



## Research Methods and Ethics

ANTH 3500 (3 Credits / 45 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:  
Australia: Sustainability and Environmental Action

**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

Research Methods and Ethics (RME) provides conceptual preparation and skill development for all other program components. Beginning with sessions during orientation week, and continuing throughout the semester, Research Methods and Ethics provides the skills and fosters the ability to observe, interpret, and appropriately function within the Australian environment. This is initially done through a series of discussions designed to break down stereotypes and sensitize students to the values assigned to behaviors and customs based on each individual's cultural heritage. Later, lectures, projects and discussions will focus on various methods of field research to prepare students for the Independent Study Project (ISP) or Internship. Most classes are taken by both ISP and Internship students but as the course progresses some classes focus on just one stream.

The Course is divided into five modules:

1. Cultural Comparison
2. Introduction to the Independent Study Project/Internship
3. Research Methods & Ethics
4. Developing a Proposal
5. Writing a research /internship paper

### Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Recognize a wide range of field study methods and their appropriate uses;
- Compare Australian and North American cultures;
- Apply an appropriate selection of research methods to a specific topic;
- Employ cultural sensitivity and an appropriate ethical stance in field study / internship;

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- Appraise previous research and literature on a topic of interest and reference it appropriately;
- Design an independent study project or organize an internship and write a project proposal;
- Demonstrate increased confidence to engage with another culture.

## Language of Instruction

This course is taught in English.

## Course 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.**

### Week 1: Cultural comparisons (5 hours)

Discussions: How to minimize environmental and social impact while studying in Australia  
Cultural stereotypes and expectations of Australians  
Australians' stereotypes and expectations of Americans

Lectures: Preparing for homestays: expectations and cultural practices in Australian homes

#### Required Reading:

Howitt, R. & Stevens, S. (2005). Cross-cultural research: Ethics, methods, and relationships. Chapter 3 in I. Hay (Ed.), *Qualitative research methods in Human Geography*.

### Week 2: Preparing for the ISP / Internship (10 hours)

Lectures: What is an ISP or Internship?  
Expectations of Advisors and Internship Supervisors  
Keeping a Work Journal  
Developing ISP topics / Organizing and applying for an internship  
Social Science report writing  
APA referencing and plagiarism

#### Required Readings:

Rogers, Z. & Bragg, E. (2012). The power of connection: Sustainable lifestyles and sense of place. *Ecopsychology*, 4 (4), 307-318. doi: 10.1089/eco.2012.0079

Hay, I. (2002). Referencing and Language Matters. In I. Hay (Ed.) *Communicating in Geography and the Environmental Sciences*. Second Edition. Pp195-200. South Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

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 2 and 3)

### Week 3: Research methods (12 hours)

Lectures: Introduction to research methods  
The Interview Process  
Sampling a Population  
Developing and conducting a survey  
Indirect and Observational Methods of Data Collection  
Participant Observation  
Content Analysis  
Analyzing and displaying data

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Discussion: Homestay: Cultural differences, sense of place, environmental ethics

Required Readings:

- McGuirk, P. & Stevens, S. (2005). Using questionnaires in qualitative Human Geography. Chapter 10, in  
Iain Hay, (Ed.), *Qualitative research methods in Human Geography*. Second Edition. South Melbourne:  
Oxford University Press.
- True, J. (1989). Indirect and observational methods of data collection. Chapter 5 in J. True, *Finding Out:  
Conducting and evaluating social research*. Second Edition. Belmont: Wadsworth.
- Hay, Iain. (2002). Communicating with figures and tables. Chapter 6 in Iain Hay, *Communicating in  
Geography and the Environmental Sciences*. Second Edition. South Melbourne: Oxford University  
Press.
- Lockie, S. (2006). Capturing the sustainability agenda: Organic foods and media discourses on food scares,  
environment, genetic engineering, and health. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 23, 313–323. DOI  
10.1007/s10460-006-9007-3

**Week 4: Research ethics and techniques (6 hours)**

Lectures: Research Ethics  
Library Skills  
Writing a good title

**Week 8: Writing a Proposal (5 hours)**

Lectures: Proposal Writing  
Reviewing the Literature  
Referencing

**Week 9: Presenting Research (5 hours)**

Lectures: Writing an Abstract  
Report Writing  
Giving an Oral Presentation

Required Reading:

Hay, Iain. (2002). Preparing and giving a talk. Chapter 8 in Iain Hay, *Communicating in Geography and the  
Environmental Sciences*. Second Edition. South Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Exam

**Week 15: Cultural Reflection (2 hours)**

Discussion: What have we learnt about culture, the USA, and us?

**Evaluation and Grading Criteria**

Assessment:

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>I. ISP/Internship Proposals</b>                                   |            |
| <b>Topic ideas</b>   | <b>5%</b>  |
| <b>Topic and Methods</b>   | <b>10%</b> |
| <b>ISP Proposal/Internship Learning Agreement</b>                    | <b>20%</b> |
| <b>2. Choose 2 of the following 4 exercises in research methods:</b> | <b>20%</b> |
| 2a. Intensive Interviewing Exercise                                  |            |
| 2b. Content Analysis Exercise  |            |
| 2c. Observation Exercise   |            |
| 2d. Survey Exercise  |            |

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<b>3. Work Journal</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>4. Participation</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>5. Open- book Exam</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>6. Reflection on the ISP / Internship process</b>	<b>5%</b>

#### 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

#### Requirements

Detailed descriptions of the above assignments along with the grading criteria for each are contained in the program handbook.

You are expected to attend and fully participate in all class sessions. You must submit all assigned work to get a passing grade. You must get a grade of D or above for each assignment in order to get a passing grade for the class. You should familiarize yourself with the policies on academic integrity, ethics, academic warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment, and the academic appeals process that are contained in the SIT Study Abroad Student Handbook. Breaches of academic integrity such as cheating and deliberate plagiarism will result in severe penalties. Assignments must be properly referenced using the APA system. See the grading policy in the appendices of the program handbook.

#### *Participation Grade:*

This element will comprise 10% of your Research Methods and Ethics grade. The objective of this element of assessment is to give students credit for the ability and the effort made to independently undertake the Study Project in an ethical and culturally appropriate manner, and the effort made to engage Australian culture throughout the semester. Students will be graded based on what the AD has observed, what has been reported by the ISP advisor and homestay family, and the evidence contained in the ISP journal and report. The following will be considered in determining the grade:

- Did you take steps to engage Australian culture away from the group?
- Did you make the most of the opportunities for cultural immersion offered by your homestay?
- To what extent did you use initiative in developing an ISP topic / Internship and establishing contacts in a timely manner?
- Did you maintain an appropriate attitude throughout the process (e.g. did you accept the limitations placed by SIT on ISP topics / Internships? Did you deal well with adversity during the ISP/Internship process? Did you display cultural sensitivity when necessary? Did you follow the ethics guidelines?)
- Did you turn up on time for all classes and ISP/Internship appointments?
- Did you fill out the ethics and contact forms correctly and submit them on time?
- Did you put the appropriate amount of effort into the ISP/ Internship?
- Did you put the interests of the people studied and worked with before your own and give proper acknowledgement and thanks to all who helped? Did you provide the organization you worked with a copy of the paper and any data needed from the ISP/Internship?

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- Did you keep the required contact with program staff during the ISP/Internship, submit all information on time and keep them informed of your whereabouts?
- Did you fulfill your obligations to your SIT advisor?

### **Expectations and Policies**

Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.

Have assignments completed on schedule, and submitted according to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.

Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).

**Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad 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>.

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