Description
The Research Methods and Ethics seminar is designed to provide first hand and experiential knowledge about the richness and challenges of doing field study in Morocco. It provides the necessary conceptual and methodological thread that enables the student to learn from experience, apply the knowledge and skills gained in language study and the thematic seminar, and prepare to undertake field study in Morocco in strict observance of research procedure involving human subjects and the regulatory ethical norms defined by the Institutional Review Board. At the end of the seminar, the student should have the cultural understanding and the methodological tools to successfully complete the Independent Study Project. The seminar is also designed to answer specific concerns the research on migration generally raises. Migration involves minors, undocumented migrants in transit, friends and families of victims of clandestine migrants, policy makers, and international organizations. The lectures address issues that pertain to research methods, confidentiality and anonymity of informants, data gathering and interviewing, and safety and migrant psychology. Throughout, individual meetings are scheduled to address research objectives and expectations of each participant.

Learning Outcomes
By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to use material collected through observation and interviews and the capacity to work with several research participants and interpreters in the field;
- Conduct field study using the tools of observation, interviewing, focus groups, and surveys;
- Demonstrate awareness of the norms of ethics in research involving human subjects;
- Produce an Independent Study Project proposal and Application for Review of Research with Human Subjects.

Language of Instruction
This seminar is taught in English, but students will be exposed to vocabulary related to course content as well as the nuances of economic change and development through in-country expert lectures and field visits in a wide range of venues and regional locales.
Course Schedule

Module 1: Experiential Learning and Positionality in Field-Based Research

This introductory module is designed to introduce students to field-based research in a study abroad context. Students learn how to relate to local communities and individuals. Most particularly, this module allows students to discover the power of experiential learning, use it as a tool to connect to local communities and individuals, and develop into reflexive researchers who are attentive to their own positionality in relation to the local communities in which they engage for their research.

Session 1: Homestay Neighborhood Exploration
In this field assignment, students are asked to explore their new cultural environment, most particularly their own homestay neighborhood, through the lenses of migration and transnational identity. The aim is to examine if and how the physical, social, and cultural aspects of the homestay neighborhood reflect signs of a homogeneous community or a diverse and transnational environment.

Recommended Reading:


Session 2: Doing Field-Based Research in a Study Abroad Context
This session provides an introduction to field-based research in a study abroad context. Students explore how experiential learning can be used as a tool to explore and interact with their new cultural environment and reflect on their own positionality in relation to the host community, most particularly their homestay neighborhood and homestay family.

Required Reading:

Session 3: Reflections on Positionality and Representation
This session builds on students’ field exercise experience. Students reflect on their own positionality and ways in which it can impact their representation of the host culture. Particular attention is given to ways in which positionality shapes the research question, relation with the research participants, approach in data collection, data processing, and the representation of research participants in the final ISP.

Required Reading:


Module 2: Research Methods and Ethics

Session 1: Selecting Topics, Formulating Research Questions, and Literature Review
This session provides an overview of the module on research methods and ethics. It highlights the main elements of conducting a research project and walks students through the different steps of writing a research proposal. Special attention is given to choosing a research topic and formulating a research question.
In-class Exercise:
Students choose a topic and rehearse how to develop a research question and interview questions for their ISP project.

Session 2: Data collection: Interviewing and Observation
This session surveys interviewing as a method for data collection, reviews types of interviews, and walks the students through observation as a method in field-based study and the processes of developing interview questions (in accordance with the research question).

Field Assignment:
Join one of the following thematic groups:
- Refugee asylum seekers
- Women and development
- Migration and human rights
- Youth and entrepreneurship
- Cultural centers
- Poverty and microfinance

Find contact information for an NGO or association operating in Rabat; research it on the net; and pay a visit to it to find about its location, easiness or difficulty of access, its subject of operation. Give an account of the interview you had with one of its members if you managed to meet them. You will act as a resource for the rest of the group. You will need to meet as a group to plan your assignment. You will be asked to present orally your findings and assessment on these assignments in our class discussions.

Session 3: Analyzing Data and Writing the ISP Research Paper
The purpose of this session is twofold. Firstly, we look at data analysis, with particular attention to theories of migration as tools for analysis. Secondly, we analyze the different elements of writing the ISP paper, with particular attention to literature review and theoretical framework.

Session 4: Doing Research on Migration
This session focuses on the specificities of conducting field-based research in Morocco on topics of migration. The session covers field resources and the ethical challenges of methodological tools such as doing research with refugees and undocumented migrants. The session also addresses the legal and ethical questions research on migration in Morocco generally involves.

Session 5: Research Ethics: Meeting with Female Immigrants from Africa South of Sahara
This session draws on a meeting with female migrants from Africa South of the Sahara. Special attention is given to reflexivity and positionality and their impact on the ethics of the representation of participants in the research and the host community. This session also discusses SIT’s Human Subject Review Policy and the application for review of research with human subjects, the LRB process, the consent form, and ethics form.

Required Reading:

Recommended reading:
Module 3: Fieldwork in the Context of a Border Setting

This module takes place during the program’s excursion to the northeast of Morocco. This region is the main migration sending zone in the country, and about 80% of Moroccan immigrants in the Netherlands originally come from North East Morocco. Most importantly, given its borders with the Spanish enclave Mellilia and its access to the Mediterranean, this region provides insights into interesting border dynamics that include undocumented migrants from Africa South of the Sahara and a culture of smuggling and youth emigration.

Session 1: Migration and Fieldwork in Northeast Morocco

This session introduces one of the main migration sending zones in the country and raises questions related to research in a border setting.

Required Reading:

Session 2: Mobility and Field Research in Northern Morocco

This session is led by a researcher and civil society activist from Al Hoceima who shares his perspective on the culture of mobility in the Northeastern part of Morocco. The session also addresses available resources for fieldwork in a border setting.

Required Reading:


Recommended Reading:

Session 3: Fieldwork Negotiations and Accessibilities within the Context of Moroccan Governmental and Nongovernmental Organizations

These sessions address access to information within Moroccan associations and governmental organizations. The sessions are scheduled before and after organizations sites visits.

Required Reading:


Field Visits: Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Undocumented Migrants, and Human Rights

1. Site visit: Orient/Occident and Oum Albanine (NGOs working with Refugees and Asylum seekers) and Orient Occident in Rabat
2. Undocumented Immigrants Workers Rights: Union of undocumented immigrant workers in Rabat (ODT)

3. Moroccan Government Migration Policies: Council for Moroccans Residents Abroad in Rabat (CCME) and Foundation Hassan II for Moroccans Residents Abroad in Rabat

4. Moroccan immigrants in the Netherlands, Euro-Mediterranean: Center for Migration and Development in Amsterdam (Labor Migration NGO)

5. Moroccan Women Immigrants in Amsterdam: Nisa and Nisa Amesterdam

6. Migration and Activism in Northeast of Morocco: Network of local development NGOs RODPAL in Al-Hocima

7. Memory and Identity: Association of the Memory of Rif (Dakirat Rif) Alhocima

8. Transnational Activism: SSR Foundation for the support of Moroccan returning immigrants from the Netherlands in Berkane, Morocco

Module 4: Nomadic Cultures and Development: Field work in Rural Morocco

This module takes place during the rural stay in the Beni-Mellal region. The module addresses the specificities of rural life in Morocco and the challenges of conducting fieldwork in a rural setting. Students learn about the impact of migration on the village population (including but not limited to social change, gender dynamics, and rural development) in an important migration zone in the country. Students also learn and practice fieldwork methods on migration in a rural setting.

Session 1: Village Stay Orientation: Fieldwork Research in Rural Morocco

This session introduces the theme of migration in a rural sending zone.

Required Reading:

Session 2: Observation: Family Dynamics, Public Spaces (Weekly Market), Urban versus Rural Morocco

Required Reading:

Session 3: The Context of Doing Fieldwork on Migration: the Case of Ouled Ghanem Village

This session provides the necessary background knowledge on migration from the village to Spain and Italy. It provides a sample space for the practice of knowledge acquired on research methods.

Required Reading:

Session 4: Research Methods in Rural Morocco:

These debrief sessions deploy the village experience to reflect on the most appropriate fieldwork research methods

- Debrief session: Participants versus non participants observation
- Debrief session: Interviews versus unstructured conversations
• From focus groups to in-depth interviews: group discussions with women and men in the village

Required Reading:

Session 5: Meeting with Moroccan Anthropologist Zakaria Rhani

Required Reading:

Module 5: ISP Design & Evaluation

Session 1: ISP Rubric
This session is devoted to the discussion of SIT’s ISP assessment rubric. Students are acquainted with the categories for each rubric and the general design of ISP project and presentation.

Session 2: Reviewing past ISPs
Join one of the thematic groups. You will be given past ISPs. Each group is invited to work on a specific ISP of their choice. The ISPs are posted on your Moodle page. After selecting the ISP, each group will have to meet in order to see how each member would contribute to the assignment implementation. You will be invited to present orally your findings.
These are some suggestions:
• Discuss ISP structure and introduction of research question. Did the author manage to relate to the research question throughout the text in their data analysis discussion? How does the literature review support the main research question and data presented? Comment on the author’s discussion about positionality;
• Use an alternative investigation tool to verify the validity of the study results;
• Try the same method with different profiles;
• Think about new theoretical questions;
• Use in-depth investigation of an issue or aspect of the data that was only partly covered in the original research;
• Collect data to find an answer to new questions about the ISP;
• Re-analyze the collected data from different theoretical perspectives;
• Compare the ISP’s collected data with data collected on other profiles;
• Try other modes of approach that you might think about.

Session 3: ISP Group Discussions
In this session, students will share and discuss their final ISP proposal. Feedback provided in this session is used to enhance the final ISP proposal.

Final Session: Submit Research Paper, Concluding Synthesis, and Analysis of Course Themes

Evaluation and Grading Criteria
Description of Assignments:
• The Literature Review / Field Assignments consist of 3 critical reviews of assigned readings and field assignments incorporating observation and interviewing.
• During the semester, students will be required to keep a Field Study Journal and will have the choice to indicate the two entries they would like to have assessed. Entries should be approximately half to one page long each.
• The Independent Study Project Proposal should contain the research problem, the research question, research methods, expected research findings, and anticipated research ethical concerns.
The Application for Review of ISP Research with Human Subjects should contain interview guide, a questionnaire, sample questions for focus group interviews when applicable, a consent form, and any anticipated ethical concerns.

Assessment

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Study Journal entries</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field visits reports and presentations</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent Study Project Proposal</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application for Review of ISP Research with Human Subjects</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Grading Scale:
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

Grading Criteria
An A grade for an assignment entails superior (not just “very good”) performance in terms of structure and organization of assignments, analysis, logical argumentation and consistency, and the provision of factual, numerical and/or historical evidence. In terms of class participation, an A grade refers to full attendance, punctuality, attentive listening and active engagement in all academic seminar lectures, discussions, field trips, and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior. The level, frequency, and quality of student participation will be monitored and taken into account.

Student Expectations
- **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.** 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.
- **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 handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment, and the academic appeals process.