

Public Health Research Methods and Ethics

IPBH 3500 (3 credits/45 class hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:
Argentina: Public Health in Urban Environments

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

The Research Methods and Ethics seminar (RME) introduces students to the conceptual and practical tools for gathering primary data and the knowledge and skills that are essential to forming constructive relationships with organizations and/or individuals, which are necessary for completing an academic project in the cultural context of Argentina. In particular, the course enhances students' skills at building rapport; initiating purposeful dialogue in the cultural context of Argentina; gathering, recording, and analyzing primary data; and writing a scholarly academic report. The course also pays particular attention to local and US higher education ethical considerations that guide primary data collection and how these could be translated within the local cultural context of Argentina and Public Health. Broadly, the seminar introduces students to both qualitative and quantitative approaches of social science field research.

The main emphasis of the seminar is on the development of empirical tools and ethics of interactive research skills involving the collection of primary data in different settings. The seminar includes lectures and discussions on the meaning and practice of experiential learning and student's positionality as researchers or interns in a study abroad context. Methodological contents prepare students for developing a research or internship proposal using qualitative methods of research in social sciences applied to Public Health area. Ethical contents provide them the information and knowledge necessary for their application for ethical review of their proposals and to conduct their work according to ethical rules. All students will participate in an overview of research design and methodological approaches to program themes. The overall aim is to help students hone their experience-based learning processes and prepare them for the development of an Independent Study Project (ISP) or an internship at a local organization.

Learning Outcomes

The Research Methods and Ethics course comprises 45 hours. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Show an acute sense of positionality and perspective and operate independently, using cultural sensitivity, language skills, and local networks of trust built over the course of the semester;
- Demonstrate awareness of appropriate methods and ethics used in field research in the critical global issue of Public Health or demonstrate awareness of the ethics of internship in the context of Argentina;
- Analyze and process primary data gathered in the field and draw valid and ethical interpretations and conclusions;
- Produce an Independent Study Project proposal that is in strict observance of ethical academic standards and local values and that includes a research question, sample review of the relevant literature, outline of the research methods, and anticipated ethical challenges and ways of addressing them or an Internship Proposal that includes a description of the host organization, learning objectives, a sample review of literature on the area of the organization's action, an outline of tasks that will be performed, a proposed work timetable, and projected outcomes such as a paper or business plan.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in Spanish and students will be exposed to vocabulary related to course content through in-country expert lectures and field visits to a wide range of venues and regional locales.

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 1: Experiential Learning and Positionality in Field-Based Research

This introductory module is designed to introduce students to field-based research or internship experience in a study abroad context. Students learn how to relate to local communities and individuals. Most particularly, this module allows students to discover the power of experiential learning and use it as a tool to connect to local communities and individuals and develop into reflexive researchers who are attentive to their own positionality in relation to the local communities in which they engage for their research or internship.

Session 1: The scientific research and cultural context: developing cross-cultural competences. The observation as a research strategy, different types of observations. The use of D.I.E method for cultural observation and registration in a journal

Required Readings:

- SIT Study Abroad (2018). Manual de Métodos de Investigación y Ética en Salud Pública. Programa Salud Pública en Ambientes Urbanos. Capítulo 1. "Registro y observación cultural"

Module 2: Introduction to the ISP and Internship

This module will describe the ISP and internship processes and help students brainstorm ideas and set goals for their ISP or internship. The module will include a review and critique of past ISP and/or internship papers.

Session 1: The general presentation of ISP and Internship will be followed by small group sessions.

After completing Modules 2, session 1, students will split into groups by ISP or internship.

ISP track

Session 2a: The health research agenda. The local and the global health agenda. Links between the health agenda, research and public policies. The process of choosing a topic; presentation and brief analysis of samples of selected thematic areas. The ISP proposal: steps in the elaboration of the proposal. ISP: Group discussion with program staff mentors.

Required Readings:

- SIT Study Abroad (2018). Manual de Métodos de Investigación y Ética en Salud Pública. Programa Salud Pública en Ambientes Urbanos. Capítulo II. "Introducción al ISP" y Capítulo III. "Diseño de Investigación: una mirada general"

Module 3a: Research Methods in Public Health

This module focuses on the tools and methods required for elaborating a research proposal and conducting a quantitative and/or qualitative field research. The Independent Study Project (ISP): Research theme, problem and the research question. Bibliographic notes and citation. Bibliographic review and conceptual framework. Exploring health data basis. The conceptual framework

Session 1: Defining the research topic and research problem. From Topics to questions, from question to problems. Orientations for Bibliographic review assignment.

Session 2: Workshop – Examining advances on the bibliographic review. Re-examining topic definition in the light of bibliographic review, identifying possible questions and problems. ISP project objectives.

Session 3: Workshop – Examining advances on the problem and objectives definition. The conceptual framework elaboration process: bibliographic notes and APA citation form.

Session 4: Workshop- Examining advances on building the conceptual framework: identifying key concepts and the conceptual framework as a network of key concepts.

Session 5: Individual meeting with Seminar professors.

Required readings

- SIT Study Abroad (2018). Manual de Métodos de Investigación y Ética en Salud Pública. Programa Salud Pública en Ambientes Urbanos. Capítulo IV. Definición del tema y el problema de investigación, Capítulo V. Hacia la construcción del Marco

Teórico-Conceptual, Capítulo VI. La estrategia metodológica y Capítulo VIII: La propuesta de investigación

Further Reading

- Quivy, R. y L. Van Campenhoudt (2000). Primera Etapa (La pregunta Inicial), Segunda Etapa (La exploración), Tercera Etapa (La problemática) y Quinta Etapa (La Observación). In Manual de investigación en ciencias sociales (pp. 25-99). México D.F.: Limusa.

Module 4a: Ethics in public health research and standard processes for ethical conduct

Ethical issues involved in scientific research in general and in the work in health field in particular. The historical development of ethics in scientific research. Basic concepts of informed consent, privacy, confidentiality, damage are analyzed in the light of practical experience in research in the field of health. Exploring institutional norms, issues of language, and expectations for ethical behavior while conducting research. The role of the Research Ethics Committee. Codes of ethics and institutional policies.

Session 1: The historical development of ethics in scientific research. Basic concepts of informed consent, privacy and confidentiality of information. Ethical dilemmas. Applying theory to the resolution of ethical dilemmas in the field.

Session 2: The role of the *Research Ethics Committee*. Discussion with members of an institutional Research Ethics Committee. Submitting the ISP proposal to the local Methodology and Ethics Review Board.

Required readings

- SIT Study Abroad (2018). Manual de Métodos de Investigación y Ética en Salud Pública. Programa Salud Pública en Ambientes Urbanos. Capítulo VIII: La Propuesta de Investigación
- Corrine Glesne, (2005). *Becoming Qualitative Researchers. An Introduction*. Boston, Pearson, 3rd Edition. Chapter 6.

Module 5a: ISP in the Context of Argentina – The ISP Proposal

This module prepares the student for the ISP experience. It examines work-based norms and practices related to conducting research in Argentina. The module highlights the importance of applied methodology in the ISP experience and the expectations and responsibilities of the student. Based on learning and engagement in the preceding course modules, this module focuses on ISP final proposal development and guides students through the development of the Human Subjects Review (HSR) application. This critical phase in the course involves both large student group meetings and individual student meetings with the academic director, ISP program coordinator and the ISP advisor.

Session 1: ISP proposal draft review and final orientations for submitting it to the Local Methodology and Ethic Review Board.

Session 2: Guided work in the ISP final proposal

Session 3: Meeting with ISP Advisors: the ISP in the context of Argentina and the advisor's role.

Required Readings:

- SIT Study Abroad (2018). Manual de Métodos de Investigación y Ética en Salud Pública. Programa Salud Pública en Ambientes Urbanos. Capítulo VIII: La Propuesta de Investigación

Module 6a: The research process: applying research methods and techniques.

The research process is analyzed through a practical case. Defining a topic and research objectives, building the conceptual framework, collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative information. Research methods in the field. Data base design and the analysis of basic statistical measures. Analysis of qualitative information. Writing the research report and presenting research results. Students will also review the ISP assessment rubric.

Session 1: Reviewing the research process steps and the ISP assessment rubric. The analysis of qualitative information.

Session 2: Data base design and the analysis of basic statistical measures (optional).

Session 3: Writing the research report and presenting research results

Required readings

- SIT Study Abroad (2018). Manual de Métodos de Investigación y Ética en Salud Pública. Programa Salud Pública en Ambientes Urbanos, Capítulo IX: Análisis de los datos para tu ISP

Further Readings

- Quivy, R. y L. Van Campenhoudt (2000). Sexta Etapa (En Análisis de la Información), Séptima Etapa (Las Conclusiones) In Manual de investigación en ciencias sociales (pp. 203-236). México D.F.: Limusa.

Internship Track

Session 2b: Internship: Requirements and characteristics. The Internship as a learning experience. The professional practice. Introduction to the Internship placement process. General description of host institutions and their scope of action. The session walks the student through host institutions' information sheets, the nature of the services offered, and a profile of the customers who use them. This will help students to make an informed preliminary selection of the institution they would like to intern with.

Required Reading:

- SIT Study Abroad (2018). Manual de Pasantía y Ética en el Trabajo en el Campo de la Salud Pública. Programa Salud Pública en Ambientes Urbanos. Chapter II: "Introducción a la Pasantía"
- SIT Study Abroad (2018). Manual de Pasantía y Ética en el Trabajo en el Campo de la Salud Pública. Programa Salud Pública en Ambientes Urbanos.) Chapter III: "Proceso de postulación y elaboración del plan de trabajo de la pasantía".

Module 3b: Working in an international context: Preparing for the Internship Experience.

This module prepares the student for the internship experience. It focuses on ways of processing and articulating the internship in an international context, and particularly in the context of Argentina and public health area of work. Orientations for making the most out of the experience personally, academically, and professionally. The module also examines work-based norms and practices related to internships in Argentina.

Session 1: The Internship as “Experiential Learning”: What is *experiential learning*? *Reflective Practicum*. Challenges, fears and expectations. Practice in professional training.

Session 2: The Internship Organization’s Scope of Action (I): The internship organizations’ scope of action on public health, and its current challenges.

Session 3: The Internship Organization’s Scope of Action (II). Planning the Internship: confirmation of internship placement. Focus of interest within the organization’s scope of action.

Session 4: The Internship Application Process and learning goals.

Required Reading:

- Cassís Larraín, Adad José (2011), "Donald Schon: na práctica profesional reflexiva en la universidad", *Compas Empresarial*, Volumen 3, número 5, 2011.
- SIT Study Abroad (2018). *Manual de Pasantía y Ética en el Trabajo en el Campo de la Salud Pública*. Programa Salud Pública en Ambientes Urbanos. Chapter III: “Proceso de postulación y elaboración del plan de trabajo de la pasantía”.

Further Readings

- Sweitzer, Frederick H and King, Mary A (2014). *The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional, and Civic Development in Experiential Learning*, Chapter 2: Framing The experience & Chapter 10: (selected pages: pp. 281-286).
- Recommended Readings by Internship host institutions.

Module 4b: Admission to the internship organization and the internship experience.

This module will focus on how to prepare for internship admission process and for the internship work experience. We will meet an institutional supervisor and discuss tips and strategies for the admission interview and orientations to perform internship activities in the institutional context. Discussion on the best ways to articulate student’s learning objectives with the institution’s proposed activities for the internship. Final orientations for the Internship Proposal.

Session 1: The admission interview and the institutional supervisor’s role; preparing for the admission interview.

Session 2: Individual meetings with program’s Internship coordinator to discuss the intern’s work plan progress.

Module 5b: Ethics in public health and standard processes for ethical conduct

This module prepares the student to identify and address ethical issues relevant in the practice of public health. The historical development of ethics in scientific research and the public health practice. Basic concepts of informed consent, privacy, confidentiality, damage are analyzed in the light of practical experience in in the field of public health. Exploring institutional norms,

issues of language, student responsibilities and expectations for ethical behavior while working in an institution. The role of the Research Ethics Committee. Codes of ethics and institutional policies.

Session 1: The ethics in participating in an internship in Argentina. basic ethics principles and norms: recognizing ethical issues and addressing ethical challenges.

Session 2: Discussion with a member of an institutional Research Ethics Committee

Required Readings:

- SIT Study Abroad (2018). Manual de Pasantía y Ética en el Trabajo en el Campo de la Salud Pública. Programa Salud Pública en Ambientes Urbanos. Capítulo IV: “Ética en el trabajo en el campo social y de salud”.

Modulo 6b: The Internship work process: applying methods and skills

Applying research methods to attain internship learning objectives. Discussion on the best way to articulate student’s Internship Proposal with the institution’s proposed activities. Final orientations for the Internship Proposal and experience.

Session 1: The use of research methods in the internship learning experience (observation, observation-participant and interview). How to organize your work during the internship period? How to register your information and activities for your final report?

Session 2: Individual meetings with program’s Internship coordinator to discuss the Internship Proposal elaboration progress.

Required Reading:

- SIT Study Abroad (2018). Manual de Pasantía y Ética en el Trabajo en el Campo de la Salud Pública. Programa Salud Pública en Ambientes Urbanos Capítulo V. “El trabajo de pasantía: registro del proceso de trabajo e informes” (Work Journal sección)
- SIT Study Abroad (2018). Manual de Pasantía y Ética en el Trabajo en el Campo de la Salud Pública. Programa Salud Pública en Ambientes Urbanos. Capítulo VI. “Metodología de trabajo en la experiencia de pasantía”

Further Readings

- Sweitzer, Frederick H and King, Mary A (2014). The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional, and Civic Development in Experiential Learning", Chapter 3: Internship Essentials: Tools for Staying engaged.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Description of Assignments:

Assignment I: Practice Interview

Students are asked to conduct a practice interview with professionals working in their area if interest. They are asked to write a small reflection (2-3 pages) about their role and attitude

towards their research subjects and the skills they brought to the interview to establish an ethical and safe environment for the interviewee. Students are also encouraged to explore how their own positionality along the lines of gender, sexuality, race, and class affected the set-up and wording of their questionnaire and consequently the outcome of the interview.

Assignment II: Literature Review

The skills developed in the assignment aim to prepare students to approach to the state of art of the selected health area of study/work and to understand the context in which they are going carry out their Independent Study Project or internship.

Field Work Journal

Students are expected to keep a work journal where they will document thoroughly all the activities and assignments carried out during the course. This will also continue during the Independent Study Project or the internship period. The work journal is submitted for review and evaluation during the course of the semester.

Research/Internship Proposal

All students must develop a research or internship proposal. The research proposal should address a theme related to the program, include research question and objectives, theoretical framework, methodology, and comply with the ethical standards learned throughout the course. The internship proposal should include the objectives to be achieved during the internship period, a justification of the work and the organization selected, skills or areas in which the student can contribute to the work of the host organization, and an outline of the work plan to be carried out.

Participation

All students are expected to prepare for classes, attend and participate in all lectures, class discussions, field activities, and carry out all assignments and other activities prepared in the context of the Research Methods and Ethics course.

Assessment:

Practice Interview	15%
Assignment II	15%
Field Work Journal	20%
Research/Internship Proposal	40%
Participation	10%

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

Research: If the research has been funded by a U.S. government agency, or if the student plans to take this research back to the home school or community for further dissemination, then the student may be required to follow standards from their home institutions in addition to the Local Review Board and those of the Office for Human Research Protections, with which SIT is registered. For applications that require a full review, the academic director will forward any questions or concerns that cannot be resolved at the program level (through the Local Review Board) to SIT's Institutional Review Board.

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, printed, and done according to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (those of classmates, lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits, etc.). 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 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>.