

Internship and Seminar

ITRN 3000 (4 credits / 120 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:
SIT Study Abroad Ghana: Africa in the 21st Century

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

This course consists of a four-week internship with a local community organization, research organization, business, or international NGO. The aim of an internship is to enable students to gain valuable internship experience and enhance their skills in an international internship environment.

SIT will use its extensive network to place students in organizations working on social change, technology innovation and diffusion, emerging business start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises in Ghana. In addition, students may petition SIT for approval of internship placements that they find on their own initiative. However, in all cases, the organization and the student's internship placement must be approved by SIT's academic director, and SIT will maintain oversight over internship placement in line with SIT academic policies, student health and security guidelines. Ultimately, each student takes responsibility for making optimal use of resources available at the organization and to be proactive in engaging with local experts to achieve their internship objectives. Weekly two-hour reflection and assessment classes are held with the academic director or internship coordinator to review the progress of the internship and learning associated with the internship experience.

The students complete an internship and submit a focus project paper in which they process their learning experience on the internship, analyze an issue important to the organization, and/or design a socially responsible solution to a problem identified by the organization. Approved in advance by the academic director, SIT's Local Review Board (for ethical clearance purposes), and the internship supervisor, the internship focus project may involve interviews and other data collection methods relevant to achieving internship learning goals. The paper and final presentation reveal how those goals are linked to the theme of Africa in the 21st Century and the critical global issue of development, economy, and inequality. The paper should also document a comprehensive schedule and the specific skills and knowledge acquired through the experience. Rubrics for the focus project paper and presentation will be shared with students.

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 Ghanaian cultural norms and practices shape the work place environment and outcomes;
- 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 work;
- Describe, analyze, and synthesize their learning experience in the internship in the form of an internship paper and oral presentation; and
- Gain meaningful and practical work experience in their chosen field.

Language of Instruction

Students should expect that English will likely be the main language spoken in most work and 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 Ghanaian context, and is taught in English by the academic director, assisted by local experts. Further, pre-internship preparations include 3 credit Twi language course, 3 credit Africa in a Globalizing World: Technology and Social Realities in Ghana and a 3 credit Contemporary Africa Represented: Perspectives from Ghana course. These four courses combined equip students with knowledge and skills for successfully completing an internship in Ghana and introduce students to the broader context, and intersection of history, religious pluralism and politics in Ghana.

Internship Seminar 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.

The internship placement and the internship seminar go hand in hand. The internship seminar is the academic aspect of the internship placement. A student completing the internship placement without the internship seminar does not receive SIT credit.

Week One (Part I): Introduction, Positionality and Internship Ethics

Reflection Question: How is the cultural environment at your internship placement different from what you are used to and how are you adjusting to this cultural difference? How is your identity (racial, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, class, etc.) influencing how you relate to others in this environment and how they relate to you?

Assigned Reading:

- Miner, Horace "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema". American Anthropologist, 1956, 58(3), 503-507
- Ritzer, George. (1983). "The McDonaldization of Society." Journal of American Culture, 6 (1), 100-107

Week One (Part 2): Setting the Stage (not graded)

Submit questions that you may have about the final paper, expectations, and how to maximize benefit from the experience. Students are encouraged to respond to each other's questions and the instructor responds as well.

Week Two: Cultural Observations (First Progress Report Due Date TBD)

Reflection Question: What are you learning about working collaboratively in this culture? What difficulties and what joys are you experiencing? What might you change about your style (manner of dress, communication, demeanor and interactions) to enhance your learning and performance at the internship?

Assigned Reading:

- Weaver, Gary R. (2000) Culture, Communication and Conflict: Readings in Intercultural Relations 3rd ed. London: Pearson. Chapter 3: "Understanding and coping with cross cultural adjustment stress."
- Kohls, Robert. "The Values Americans Live By."

Week Three: The Theory of Practice: Digging Deeper

Reflection Question: How have your courses on this program (Language, RME and Thematic Seminars) informed your internship experience and your performance of the internship?

Assigned Reading:

- Thomson S. Ansom A & Murison J (2013) "Emotional and Ethical Challenges for Field Research in Africa: The Story Behind the Findings". Chapter 1.

Week Four: Learning Goals, Skills and Experience (Second Progress Report Due TBD)

Reflection Question: Briefly describe what you have learnt from the internship placement. What could you have done differently to enhance your learning? Identify key talking points for presenting about your internship to your school back home.

Assigned Reading:

Switzer, Frederick and King, Mary (2013) "The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional and Civic development in Experiential Learning (4th Edition). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole. Chapters 3, 9 & 12)

Description of Assignments

Weekly response papers

Students are required to submit weekly written responses to reflection sections as shown below. In addition, each student is expected to compose one response that addresses issues raised by at least three other students. Written responses should incorporate assigned reading.

The course instructor will in turn provide written feedback to the entire student group. The goal is to foster interaction and discussion among the students and between the students and the course instructor.

Written responses should be no less than half a page, single space and no more than a full page, approximately 350-700 words.

Progress Reports

The progress report is a bi-weekly reflective synthesis of the professional and personal issues that the student has encountered over the course of the two preceding weeks. The progress reports may be used to inform writing of the critical reflection component of the final internship report.

We anticipate that students will need to spend about two hours each week doing the assigned reading and preparing their response papers.

Internship Performance

This evaluation by the by the internship supervisor or someone at the internship organization assesses the student's internship experience, overall professional achievements, and self-growth.

Oral Presentation

In the presentation, you should provide a succinct and clear description of the internship experience, a brief history of the organization where you interned, and the responsibilities undertaken. The oral presentation should relate the learning associated with the focus project and reflect on its relevance to the program theme and Critical Global Issue. You should demonstrate effective management of the discussion with the audience and attend to the aesthetic elements of the delivery. A summary of the oral presentation assessment rubric will be shared with students in advance.

Final Paper

Students are expected to submit a final paper at the end of their internship experience. The final paper should include a title, list of acknowledgments, and an abstract. The paper should also have an introduction which summarizes the work and history of the organization and incorporates a number of references, detailed description of internship accomplishments, and strong and innovative aspects of the organization. The paper should be well-written, well-organized, and aesthetically pleasing. A summary of the final paper assessment rubric will be shared with students in advance.

Grading

Weekly Response Papers and Progress Reports 20%

1. Written response to reflection questions: 10 points each (4 total x 10 points) 40 points maximum
2. Written response to issues raised by other students: (4 total x 5 points) 20 points maximum
3. Progress Reports (2 total x 20 points each): 40 points maximum

Late submissions are penalized by 2 points for every additional 24 hrs.

Internship Performance 35%

Oral Presentation 10%

Final Paper 35%

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

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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>.