



Independent Study Project

ISPR 3000 (4 Credits / 120 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:

Chile: Public Health, Traditional Medicine, and Community Empowerment

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

One of the most important parts of the cross-cultural learning process is the Independent Study Project (ISP). The ISP offers students the opportunity to undertake a specific and individualized independent field study project. Students may choose to incorporate a guided practicum experience into the project as well. The ISP provides access to material and human resources in Chile and facilitates greater understanding through further immersion into the host culture. Orientation, Spanish language training, homestays, excursions, and the academic seminars provide the information, resources, and additional skills training for the study. The direction and monitoring of the students during the ISP phase includes methods of learning as well as progress towards the finished project. The final paper, in turn, provides the material evidence of the capability of applying methodological approaches to field-based research and in synthesizing experiences in the host culture.

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 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 Chile
- Understanding of the ethical parameters involved in conducting public health research particularly in a developing world context

Course Requirements

The project should be based on field study and designed to take advantage of the unique human and material resources available in Chile. To help determine the appropriateness of your preliminary proposal, you should ask yourself the following questions:

1. Could this project be done in the US? (If so, inappropriate topic)
2. Does this project require extensive library research? (If so, inappropriate topic)
3. Can I reasonably expect to complete this project in the actual ISP period (actual study period = 1 month) given the limitations of time, transportation, linguistic problems, access to resources, and costs? (If not, inappropriate topic)
4. Will this project involve me in extensive contact with Chileans/Mapuche/Aymara and their cultures? (If so, possibly an appropriate topic)
5. Could this project yield interesting, specific insight into some aspect of Chilean culture as well as new learning skills? (If so, possibly an appropriate topic)

Student Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Project Requirements

- Satisfactory completion of Research Methods and Ethics (RME)
- A majority of the ISP work conducted in the field (as opposed to libraries e.g.)
- At least 120 hours of work for a four credit ISP project
- Periodic progress conferences held with the academic directors
- A final project in the form of a major paper or material project (e.g. a portfolio of drawings, a photographic essay, weavings, etc.)
- A well prepared 20-minute oral presentation on the ISP to the program group at the final evaluation session.

Student Assessment:

Of major importance is the demonstration of synthesis of the various components of the SIT Chile program. In addition, the project should contribute to a greater understanding of some aspects of a Chilean Health topic or Mapuche or Aymara reality. The quality of the oral presentation given at the final evaluation will form an important part of the final ISP grade as will the quality of the finished ISP. The paper's structure and mechanics also will be given serious consideration.

Written Paper	65%
Oral Presentation	25%
Advisor Evaluation of Project	10%

Further student assessment will take the following criteria into account:

- Productive and appropriate use of 120 hours dedicated to the completion of the ISP;
- Demonstration of increased depth of understanding, analytical clarity, and cross-cultural sensitivity;
- Demonstration of the implementation of techniques learned in RME

- Accuracy of information
- Use of a diversity of primary sources of information (especially people)
- Use of library resources to analyze information from primary sources
- Effective oral and written presentations of the project
- Written evaluation of the project by a Chilean Project Director/Advisor
- Successfully meeting the ISP deadline

Grading Scales and Criteria

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

Please see the SIT Study Abroad Student Handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, academic warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment, and the academic appeals process.

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Please Note: Course contents, lecturers, and readings may be modified as needed. Should any change of class topics or lecturers be necessary, students will be promptly notified.

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.