Independent Study Project
ISPR-3000 (4 Credits / 120 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.

Course Description
The Independent Study Project (ISP) provides an opportunity for in-depth study of a topic that the student finds of particular academic interest. The student prepares an extensive research proposal based on their topic of interest. Once the research is approved by the academic director and the Local Review Board, the student conducts field research with guidance from their ISP Advisor. ISP advisors are available to students during each stage of the research process. Students prepare an extensive paper with the results of their research and give a formal oral presentation in Spanish.

Course Objectives
The objectives of the ISP course are to:
- Introduce students to the concept of scientific method and research question formulation
- Enable students to convert their academic inquisitiveness into meaningful field research and results
- Allow students to engage in and conduct original research
- Provide students the opportunity to put into practice the theoretical material, methodologies, language abilities, and intercultural skills acquired during the course of the semester.
- Put forth to students the ethical implications of conducting field research and the necessary preparative processes having to do with consent and the Local and Institutional Review Boards

Expected Learning Outcomes
By the end of the course, students should have attained the following:
- Competence in the processes of designing, executing, analyzing, and interpreting primary research
- Comprehensive knowledge of a specific academic topic having to do with urban public health in Argentina
- Understanding of the ethical parameters involved in conducting public health research particularly in a developing world context

Course Requirements
Students spend a minimum of 120 field hours (equivalent to 60 classroom hours) on this course. These hours are documented in the ISP field journal.

All ISP topics must be approved by the academic director. Topic approval is based on validity, viability, safety, ethics, cultural appropriateness, and potential to contribute meaningfully to the community.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria
Timely completion of all assignments is expected. Late hand-ins will be penalized. All assignments are evaluated according to organization, analytical quality, depth of understanding, and substantiation of arguments.

Written paper	60%
Oral presentation	20%
ISP field work journal	20%

Written paper
1) Content
The content of the report should be coherent with the research question, the methodology used, and the conclusion. Adequate use of primary and secondary sources. Evidence of effort made in the search of information and the quality of it.
Quality and size of the bibliography used.

2) Technical
Organization and inclusion of all the criteria asked for the report. Well use of written language, grammar, orthography, and quoting. Technical aspects are equally relevant in the case of Spanish and English. Therefore, it is strongly suggested that students who choose to write the ISP in Spanish make use of the corresponding tutoring.

Oral Presentation
1) Presentation
Clarity, adequate use of audiovisual support, level of enthusiasm, and capacity to keep the audience interested and participative.

2) Organization
Clear logic. Effective use of time. Effort made in the preparation and organization of information.

3) Questions and Answers
Clarity in the answers given after the presentation.

4) Assistance and support
Assistance and support to other students' presentation will be graded as well as participation in other presentations through questions and comments that show interest in others students' ISPs.

Field work journal
1) Organization

Clear organization of information. There is a clear criteria of organization that is legible and understandable for the AD or other person that should read the report. Guidelines suggested in the handbook are followed.

2) Quality of the information
The report includes information collected in the interviews, bibliographic record cards, observations of the Field Journal. Information is not only descriptive but there are also analytical elements.

3) Good use of time
It is possible to see the use of time through the Field Journal completed during the ISP period. The Journal shows commitment and organization. There should be a plan/Schedule that is followed.

Grading Scale: The grading scale for all classes is as follows:

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

Grading Criteria
All grades assigned will take into account the student's special circumstances and challenges they face as foreign students. An "A" grade for an assignment entails superior (not just "very good") performance in terms of structure and organization of assignments, analysis, logical argumentation and consistency, and the provision of factual, numerical and/or historical evidence. In terms of Class Participation, an "A" grade refers to punctuality, attentive listening and active engagement in all lectures, discussions, field trips and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior. The level, frequency, and quality of the student's participation will be monitored and taken into account.

Student research (Independent Study Project) is a product of field work and as such students have an obligation to assess both the positive and negative consequences of their field study. Ethical field work, as stipulated in the SIT Statement of Ethics, results in products that are shared with local and academic communities; therefore copies of ISPs are returned to the sponsoring institutions and the host communities, at the discretion of the institution(s) and/or community involved. World Learning/SIT Study Abroad may archive, copy, or convert the ISP for non-commercial use, for preservation purposes, and to ensure future accessibility. World Learning/SIT Study Abroad may archive ISPs in the permanent collection at the SIT Study Abroad local country program office and/or at any World Learning office. World Learning/SIT Study Abroad has a non-exclusive, perpetual right to store and make available, including electronic online open access, to the ISP. Students retain all ownership rights of the ISP product and retain the right to use all, or part, of my project in future works. Please refer to the Student Handbook or the Access, Use, and Publication of ISP form.

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.

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.