

Internship and Seminar

ITRN 3000 (4 credits / 120 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:
SIT Study Abroad Cameroon: Development and Social Change

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

This seminar consists of a four-week internship with a Cameroon-based local NGO, research organization, or international NGO. The goal of the internship is to enable students to gain valuable learning experience and enhance their professional skills in an international setting. The internship contributes to the student's experiential learning and is not a paid activity. SIT has a long and established partnership with local civil society and international organizations in Cameroon. Each student is expected to choose an organization identified by the academic director as suitable, and satisfying the program's requirements. A list of approved organizations will be made available to students upon their arrival but they can also choose an organization with no established partnership with the program, granted approval from the academic director. Regular reflection and assessment sessions will be held with the academic director to review the progress of the internship, and the learning process associated with the internship experience. Students will complete their internship and submit a final paper. In the final paper, students will process their learning experience, analyze an important organizational issue, as well as their experience and observations, as related to the program theme. The final paper and presentation will demonstrate how the students' goals are achieved, how their experience links to the program theme and how the student intends to apply these skills and knowledge upon return to the United States.

Learning Outcomes

The Internship and Seminar course comprises 4 credits and 120 hours. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate awareness of the internship ethics in the context of Cameroon;
- Show understanding of the role of civil society in Cameroon;
- Gain meaningful and practical professional experience in their chosen field;
- Present, analyze, and synthesize their learning experience during the internship in the form of a final paper and an oral presentation; and
- Assess the challenges of civil society organizations in a society in transition such as Cameroon.

During the internship month students are required to attend four reflection sessions. These sessions focus on the review of, and reflection process on, the overall internship experience. Prior to each session, students will submit their progress report to the academic director.

Course Schedule

Session 1: *Norms, Ethics and Positionality*

Keep an internship journal and write three progress reports on your learning experience.

Recommended reading:

Sweitzer, H. Frederick and King, A. Mary (2013) *The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional and Civic development in Experiential Learning* (4th Edition). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole (Chapter 12)

Session 2: *The Civil Society in Cameroon*

Discuss new learning: how has your understanding of the role and work of your organization improved – particularly in relation to what you have learned about Cameroon throughout the semester seminars and in relation to the program theme

Recommended reading:

Henry Veltmeyer. *Democratic Governance and Participatory Development: The Role of Development NGOs*. *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations*, Fall 2005, Pp 89-109.

Session 3: *Internship Final Paper and Presentation Design and Content; Talking about the Internship Experience*

This session focuses on the design and mechanics of the internship final paper. It also allows students to reflect on the internship experience and process the learning that occurred in a safe and supportive context. The internship may have been a different experience than expected, may challenge the student's expectations of interning in a diverse and new work environment, and may change or reinforce the student's perspective of life projects or professional goals. The module discusses ways of acknowledging both the successes and potential failures of the internship, of completing tasks, handing over projects to and sharing insights with colleagues on the internship site, and setting realistic goals for the future.

Session 4: *Personal Assessment of the Internship Performance and Including the Internship Experience in your Resume*

This session provides guidelines for an assessment of the key learning milestones acquired during the internship experience, challenges faced, and a possible impact of the overall experience on the student's academic and professional career. The session also includes a reflection on the internship experience, including the output of the internship as it relates to the critical global issue central to the program theme. Students will also learn adequate ways of including their internship in their résumés and online professional platforms such as LinkedIn.

Ethics

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 code, 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.

Academic and Ethical Integrity

The internship experience must reflect SIT's ethics policy and commitment to the values of reciprocity. Students must respect, protect and promote the rights and the welfare of all those affected by their work by doing everything in their power to protect the dignity and privacy of the people with whom they work. 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.

Students must not represent as their own work, either in speaking or writing, materials or ideas, directly taken from other sources. They must give full credit in speaking or writing to all those who have contributed to their work. Academic penalties apply for deliberate plagiarism or other academic dishonesty.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

At the end of the internship period, students are expected to give an oral presentation of their work. Assessment of both written work and the oral presentation is based on quality, academic scholarship, and adherence to the highest ethical standards.

Assessment of the Internship

Discussion and Four Reflection Sessions	10%
Three Journal Reports	15%
Internship Mentor Evaluation [from the NGO]	20%
Oral Presentation	10%
Final Paper	45%

Grading Scale

94-100% A Excellent
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 Fail

Expectations and Policies

- Show up prepared, on time, and appropriately dressed for your internship. Comply with organization rules.
- Have the internship journal and progress report assignments completed on schedule and done according to specified requirements.
- Ask questions when in the field/office. Engage in the 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 on-site 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.

Academic Policies

SIT prides itself on providing students with an experientially based program; we hold ourselves, and

our students, to the highest of academic standards. Students are asked to refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, academic 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>.