



## Internship & Seminar

ITRN 3000 (4 credits / 120 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:  
**Cameroon: Development and Social Change**

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

Cameroon has had political stability relative to other countries in this region. This has permitted investments in agriculture, transport infrastructure, petroleum and timber. As is the case in many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, an internet revolution has enabled proliferation of many innovations in mobile apps and banking. A simultaneous convergence and divergence in global class structure, production and consumption lifestyles is unfolding in Cameroon. Several non-governmental organizations at community levels and various social entrepreneurship programs are leading innovations in maternal and child health, nutrition, water supply and sanitation. In this sense Cameroon provides an excellent setting in which to study mainstream development and the transitions that occur as Cameroonian society gets increasingly integrated into modern lifestyles. This internship experience is intended to place students in organizations at the center of this transition and these innovations as a way to enable them to appreciate the drivers and goals of mainstream development practice, how they have been structured and how society has responded to them.

SIT will use its extensive network to place students in national and international organizations working in the broad area of international development in Cameroon. In addition, students may petition SIT for approval of internship placements that they find on their own initiative. In either case, SIT's academic director must approve of the student's internship duties, location and placements. Ultimately, each student takes responsibility for making optimal use of resources available at the organization and will be expected to be proactive in engaging with local experts to achieve internship objectives. Weekly two-hour reflection and assessment meetings are held with the academic director or internship coordinator to review the progress of the internship and learning associated with the internship experience.

Students complete an internship and submit a paper that describes, assesses and analyzes their learning in regard to the theoretical underpinnings, complexity, challenges and benefits to the community of the work of their internship organization. The internship paper also outlines the tasks that students completed at the international development internship, reporting relationships, challenges encountered and how the student overcame them.

### **Learning Outcomes**

The internship course comprises of 120 hours, equal to 4 academic credits.

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

- Demonstrate knowledge of how Cameroonian cultural norms and practices shape the work place environment and outcomes in a development organization;
- Articulate the ways in which organizations attempt to negotiate tensions between Western and local cultural norms and practices;
- Assess and articulate the benefits, challenges and obstacles that the internship organization encounters in their development work;
- Describe, analyze, and synthesize their learning experience in the internship in the form of an internship paper and oral presentation;
- Gain meaningful and practical work experience in their chosen field.

### **Language of Instruction**

French and English are the official languages in Cameroon and students should expect that French or English will be widely spoken in work and in most field settings of the internship. The pre-internship part of the course, Research Methods and Ethics, prepares students by introducing them to the work norms, practices and ethics in the Cameroonian context, and is taught in English by the academic director, assisted by local experts. Further, pre-internship preparations include a 3 credit French language course, a 3 credit Development Studies course and a 3 credit Modernization and Social Change course which expose and introduce students to the broader theories and practices of international development. These courses prepare the students and set the context for the internship experience in Cameroon.

### **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 I: Making the Most of Your Internship

During this module, students will prepare for the internship and the writing of the internship paper, have regular meetings with the academic director, reflect on the internship experience, and learn how to use their experience for future professional growth. Complementary reading will be assigned by the academic director.

#### Session I: Setting the Stage

This session reviews objectives for the internship. Students meet with the academic director, following confirmation of their internship placement, and discuss expectations, time frames and other logistics, structural components of the final internship paper, content, layout, and general guidelines.

### Sessions 2 & 3: The Internship Experience: Review and Critical Reflection

These sessions focus on the review and reflection process of the internship experience. Students set weekly learning objectives, keep an internship journal, and write two progress reports on their learning experience.

### Session 4: Talking About the Internship Experience

This session allows students to reflect on the internship experience and begin to process the learning that occurred in a safe and supportive context. The session discusses ways of acknowledging both the successes and failures of the internship, of completing tasks, handing over projects to and sharing insights with colleagues on the job, and setting realistic goals for the future.

### Session 5: Next Steps and How to Include Your Internship on Your Résumé

This final session occurs in the final weeks of the program, as part of re-entry discussions. Students discuss fears and strategies for successful re-entry into their home setting, opportunities for professional growth, and how to make optimal use of the internship experience. They will discuss ways to describe the experience gained and skills learned in their internship in cover letters, résumés and how to use this experience for future professional growth.

*Suggested reading:*

Switzer, Frederick and King, Mary (2013) *The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional and Civic development in Experiential Learning (4<sup>th</sup> Edition)*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole (chapter 12)

## **THE FINAL PAPER**

The final paper shall consist of the following four sections:

- Description of the host institution
- Description of tasks performed on the job
- Business plan design, grant proposal, or other major output of the internship experience
- Personal assessment of your job performance

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE FINAL PAPER**

Expectations for each section of the final paper are outlined below. These, however, are guidelines and may be adapted to the specificities of your internship.

**Description of host institution:** a brief description (one page) of the host institution for the internship. This should include the nature of the services offered and a profile of the customers who use them. The student may also provide brochures or collateral material that further describes the institution.

**Description of tasks performed:** this should be written in third person as if the student, acting as a manager, were writing it for a new employee/associate. It should be written in outline form, except for the job summary section. Headings should be used to identify each of the sections. A suggested outline for this description is listed below:

- Job title and place of employment

- Job summary—narrative summary of the activities of the position
- Qualifications—education and experience required and/or desirable
- Working conditions—uniform requirements, physical surroundings, working days, hours, etc.
- Job relationships—who is the mentor and to whom reported
- Specific duties and responsibilities—a list should be provided to indicate all duties performed by the individual in this position

**Output of the internship experience:** this can be a proposal for a strategic response to an existing problem, a creation of a sustainable plan, a grant proposal, or a research that responds to the need of an organization. The proposal should also outline the human and financial resources needed for the implementation of the proposed model and measures of its success.

**Personal assessment of the experience:** in this section provide an assessment of the key learning milestones acquired on the internship experience, the challenges faced, and the possible impact of the experience on the student’s academic and professional career. Included in this section is a reflection on the internship experience, including the output of the internship (mentioned above), as it relates to development in Cameroon.

**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.

**Evaluation and Grading Criteria**

Weekly two-hour reflection and assessment meetings are held with the academic director or internship coordinator to review the progress of the internship and learning associated with the internship experience.

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 the quality of research and academic scholarship and adherence to the highest ethical standards.

Assessment of the Internship

Internship Paper	35%
Internship Presentation	10%
Internship performance	35%
Progress reports	20%

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

**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>.

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