

Internship & Seminar (Interactive Learning and Research Activity, ILRA)

ITRN 3000 (6 credits / 180 hours)

Switzerland: Banking, Finance, and Social Responsibility

This syllabus is representative of a typical semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Description

This seminar consists of a six-week, 180-hour internship with a local community organization, research organization, business, government agency, or international NGO. The aim of an internship is to enable students to gain valuable experience and enhance their skills in a career field/professional environment related to the finance/banking environment.

SIT will use its extensive network to facilitate an internship placement for students where interviews may be required. The organization and the student's internship activities, including the Internship Learning Agreement, must be approved by SIT's Academic Director. SIT will maintain oversight over internship placements in line with SIT academic policies and student health and security guidelines. Ultimately, each student will need to take responsibility for making optimal use of resources available at the organization and to be proactive in engaging with local experts to achieve internship objectives. During the Internship period, weekly three-hour reflection and assessment classes are held with the Academic Director or Academic Advisor to review the progress of the internship, learning associated with the internship experience, and to draw out broader issues related to program themes, positionality, culture and ethics in the context of the internship.

Students will be informed of the types of internships available and the placement process early in the semester. Students must decide whether they want to undertake an internship by the fourth week of the program and will have ample opportunities to consult with SIT program staff. Internship placements may include Swiss and international companies, start-ups, NGOs, and inter-governmental organizations.

Each student will be required to submit a final paper in which they process their learning experience on the internship, analyze an issue important to the organization, and apply what they are learning at the internship site to the core themes of the program. Approved in advance by the Academic Director, SIT's Local Review Board (for ethical clearance purposes), and the internship supervisor, the internship paper may involve interviews and other data collection methods relevant to achieving internship learning goals. Students will also do a final presentation to demonstrate how the internship experience enhanced their understanding of the SIT program theme and its Critical Global Issue focus. The paper should also briefly 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 in country.

Learning Outcomes

The *Internship and Seminar* course comprises 40 hours of instruction and reflection, and 140 hours of Interactive Learning and Research Activity. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Describe, analyze, and synthesize students' learning experience in the internship in the form of an academic paper in sustainable finance/development or impact investment areas;
- Articulate new learning from the internship experience in the form of an oral presentation and experience sharing with other class participants/interns;
- Develop an understanding of ethical banking/finance and how it applies in a professional environment in Switzerland / Europe;
- Evaluate the challenges of implementing alternative financial systems, Islamic banking, microfinance and the circular economy and their impact on society in the 21st century;
- Gain exposure and professional experience in ethical banking by broadening and widening their knowledge of sustainable finance/development related practices.
- Experience cultural immersion and develop skills in communicating with professionals and build-up their network.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in English, but students will be exposed to vocabulary related to the internship through a wide range of venues and briefings prior to the start of the ILRA. There are institutions where the working language is English while there are also institutions where the working language is French. Students will learn about the working practices within the Swiss/international environment and may communicate in languages other than English.

Course Schedule

Students will be provided a detailed course schedule during orientation on the program. 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: The Internship Experience: Review and Reflection

This module occurs while students are fully participating in their internship. Critical and guided reflection will play a key role in student development and learning during the internship. Students will keep an internship journal in which they respond to the questions/issues listed below as instructed. Journaling should be done daily, keeping in mind the learning objectives. Students will submit two progress reports on their successes and limitations toward achieving learning objectives. Students will also meet with their instructor and other internship students for reflection and discussion during the internship.

Cultural observations: *How is the professional environment different from what you are used to? What are you learning about working collaboratively in this culture? How do you find yourself reacting to and adjusting to cultural practices that are different from what you are accustomed to? How does it feel to be a foreigner in this environment?*

Theory and Practice: Digging Deeper: *How does the work of your internship site connect to important program themes? How has the experience at your internship challenged or affirmed the arguments in a reading or lecture from this semester?*

Skills and Experience: *What insights into this field have you gained through your internship? What skills are most valuable for this internship site and what opportunities have you had to improve your skills in this area? What has challenged you and how are you handling those challenges? How do you see this experience preparing you for future opportunities?*

Learning Goals: *How much progress have you made toward your learning goals? What experiences or activities have contributed to your ability to meet them? Are you learning something important you didn't anticipate and would like to add to your Learning Goals at this time?*

Session 1: Setting the Stage: Internship Experience, Review and Reflection

This session reviews objectives for the internship. Students meet with the academic director following confirmation of their internship placement and discuss expectations, timeframes, structural components of the final internship paper, content, layout, and general guidelines. Students set weekly learning objectives, keep an internship journal, and discuss on their learning experience. Students review the internship experience after the first few days and reflect about their positionality and cognitive bias with their classmates and the AD/AA.

Required Readings:

Sweitzer, F. and King, M. (2013). *The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional and Civic Development in Experiential Learning (4th Edition)*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole. Chapter 1: "The Lay of the Land", 3-30.

Recommended Readings:

Théry, M. (2014). 10 Finance Innovations. *Geneva, the sustainable finance laboratory*. Geneva: Sustainable Finance Geneva. Retrieved from:
http://www.whygeneva.ch/media/ecowhygeneva/files/publication_ang_screen_simple-1.pdf

UNEP. (2015). The Financial System We Need, Aligning the Financial System with Sustainable Development. Retrieved from: <http://geneva-summit-on-sustainable-finance.ch/gssf2016/papers/inquiry.pdf>

Sessions 2: Internship Final Paper and Presentation Design and Content

This session focuses on the design and mechanics of the internship final paper. The module covers the final paper's structural design, organization, and guidelines for effective self-reflection on the internship experience and appraisal of acquired inter-active research and professional experience. This session focuses on the general guidelines for the description of the host institution. The session walks the student through samples of a brief description (one page) of the host institution for the internship, the nature of the services offered, and a profile of the customers who use them. The session also highlights the importance of including brochures or collateral material that further describes the institution.

Required Readings:

Sweitzer, F. and King, M. (2013). *The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional and Civic Development in Experiential Learning (4th Edition)*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole. Chapter 4: "Starting with You: Understanding Yourself", 85-114.

Recommended Readings:

University of Zurich. (2016). Swiss Investments for a Better World. The First Market Survey on Investment for Development. Retrieved from:
http://www.sustainablefinance.ch/upload/cms/user/SSF_A4_Layout_RZ-1.pdf

Module 2: Processing and Maximizing the Internship Experience

The final module occurs toward the end or after the internship and focuses on ways of processing and articulating the internship as well as equipping students with practical tips and strategies for making the most of the experience personally, academically, and professionally. Students will reflect on the internship experience and process the learning that occurred in a safe and supportive context. The internship may have been a different experience than expected, may challenge the student's expectations of interning in a diverse and challenging environment, and may change the student's perspective of life projects or professional goals. The module discusses ways of acknowledging both the successes and failures of the internship and setting realistic goals for the future.

Session 3: Talking About the Internship Experience

This session allows students to reflect on the internship experience and process the learning that occurred in a safe and supportive context. The internship may have been a different experience than expected, may challenge the student's professional expectations in a diverse and challenging environment, and may change the student's perspective of life projects or professional goals. 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, and setting realistic goals for the future.

Additional seminar content will include:

1. Processing the End of the Internship Experience
2. Closure with Colleagues and Supervisors
3. Articulating the Experience through an oral presentation
4. Next Steps: How to include your internship on your résumé, how to frame the internship in a cover letter, and other ways to build on this experience.

Required Readings:

Sweitzer, F. and King, M. (2013). *The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional and Civic Development in Experiential Learning (4th Edition)*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole. Chapter 7: "Getting to Know the Clients: A Chapter of Special Relevance to Helping and Service Professionals", 180-204.

Session 4: Personal Assessment of the Internship Performance

This session provides guidelines for 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. The session also covers a reflection on the internship experience, including the output of the internship, as it relates to the critical global issue central to the program theme.

Required Readings:

Sweitzer, F. and King, M. (2013). *The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional and Civic Development in Experiential Learning (4th Edition)*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole. Chapter 14: "And at the End: The Culmination Stage", 398-427

Recommended readings:

Bell, J. (2010). *Doing Your Research Project (5th Edition)*. London: Open University Press. Chapter 13: "Writing the Report", 231-246. Retrieved from: http://elearning.cfl.udn.vn/home/esp/pluginfile.php/3274/mod_resource/content/1/Judith%20Bell%20-%20Doing_Your_Research_Project.pdf

Session 5: Oral Presentation of the Internship Final Paper

This module focuses on the mechanics and guidelines for the presentation of the internship final paper. The presentation should take 15 minutes and students are encouraged to use audiovisual aid/handouts to facilitate their presentations.

Session content includes:

- Presenting a brief overview of the internship experience
- Communicating assigned responsibilities and tasks performed
- Articulating major output of the experience
- Providing personal assessment of the internship performance.

Required readings:

Quinlan, B.C and Griffin, Z. (2015). *Business Research Methods (1st Edition)*. Hampshire (UK), Chapter 20: "Complementing and Presenting the Research", 377-393.

Recommended readings:

Eriksson, P. and Kovalainen, A. (2008). *Qualitative Methods in Business Research* London: SAGE Publications. Chapter 18: "Writing Process."

Potential Internship Placements in Geneva

1. Léman Monnaie
2. Sofies Group
3. Diplo Foundation
4. Toilet Board Coalition
5. Impact Hub Geneva
6. Geneva Desk for Cooperation, etc.

Field Visits/Briefings in Geneva

1. International/Intergovernmental Organizations:

- World Trade Organization (WTO)
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)
- United Nations Environment Program Financial Initiative (UNEP FI)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), etc.

2. NGOs

- Léman Monnaie
- Geneva Desk for Cooperation, etc.

3. Sustainable Development Enterprises/Start-ups

- Sofies Group
- Impact Hub Geneva
- Toilet Board Coalition, etc.

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

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 quality, academic scholarship, and adherence to the highest ethical standards.

Description of Assignments

The following assignments constitute the seminar requirements. In all exercises, students are asked to reflect analytically and to integrate the briefings, lectures, readings, as well as field visits.

Progress Reports (10%):

The progress report should document the student's progress toward achieving their learning objectives during the internship. Students also document the challenges they face and how they try to deal with those challenges. Students submit two progress reports in the course of their internship experience.

Assignment 1 (5 points out of 10 points):

In this 600 words long report, students will learn about the internship institution by immersing into its daily working activities. Typically, they will engage in observation with participation. They will analyze a series of activities the professionals are performing, and will reflect about issues which may strike their attention.

The assessment can go from the analysis of the dress code, to language and concepts the professional use to communicate among themselves and with partners outside the institution. Students will also consider their work-ethics as well as their professional goals. Students will focus their observation on three different levels of communication within the institution and will discuss:

1. Swiss/Francophone culture or international culture of the working environment;
2. Corporate culture of the institution, its mission statement and code of conduct, and how institutions makes professionals converge to achievement of corporate goals;
3. Professional culture within the finance industry and how different profession communicate with each other, what specific concepts and vocabulary they use, and how once vocation may shape the working environment.

Students will assess the internship institution from the anthropological perspective by looking at the meaning/purpose that professionals give when working for institution.

Assignment 2 (5 points out of 10 points):

In this 600 word report, students will undertake three semi-structured interviews with professionals from the finance industry. The scope of this exercise is to learn about the ethical banking/sustainable finance from the experience and viewpoint of the professional working in the industry. Students will engage in discourse analysis, and will reflect about their own positionality and cognitive bias towards the knowledge they have acquired.

The semi-structured interview assessment is a free format exercise and depends on the industry in which the interviewee is working. Students prepare a list of questions that they use to conduct an interview.

Possible topics: Ethical banking and investment; sustainable development and finance, impact investment; circular and green economy; greenwashing and unethical financial practices; tax avoidance and money laundering; dirty money and black money; local and alternative currencies; block-chain technologies and digital currencies;

Discussion and Reflection Sessions (10%):

Discussion and reflection sessions take place on a weekly basis. Students are expected to discuss experiences in the internship, reflect on the professional learning process, and respond to any prompts assigned by the internship instructor. These discussion and reflection sessions are key elements for personal, academic, and professional development during the internship. Depending on the circumstances, these sessions may be held in person or virtually.

Internship Performance (35%):

This evaluation by the Academic Director assesses the student's internship experience, overall professional achievements, and self-growth.

Oral Presentation (10%):

In the presentation, you should provide a succinct and clear description of the internship experience, a brief history of the organization where you interned, the activities undertaken, and key insights gained that are related to the core program themes. You should demonstrate effective management of the discussion with the audience and attend to the aesthetic elements of the delivery.

Internship in Finance Final Paper (35%):

Students are expected to submit a 6'000-7'000 words long final paper at the end of their internship period (the bibliography, diary, and transcription of interviews in the appendix are not counted). 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 the activities accomplished, and strong and innovative aspects of the organization. The final paper must include thoughtfully articulated analytical writing that connects learning at the internship to the broader themes of the semester program and/or the investigation of one or more specific questions. 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. (Example at the end of syllabus.)

Assessment of the Internship

Progress Reports 10%

(Assignment 1 and Assignment 2)	
Discussion and Reflection Sessions	10%
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

Expectations and Policies

- Show up prepared, on time, and appropriately dressed for your internship. Comply with organization rules.
- Have progress report assignments completed on schedule and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions when in the field/office. Engage yourself in everyday life of the organization and initiate interaction.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (those of your internship supervisor and colleagues, classmates, lecturers, local constituents engaged with onsite 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 Student 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>.

RUBRIC: Internship Paper	
Category	Possible Considerations
Title / Acknowledgements / Abstract/Technical Aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The title is succinct and captures the essence of the internship experience -The acknowledgements are complete and professionally written -The abstract clearly summarizes the internship experience and learning outcomes -Table of contents, In-text citations, and reference list or bibliography are done correctly and completely -There are no mistakes in writing & grammar, spelling & punctuation -The paper is clean, legible, well-formatted, professional in appearance, and aesthetically pleasing
Contextualization and Organizational Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Important themes and background information are provided so reader understands the field in which the internship organization operates -The history and work of the internship organization, how its work relates to the program theme, and how it fits into the context of other similar organizations are all accurately described -The organizational structure, including division of responsibilities and the goals, objectives and activities of the organization are well elaborated -Care is taken not to harm by criticism, nor evaluate -The community served by the organization is described in sufficient detail
Internship Focus/Objectives/Justification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The paper specifies the focus area of the internship within the organization's broader work -The objectives of the internship are clearly presented and appropriate; how the objectives relate to the program theme and/or Critical Global Issue are clearly described. -The student's internship tasks/duties at the organization are presented and justified.
Information Acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -How information was gathered in order to compose the final internship paper is explained in a clear and accurate manner and supporting materials are included in appendices (if applicable) -A clear and complete description of the work undertaken is given, including dates and hours worked (put in an addendum).
Positionality and Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The paper acknowledges the intern's views, values, beliefs and other aspects of their personal background that influence their worldview. - The paper demonstrates ongoing self-reflection throughout the internship experience in relation to their positionality. -Human Subjects policies and ethical guidelines are adhered to and thoroughly discussed -Appropriate consideration is given to informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality of participants, in keeping with human subjects protocols and the LRB-approved internship learning agreement -The internship strengthens relationships and contributes to mutual trust between the author, the organization and its clientele in ways that are respectful, culturally appropriate, and collaborative -The internship project is responsive to host organization and/or host community needs, as applicable

Critical Reflection on Internship Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The description of tasks and responsibilities is clear. -The paper examines the extent to which objectives were achieved, how objectives changed or evolved over the course of the internship experience. -Key professional lessons learned through the internship experience are described with specific examples -A personal evaluation of performance in the internship is included with suggestions of how it could have been improved. -Ways in which student identity may have shaped their insights of the internship experience are described
Analysis of Critical Issues/Themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The manner in which the organization and its work are linked to the core themes of the program is described. -Analysis is given by comparing and contrasting the theory of the work/field studied throughout the semester with the practice of the work at the specific internship site. -Clear articulation of how the intern's knowledge and understanding of the core themes of the program were enhanced through the internship experience.
Conclusions & Recommendations for Future Interns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The main insights and lessons learned through the internship experience are detailed -Recommendations of opportunities or projects for future interns are described.
Effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Determinations of effort vary by program.