests, future research interests, personal interests, etc.).
- b. Describe why this topic is relevant to the region/country/culture and program theme.
- c. Define the general parameters of your study, including the scope, depth, and expected outcomes (hypothesis).
- d. Define your terms, including the overall theory on which you are basing your work, while situating your work in a scholarly context.

II. Literature Review

- a. This segment is usually a general introduction into the literature and theories relevant to your topic.
- b. Link your topic to the literature currently available on the subject—cite authors, book titles, theories, or general perceptions that you may or may not agree with.
- c. Explain why you feel these authors were right or wrong; argue with or against their theories using your own observations or those of other theorists.

III. Body of Paper/ Methodology

- a. This should be the fun part of the paper, as it allows you the opportunity to describe your overall research experience.
- b. Describe the way you decided to set out on your research (i.e., how you chose the participants that you interviewed or worked with, the locations where you conducted your research, etc.).
- c. Describe the methods you used while planning your strategy to obtain the data for your research (i.e., protecting the identity and integrity of your participants, maintaining the integrity of your data, how you planned to avoid any misunderstanding/misinterpretation of your data).
- d. Describe the obstacles and problems that arose during the course of your research.
- e. If necessary, explain how and why you had to change your original plans (basically a cause/effect section) and how that affected the quality, depth, and scope of your data.

IV. Findings

- a. The really fun part! This is where you get to explain what you found out during the research process.
- b. It's better to focus on the important points of your hypothesis in this section. Highlight the most important aspects of your data and cite responses or observations that either prove or disprove your original hypothesis (it's okay to be wrong here) using the data you generated during the study.
- c. You can include your analysis of the data/interpretation of findings in this section or you can include this discussion in the "Conclusions" section.

V. Conclusions

- a. This is where you get to tie up all the loose ends and bring things together, while proving or disproving your original hypothesis.
- b. You can include your analysis/interpretation of findings in this section as the proof you need to argue for or against your original theory.
- c. Describe what the implications of your study are (i.e., why your findings are important. How can this information enhance the existing body of knowledge already available on the topic? What new questions arose out of your findings? How will these findings inform your future research interests?)

VI. Limitations of the Study

Though optional, this section is highly recommended. Legitimize your study by proactively pointing out its shortcomings and biases (all studies have them, of course).

VII. Recommendations for Further Study

This should consist of a short list of recommendations on how your study might be expanded upon or used as the basis for future ISMDs.

VIII. Endnotes (unless you have used page-by-page footnotes)

IX. Bibliography and List of Sources

This should include all primary and secondary resources used. Primary resources (usually consisting of personal communications) and secondary (textual) resources should be listed under separate headings. Whatever style you choose to use, be accurate and consistent.

X. Appendices

- a. Include a copy of your questionnaire, survey questions, etc. if applicable
- b. Include a copy of your written consent form (not the ones signed by participants—those you keep in a safe place), if applicable.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

The evaluation of the research and paper will be completed by the Academic Directors. Assessment of the project is based on the accuracy of information conveyed, the quality of analysis and argumentation. 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 Directors assign the final grade.

Description of Assignments:

Work Journal and Interactive Research Log (20%):

The Project on International Studies and Multilateral Diplomacy Work Journal documents the information-gathering process and records all information relevant to the evolution of the paper. This journal can be helpful in the event that students have to demonstrate to their university advisor what this course involved. Before determining what categories to include student has to consider the objectives of their research and how you can best organize information in a coherent, convenient, and accessible manner.

Students has to submit an Interactive Log document together with the Work Journal. In this document, students has to indicate the name and title of the experts and the date and the time of interviews conducted with these experts to complete their Interactive Research requirements.

International Studies in Multilateral Diplomacy Paper (80%):

Assessment of the paper on International Studies and Multilateral Diplomacy is done on the basis of grading evaluation and criteria listed below.

Title/Acknowledgements/Abstract

- The title is succinct, interesting, and engaging, and it clearly explains the project
- The acknowledgments are complete and professionally written
- The abstract clearly summarizes the project

Research Question/Objectives/Justification

- The study/research question is relevant, thought-provoking, and original
- The project aims to contribute information on a topic relevant to local community and/or other researchers
- The objectives of the study are clearly presented and appropriate
- The justification of the project is clear and contextualized

Context and Literature Review

- The content is relevant. Important themes and background information is provided
- The paper includes appropriate, high-quality relevant background sources, including several from peer-reviewed journals

Methods

- The explanation of methodology is clear and accurate and supporting materials are included
- Implementation of methods through the research process is thoughtful and handled with care
- The methods are appropriate

Ethics

- Human subject policies and ethical research guidelines are adhered to and thoroughly discussed
- Appropriate consideration is given to informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality of research participants, in keeping with human subjects protocols and the LRB-approved ISMD proposal
- The ISMD is responsive to host community needs, as applicable

Presentation of Results/Findings

- The findings are complete and are logically and convincingly presented
- The prose discussion of findings is clear, succinct, and logical
- Tables, graphs, photos, and direct quotes are relevant and support the argument

Depth of Analysis/Conclusions

- Important implications raised by the findings are included
- The argument is well-structured and different sources of information are well-integrated
- Patterns in the findings (or lack of a pattern) are identified and discussed
- The author gives logical explanations of what findings mean
- The author clearly and specifically related his/her findings to the study/research question and to previous research in the field

Technical Aspects/Effort

- The paper is organized into major sections and/or follows the guidelines in accordance with the orientation of the program
- Table of contents, in-text citations, and reference list or bibliography are done correctly and completely
- There are no mistakes in writing, grammar, spelling, and punctuation

Assessment:

Paper	80%
Work Journal and Interactive Research Log	20%

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.

Grading Scale

94-100%	A	Excellent
90-93%	A-	
87-89%	B+	
84-86%	B	Above Average
80-83%	B-	
77-79%	C+	
74-76%	C	Average
70-73%	C-	
67-69%	D+	
64-66%	D	Below Average
below 64	F	Fail

Expectations and Policies

- Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.

- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak to the program.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (classmates', lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the 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>.

Please note: the syllabus, course content, lecturers, and readings may be 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.