Research Methods and Ethics
ANTH 3500 (3 credits / 45 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:
Argentina: Social Movements and Human Rights

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus represents a recent semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Description
The Research Methods and Ethics course (RME) introduces students to the conceptual and practical tools for gathering primary data and the knowledge and skills that are essential to forming constructive relationships with organizations and/or individuals, which are necessary for completing an academic project in the cultural context of Argentina. In particular, the course enhances students’ skills at building rapport; initiating purposeful dialogue in the cultural context of Argentina; gathering, recording, and analyzing primary data; and writing a scholarly academic report. The course also pays particular attention to US higher education ethical considerations that guide primary data collection and how these could be translated within the local cultural context of Argentina and the program’s Critical Global Issue focus, Peace | Human Rights | Social Movements. Broadly, the course introduces students to both qualitative and quantitative approaches of social science field research.

The main emphasis of the course is on the development of empirical tools and ethics of interactive research skills involving the collection of primary data. The course includes lectures on qualitative methods of research in social sciences and in particular Social Movements and Human Rights, development of a research proposal or internship proposal, and preparation of an application for review of research with human subjects. All students will participate in an overview of research design and methodological approaches to program themes. Ethical considerations related to conducting research or completing an internship will be discussed. The overall aim is to help students hone their experience-based learning processes and prepare them for the development of an Independent Study Project (ISP), which is largely based on the data gathered from primary sources, or an internship at a local organization.

Learning Outcomes
The Research Methods and Ethics course comprises 45 hours. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:
• Show an acute sense of positionality and perspective and operate independently, using cultural sensitivity, language skills, and local networks of trust built over the course of the semester;
• Demonstrate awareness of appropriate methods and ethics used in field research in the critical global issue of Global Health OR demonstrate awareness of the ethics of internship in the context of Argentina;
• Analyze and process primary data gathered in the field and draw valid and ethical interpretations and conclusions;
• Produce an Independent Study Project proposal that is in strict observance of ethical academic standards and local values and that includes a research question, sample review of the relevant literature, outline of the research methods, and anticipated ethical challenges and ways of addressing them OR an internship proposal that includes a description of the host organization, an outline of tasks that will be performed, a proposed work timetable, and projected outcomes such as a paper or business plan.

Language of Instruction
This course is taught in Spanish and students will be exposed to vocabulary related to course content through in-country expert lectures and field visits to a wide range of venues and regional locales.

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.

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 and 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 or internship.

Session 1: Learning in Argentina: Experiential Learning, cultural learning, adaptation, and academic expectations. RM&E role.

Ana Laura Lobo

Experiential Learning Philosophy and the Politics of Culture in Argentina. Discussion of experiential learning, cultural learning, and adaptation. What does it mean to learn and study in a new culture and environment? We will discuss academic and student expectations under the experiential learning model, discuss doubts, and answer questions about learning in an Argentine classroom; differences/similarities. We will look at group dynamics and discuss group norms while analyzing hypothetical situations as a group.

Doing Field-Based Research in a Study Abroad Context.
Experiential methods.
Presentation of the basics of RME Seminar and importance of cultural observation, discuss the importance of and how to maintain a field journal. Introduction to DIE method of observation. We will also deliver RM&E schedule and syllabus for your reading.

Cultural adjustment cycle. Discussion of cross-cultural communication and developing cross-cultural competence. What are culture shock and the cultural adaptation curve?

Ethics: Homestay as a cultural experience site of learning.

Positionality and Outsider/Insider Research.

**Exercise 1:** In session: Introduction of cultural observation activity and its objectives.

**Note!** Deliver your field journal’s entries (you can deliver your notebook or upload your entries to Moodle).

**Required Readings:**


**Session 2. Understanding the host culture: Content analysis of the films
Ana Laura Lobo and Gabriel Noel**

We will focus on the importance of cultural observation. Debrief in detail the cultural observation assignments. Discuss first impressions about daily life in Buenos Aires and cultural repertoires. Review DIE method of observation and the importance of field journaling during the semester.

We will use the assignment to reflect about cultural norms, positionality, experiential learning, methods, and challenges.

**Required Readings:**


**Recommended readings.**

Module 2: Research Methods and Ethics in Peace | Human Rights | Social Movements
This module focuses on the tools and methods required for conducting quantitative and/or qualitative field research in observance of the ethics and value systems of the local community.

Session 1. Introduction to qualitative social research

Ana Laura Lobo, Paula Boniolo, y Gabriel Noel

Introduction to the main characteristics of qualitative research. Defining research themes and research questions. The process of identifying topics of interest, to formulating research problems and objectives.

The Independent Study Project or the opportunity to conduct an undergraduate research project. We will describe and analyze the main norms around the ISP.

Ethical considerations related to social research: reflect on the limits of research, fieldwork and different solutions to face these problems.

Exercise 2: In class. Analysis of past ISP reports. In groups, we will review a past ISP report and we will discuss the differences between topics and research questions.

Required Reading:

- Former ISP report.

Session 2. Research process: From questions to research problems.

Paula Boniolo y Gabriel Noel

We will deepen our investigations by examining the differences between topics, questions, and research problems. We will be introduced to the role of theory and method in the construction of
the object of study. As an application of this process, we will learn about Theories on Collective Memory. During the week we are going to visit the Ex Clandestine Detention Center located at ESMA and will analyze the visit using the theory as a guide.

**Exercise 3:** Right after the visit to EX ESMA, take some time to make an entry in your field journal. Follow DIE method but also rehearse possible research questions, not only guided by the experience, but also by the theory you’ve learnt.

**Required Readings:**

**Recommended Readings:**

**Session 3. Theoretical approach and research problem. Bibliographical review.**

_Paula Boniolo y Gabriel Noel_

In this session we will deepen our investigations of the role of theory and method in the construction of the object of study. The theoretical framework and its relationship to the research problem. We will focus on the state of the art: critical review of accumulated knowledge. Introduction to bibliographical review.

Ethical standards in quotation.

**During this session we will introduce and start working on exercise 4.**

**Required Reading:**
- “Búsqueda de información y citado” (22-27); “Anexo I: Normas de citado y consignación de bibliografía (61-68); “Anexo II: Ejemplo de Ficha Bibliográfica” (69) and “Anexo III, Listado de bibliotecas” (70-71), in *Research Methods and Ethics Handbook*. SIT-Fundación World Learning Argentina.

**Session 4. From the What of the Study to How to conduct a research.**

_Paula Boniolo y Gabriel Noel_

Research design. Data gathering techniques: The use of the interview in qualitative research. Characteristics, stages, format. Constructing interview questions. The role of research objectives and concepts in interview and interview questions. The importance of questions. Entering the field. Ethical and cultural sensitivity in the process of interviewing, observing and entering the field.

**Exercise 4:** Write up a draft answer to the question: “How would you answer your ISP Question? Which techniques are more suitable to achieve your goals?”
Exercise 5: In class we will create a guide of questions to apply in an interview with an expert/gatekeeper/key informant.

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:


Session 5. Qualitative analysis: Codification of primary data.

Paula Boniolo

In this session we will have our first introduction to codification of primary data. Next, we will go deeper into codification techniques.

Exercise 6: In class, students will develop a Coding Manual and apply it to analyze interviews.

Required Readings


Recommended Readings:

Module 3: Introduction to the ISP and Internship

This module will describe the ISP and internship processes and help students brainstorm ideas and set goals for their ISP or internship. The module will include a review and critique of past ISP and/or internship papers. The module will also walk the students through the Local Review Board (LRB) and Institutional Review Board (IRB) process and the application for Human Subjects Review (HSR application).

Session 1. Introduction to the ISP and Internship
Ana Laura Lobo
In this session we will review the basic aspects of ISP and internships. We will introduce the LRB/IRB Process and HSR Application.

We will also build a check list of your duties during the ISP/internship period.

Module 4: Project Proposal Development

Based on learning and engagement in the preceding course modules, this module focuses on ISP and internship proposal development and guiding students through the development of the Human Subjects Review (HSR) application for review by the Local Review Board (LRB). This critical phase in the course involves both large student group meetings and individual student meetings with the academic director and the ISP advisor or internship supervisor.

Session 1. Designing ISP/internship proposals.
Ana Laura Lobo, Paula Boniolo, Gabriel Noel y Lucas Melfi
Review, discuss, define and reflect. Elements of the proposal. How to order the research proposal. Students will discuss their ISP/internships ideas in small groups. The objective of this class is to provide your peers with feedback about their research topic.

Exercise 7: In groups students will review previous ISP/internships proposals.

Required Reading:
- “Introducción al ISP” (4 -14) and “Diseño de la propuesta de investigación” (38-48), “Etica en la investigación social” (49-52) and “Anexo IV” (72-104), in Research Methods and Ethics Handbook. SIT-Fundación World Learning Argentina.

Recommended Readings:
Session 2. Proposal Development.
Ana Laura Lobo, Paula Boniolo y Lucas Melfi
The objective of this class is to provide your peers with feedback about their proposal development. We will discuss in small groups or pairs their ideas about their ISP/internship proposal. Introduction to IRB forms.
We will present the exercise 8: first draft of ISP proposal.

Required Reading:
- “Introducción al ISP” (4 -14) and “Diseño de la propuesta de investigación” (38-48), “Etica en la investigación social” (49-52) and “Anexo IV” (72-104), in Research Methods and Ethics Handbook. SIT-Fundación World Learning Argentina.

Recommended Readings:

During the trip to the north: Students will have group or individual interviews with the AD to discuss ideas about their projects.

Exercise 8: Hand in first draft of ISP Proposal (Research Question, theoretical framework and problem, objectives and methodology) or Internship Proposal (possible topics, institutions, objectives).

Session 3. Writing up report and the ISP Journal.
Ana Laura Lobo
We will present the ideal structure of your ISP/internship report and challenges in writing it. We will also talk about the ethics of publishing and communicating results. We will explain how to keep a work journal throughout your ISP. During class we will review and discuss different ISP reports, ISP rubric and ISP journal.

After completing Modules 1-4, students will split into groups by ISP or internship. ISP students will take Module 5a, and internship students will take Module 5b.

Module 5a: ISP in the Context of Argentina
This module prepares the student for the ISP experience. It examines work-based norms and practices related to conducting research in Argentina. The module highlights the importance of applied methodology in the ISP experience and the expectations and responsibilities of the student.

**Session 1: Preparing for the ISP**
This introductory session prepares the student for the ISP. The session covers a range of areas that include how to approach and develop rapport with research participants, how to work collaboratively with the ISP advisor, and logistics of the ISP period, including travel, materials, and timelines. Students will also review the ISP assessment rubric.

**Session 2: Work-based Norms and Practices in Argentina**
This session explores work-based norms and practices related to research in Argentina, exploring such issues as how best to describe the ISP to potential research participants and others, gender norms, issues of language, and expectations for behavior while conducting research.

**Required Readings:**
- *For group A. required readings of this module are already included in previous sessions.*

**Session 3: ISP Applied Methodology**
This session covers strategies of time management, networking strategies, and problem-solving research challenges.

**Required Readings:**
- *For group A. required readings of this module are already included in previous sessions.*

**Module 5b: Internship in the Context of Argentina**
This module prepares the student for the internship experience. It examines work-based norms and practices related to internships in Argentina. The module highlights the importance of ethics in the internship experience and the expectations and responsibilities of the student, the host institution, and the program.

**Session 1: Preparing for the Internship**
This introductory session prepares the students for their internship in country. The session covers a range of areas that include résumé preparation and cover letter, dress, student objectives for the internship, and stages of student growth in the internship. Students will review the internship rubric.

**Required Readings:**
Session 2: Work-based Norms and Practices in Argentina
This session explores work-based norms and practices related to internships and work in Argentina, exploring such issues as how best to describe the internship experience and purpose to potential internship hosts and others, gender norms, issues of language, and workplace expectations.

Required Readings:


Session 3: The Ethics of Participating in an Internship in Argentina
This session outlines the responsibilities of the student and the host organization for a productive and significant experience that can serve the objectives of both. The session also reviews best practices for a successful internship and exposes the student’s positionality in relation to the organization.

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Description of Assignments:

1. Presentations/debriefing of visits:
Students will present orally, the experiences lived during field excursions. An “A” will be given to students that follow instructions, relate the experience with the classes’ content and achieve a reflective perspective.

2. General exercises and field journal entries:
Students will be assigned analysis exercises related to cultural observation, skill exercises, data gathering techniques, analysis, etc.
An “A” is the work that responds to all the questions given in an analytical perspective and which students have applied all the concepts given in class.
Field journal entries: An “A” will be given to fields journal that are complete, applies DIG methods, make reflections, includes the assignment assigned during the trip to the South, and relates theoretic and methodology reflections with observation.

3. Exercises related to research/ Internship proposal:
Students will hand in a proposal for a field of study and/or a theme, a proposal of a question or research problem, drafts and a final research proposal. The grade will take into account the final product but also the drafts and the interest the student has in the definition of the research proposal. An “A” will be given for a student who hands in a proposal that includes all the topics seen in class. It should have a clear research question; a well-developed theoretical framework for the research question and a complete proposal with all its components. The student should also hand in a pre-research proposal with the components required. The student should also hand in the IRB form taking into account the ethical principles of research with human subjects. The internship proposal should include the objectives to be achieved during the internship period, a justification of the work and the organization selected, skills or areas in which the student can contribute to the work of the host organization, and an outline of the work plan to be carried out.

4. Participation
All students are expected to prepare for classes, attend and participate in all lectures, class discussions, field activities, and carry out all assignments and other activities prepared in the context of the Research Methods and Ethics course.

Assessment:
Presentations/debriefings 15%
Assignment 15%
Field Work Journal 20%
Research/Internship Proposal 40%
Participation 10%

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

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 according 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.

• **Comply with academic integrity policies** (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).

• **Respect differences of opinion** (those of classmates, lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits, etc.). 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.

**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.