

## **Project on Food Security, Nutrition, and Sustainable Development**

IPBH 3060 (3 Credits / 45 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:  
**Switzerland: Food Security and Nutrition**

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.

### **Course Description**

The Project on Food Security, Nutrition, and Sustainable Development offers students a unique research opportunity in their field of interest in comparative and international studies. In this course, students are introduced to recent research and become familiar with the methodologies employed in public health and development 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 Food Security, Nutrition, and Sustainable Development 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. Program and study sites are Geneva as well as Istria/Croatia. Support is provided throughout the project from program faculty, particularly by aiding students in finding resources in Switzerland.

### **Learning Outcomes**

The Project on Food Security, Nutrition, and Sustainable Development course comprises 45 class hours of instruction (3 credits). Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify, design and implement an individual project in a topic related to food security, nutrition, human development, development policy, environment and ecology, public and global health, European and Mediterranean affairs, and international trade, among others;
- Apply field-based study techniques;
- Take advantage of the Geneva based resources in international studies;
- Participate in a study trip to the Istrian Peninsula in Croatia;

- Write a paper that is relevant to students' careers and academic interests and demonstrates critical thinking.

### **Language of Instruction**

This course is taught in English, but students will be exposed to vocabulary related to course content through in-country expert lectures and field visits in 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.

### **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 four weeks of seminars, students identify primary and secondary sources related to the topic of their research. Students meet the academic director and 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, working on 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 and academic advisor throughout the research and writing period. Students might also choose an external project advisor.

### **Course Requirements**

1. At least two face-to-face meetings with experts and two meetings with the academic director and the 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 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;

4. The original paper, Work Journal and Interactive Research Log submitted to the academic director and the academic advisor;
5. Electronic version (disk or e-mail) of your fully formatted paper.

### **Student Evaluation and Grading Criteria**

The evaluation of the research and paper will be completed by the academic director and the academic advisor. 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 director assigns the final grade.

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
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

**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>.

**Please note that 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.