

## Internship & Seminar

ITRN 3000 ( 4 credits / 120 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:  
Vietnam: Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Internship

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

### Description

This seminar takes place in conjunction with a 5-week internship with a local community organization, research organization, sustainable social enterprise, and local or international NGO. The aim of an internship is to enable students to gain valuable experience and enhance their skills in an international internship environment. The internship should be related to the themes of the Vietnam: Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Internship program.

SIT will draw upon its extensive network to facilitate the internship placement process. SIT internships prioritize collaborative engagement/relationships with host communities and inclusive internship opportunities to better match student's interests with the internship placement. The internship placement and the student's internship activities, including the Internship Learning Agreement, must be approved by SIT's academic director. Time in the internship will include approximately 30 hours per week, in addition to regular reflection and assessment meetings held with the academic director or internship coordinator to review the progress of the internship and learning associated with the internship experience.

This internship provides students the opportunity to put into practice the theoretical material, methodologies, language abilities, and intercultural skills developed during previous coursework related to social sciences and in the Vietnam: Civil Society and Social Change thematic seminar that precedes the internship. Our experiential education model helps students develop self-confidence, deeper understanding of the challenges of putting theory into practice, as well as analytical clarity and cross-cultural sensitivity.

Successful completion of the internship involves active participation in weekly seminar activities, developing a focus project linking program theme(s) to internship learning experience, culminating in an internship paper and final presentation. 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 SIT program theme and its Critical Global Issue focus on Development and Inequality. The paper should also document a comprehensive schedule and the specific skills and knowledge acquired

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through the experience. Rubrics for the focus project paper and presentation will be shared with students.

## Learning Outcomes

The *Internship and Seminar* course comprises 150 - internship hours over five weeks at the internship site, plus 10 seminar hours before, during, and after the internship.

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

- Demonstrate awareness of the ethics of engaging in an internship in the context of Vietnam;
- Describe, analyze, and synthesize learning experience in the internship in the form of an internship paper;
- Articulate the output of the internship experience in the form of an oral presentation;
- Show understanding of Vietnam's diverse cultural identities, development and community concerns;
- Assess the challenges faced by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the context of Vietnam;
- Reflect critically on the challenges of carrying out an internship in a cross-cultural setting with limited language skills and in a short timeframe;
- Gain meaningful and practical experience in their chosen field.

## Language of Instruction

The internship seminar is taught in English but students will be exposed to Vietnamese language vocabulary related to the internship prior to the start of the internship. The internship language will be English or Vietnamese, depending on the student's language skills. All students are encouraged to use as much Vietnamese language as possible.

## Internship Requirements

### 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 (prior to the Internship)

During this module students will prepare for the internship and the writing of the internship paper, in meetings with the academic director, students' will reflect on the internship opportunities.

Additional seminar content will include:

1. Positionality and Internship Ethics/Awareness
  - a. Stereotypes and preconceptions about Vietnam
  - b. Students' lens – how have you been taught to understand Non-Governmental Organizations in international contexts, particularly in a developing country?
  - c. What are my motivations?
2. Introduction to Work Culture in Vietnam; differences from the US
3. Introduction to Internship – visit internship site and develop understanding of context and position in field/country
4. Ethics of Internships in Vietnam  
This is an opportunity to discuss and reflect on the ethics of engaging in an internship in international contexts in general and in Vietnam in particular.

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As a matter of policy, we will also discuss SIT's commitment to ethical engagement and reciprocity. 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.

Once internship placements are confirmed, the students, together with the academic director will review objectives for the internship and discuss expectations, learning agreements, timeframes and other logistics, structural components of the final internship paper, content, layout, and general guidelines. The Internship Learning Agreement is a graded component of the Vietnam: Human Development and Roles of Non-Governmental Organizations Seminar and serves as a foundation of the final internship paper.

*Required readings:*

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 (chapters 1-4)

Sasges, Gerard (2013). *It's a Living: Work and Life in Vietnam*. Singapore: National University of Singapore Press.

International NGO Partnership for Sustainable Development. December 2016, VUFO- NGO Resource Center, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, its website at [www.ngocentre.org.vn](http://www.ngocentre.org.vn)

**Module II: The Internship Experience: Review and Reflection (Weeks 3-6)**

During the seven weeks of the seminar students will focus on the review and reflection process of the internship experience. Students will keep an internship journal responding to the questions/issues listed below. Journaling should be done daily, keeping in mind the learning objectives of the internship. Two progress reports on their learning experience should be submitted.

Week 3 – First week at Internship site

Cultural observations: *How is the work environment different from what you are used to? What are you learning about working collaboratively in the internship context? How do you find yourself reacting to and adjusting to internship site practices that are different from what you are accustomed to? How does it feel to be in this environment? First Progress Report submitted.*

Week 4 – Second week at Internship site

Theory and Practice: Digging Deeper: *How does the work of your internship site connect to the community issues and NGO activities in Vietnam? How has the experience at your internship challenged or affirmed the arguments in a reading or lecture from the Vietnam: Civil Society seminar.*

Week 5 – Third week at Internship site

Skills and Experience: *What insights into this field have you gained through your internship? What skills are most valuable for this work and what opportunities have you had to improve yours 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? Second Progress Report submitted.*

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### Week 6 – Fourth week at Internship site

Learning Outcomes: *How much progress have you made toward your learning outcomes? 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?*

#### *Required Readings:*

*Articles specific to the issues addressed by the internship will be assigned once internship placement is determined.*

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 (chapters 5-11)

### **Module III: Processing and Maximizing the Internship Experience (Week 7)**

This module 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.

### Week 7 – Fifth week at Internship site

#### Talking About the Internship Experience

This session allows students to reflect on the internship experience and associated learning as part of a process that is safe and supportive. The internship may have been a different experience than expected, may challenge the student's expectations of working 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, of completing tasks, handing over projects to and sharing insights with colleagues on the job, 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 and Setting Plans for the Future

This final portion occurs in the final days of the program, as students plan their next steps, academically and professionally. Students discuss strategies for building on this experience in other work settings, opportunities for professional growth, and how to make optimal use of the internship experience.

4. How to Include Your Internship on Your Résumé
5. Next Steps

#### *Required Readings:*

*Articles to be assigned upon arrival in India once internship placement is determined.*

#### *Recommended Readings:*

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 (chapters 12-14)

### **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,

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and adherence to the highest ethical standards.

### ***Description of Assignments***

#### **Internship Learning Agreement**

The Internship Learning Agreement is developed by students to establish key learning goals and themes in advance of the internship. The academic director or internship coordinator will work with students to prepare the learning agreement. The Learning Agreement is reviewed but not given a grade.

#### **Internship Journal**

Students are expected to keep an internship journal. This can be an online journal in which they document their everyday internship experience and reflect on their professional achievements in the internship. The work journal is reviewed but not given a grade.

#### **Discussion and Reflection Sessions (10%)**

Discussion and reflection sessions take place on a weekly basis. Students are expected to share their personal experience in the internship and reflect on the professional learning process. These discussion and reflection sessions are key elements in the process of the learning experience and the student's professional achievements within the host organization.

#### **2 Progress Reports (10%)**

The progress report should document the progress of the student's professional and personal learning during the internship. Students document aspects of 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, after weeks one and three of the internship.

#### **Internship Performance (35%)**

This evaluation by the academic director or internship supervisor, in conjunction with an on-site internship supervisor, assesses the student's internship experience, overall professional achievements, and self-growth. The Internship Learning Agreement forms a foundation on which to evaluate internship performance, including adaptability to evolving internship circumstances.

#### **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, and the work undertaken. You should demonstrate effective management of the discussion with the audience and attend to the aesthetic elements of the delivery.

**Final Paper: NGOs Internship and Community Reflection Paper (35%)** 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 the work accomplished, and strong and innovative aspects of the organization. The paper should be well written, well organized, and aesthetically pleasing. This paper, submitted with the thematic seminar reflection paper at the end of the program, constitutes the culmination of written work for the civil society internship program.

#### **Assessment of the Internship**

Discussion and Reflection Sessions	10%
2 Progress Reports	10%

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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 work journal and 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](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>.

<b>RUBRIC: Internship Paper</b>	
<b>Category</b>	<b>Possible Considerations</b>
<b>Title / Acknowledgements / Abstract/Technical Aspects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The title is succinct and captures the essence of the internship experience</li> <li>-The acknowledgements are complete and professionally written</li> <li>-The abstract clearly summarizes the internship experience and learning outcomes</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Table of contents, In-text citations, and reference list or bibliography are done correctly and completely</li> <li>-There are no mistakes in writing &amp; grammar, spelling &amp; punctuation</li> <li>-The paper is clean, legible, well-formatted, professional in appearance, and aesthetically pleasing</li> </ul>
<b>Contextualization and Organizational Profile</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Important themes and background information are provided so reader understands the field in which the internship organization operates</li> <li>-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</li> <li>-The organizational structure, including division of responsibilities and the goals, objectives and activities of the organization are well elaborated</li> <li>-Care is taken not to harm by criticism, nor evaluate</li> <li>-The community served by the organization is described in sufficient detail</li> </ul>
<b>Internship Focus/Objectives/Justification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The paper specifies the focus area of the internship within the organization's broader work</li> <li>-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.</li> <li>-The student's internship tasks/duties at the organization are presented and justified.</li> </ul>
<b>Information Acquisition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-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)</li> <li>-A clear and complete description of the work undertaken is given, including dates and hours worked (put in an addendum).</li> </ul>
<b>Positionality and Ethics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The paper acknowledges the intern's views, values, beliefs and other aspects of their personal background that influence their worldview.</li> <li>- The paper demonstrates ongoing self-reflection throughout the internship experience in relation to their positionality.</li> <li>-Human Subjects policies and ethical guidelines are adhered to and thoroughly discussed</li> <li>-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</li> <li>-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</li> <li>-The internship project is responsive to host organization and/or host community needs, as applicable</li> </ul>
<b>Critical Reflection on Internship Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The description of tasks and responsibilities is clear.</li> <li>-The paper examines the extent to which objectives were achieved, how objectives changed or evolved over the course of the internship experience.</li> <li>-Key professional lessons learned through the internship experience are described with specific examples</li> <li>-A personal evaluation of performance in the internship is included with suggestions of how it could have been improved.</li> <li>-Ways in which student identity may have shaped their insights of the internship experience are described</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Analysis of Critical Issues/Themes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The manner in which the organization and its work are linked to the core themes of the program is described.</li> <li>-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.</li> <li>-Clear articulation of how the intern's knowledge and understanding of the core themes of the program were enhanced through the internship experience.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Conclusions &amp; Recommendations for Future Interns</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The main insights and lessons learned through the internship experience are detailed</li> <li>-Recommendations of opportunities or projects for future interns are described.</li> </ul>

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