Research Methods and Ethics
ANTH 3500 (3 Credits / 45 class hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:

Rwanda: Post-Genocide Restoration and Peacebuilding

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 is a qualitative research design course designed to provide an overview of methodological field study approaches within the local cultural context, affording students the tools necessary to conduct field research in Rwanda. The course also introduces students to knowledge and skills that are essential to forming constructive relationships with organizations and/or individuals, which are necessary for completing an internship. The course familiarizes students to the tools and methods of field study with a focus on how to do field research with victims of genocide and their descendants or violence perpetrators. It enhances students' skills at building rapport, initiating purposeful dialogue and conducting participatory study in the cultural context of Rwanda. In doing so, the course addresses the social and cultural dynamics in post-genocide Rwanda. Classes analyze the role of the field researcher in a post-conflict environment and the contribution that can be brought to a local organization while interning with it. In addition, the course details the ethics of field research and internship and introduces students to the Human Subjects Review process. In addition to that, the seminar devotes time to psychological and cultural orientation sessions before site visits and to the processing of field experiences. One function of these sessions is to reorient student focus toward positive examples of bravery, caring, and compassion that studies of genocide often reveal.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Exhibit greater awareness of the challenges and triumphs in dealing with national and ethnic identity issues in post-genocide Rwanda;
- Understand research design and field study techniques appropriate for independent study topics on issues of genocide;
- Undergo personal growth and the enhanced capacity to engage in a topic with the depth of complexity and emotional demands such as the 1994 genocide in Rwanda; and
- Engage in an Independent Study Project (ISP) or conduct an internship in Rwanda using appropriate methods and observing all ethical standards in post-conflict communities.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in English, but some field visit activities will involve translation from Kinyarwanda to English.

Course Schedule (see the program detailed calendar)

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 NOTIFIED.

Module 1: Cultural Immersion and Adjustment

The purpose of this module is to introduce students to the local culture and to daily life in Kigali and Rwanda in general. It emphasizes the most important values Rwandans live by and how they may differ from American values. Students discuss the dos and don'ts related to the local culture and the post-genocide context. The module highlights the most important social, economic, and political facts about Rwanda.

In order to acquire skills to cope with life in Kigali, students are given an exercise that consists of going to different parts of the city to talk to local people and get information about different topics related to life and culture in Rwanda. Topics include transportation, communication and media, economy and money, food and restaurants, etc. During presentations, each group shares the strategies used to obtain information, reflect on

their roles as researchers, shares any cultural clues they picked up on, and discusses differences observed between their culture and the host culture.

The end purpose of this module is to help students adjust to the local cultural norms without undermining their own American values.

Assigned readings:

Oberg, K. (2006). "Cultural Shock: Adjustment to New Cultural Environment" in Practical Anthropology, 7: 177-182

Robert Kohls, L. (1984). From *Survival Kit for Overseas Living*, 2nd ed., Intercultural press Kohls R. (1988) The Values American Live By

Rwandan Culture. Retrieved from http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html on August 10th 2016.

Module 2: Introduction to the Independent Study Project (ISP) or Internship Assignment

This module introduces students to the Independent Study Project (ISP) or internship assignment that they have to accomplish. They share previous research and internship experience acquired, discuss their fears and expectations and together with the academic director (AD) and program staff devise a plan of how to overcome expected challenges.

Assigned readings: review two to three previous ISP or internship reports to get some insights.

Module 3: The Ethics of Conducting Social Research and Internship in the Post-genocide Context

Students explore field study principles in the area of peacebuilding with special focus on the Rwandan post-genocide context. They discuss principal values, knowledge, and skills needed to positively overcome challenges related to such a politically and emotionally sensitive environment. Through sites visits, students also get to learn about different organizations that are involved in peacebuilding work in Rwanda and their specific area of intervention. These visits help them to start exploring potential opportunities those organizations can offer to them later as internships or ISP sites.

Assigned readings:

Campbell P. S. (2010). Literature Review. Ethics of Research in Conflict and Post-Conflict Environments. The City University of New York, USA.

Chiumento A. et al. (2015). Managing Ethical Challenges to Mental Health Research in Post-Conflict Settings. University of Liverpool, UK.

Amr A. (2010). Principles of Research in the Areas of Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution, University for Peace, San Jose, Costa Rica.

Module 4: Research/Internship Design in the Peacebuilding and Post-conflict Reconstruction Context

This module outlines the important steps followed by social researchers in the field of peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction. Students reflect on the particularities related to the post-genocide context and peacebuilding process in Rwanda.
Thus, they go through the process of identifying a research area, define a research topic, focus and narrow down the research topic, determine the research purpose, do a literature review (develop a theoretical/conceptual framework), and determine the type of research (exploratory, and/or explanatory, descriptive, causal, comparative and correlational research).

The module also helps them to develop methods (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed), identify initial partners (ensure participation, inclusiveness, and cultural input), develop and operationalize research questions, variables and constructs, identify a target population and sample, conduct a cultural reality check and make adjustments accordingly. Students explore different qualitative data collection techniques and review the SIT Study Abroad Human Subjects Review Policy.

For those students who choose to conduct internship, this module provides them with the opportunity to identify the institution, partner, or NGO they will work with as interns. Each student will have to work closely with the AD and program staff to start building rapport with the identified organization and start necessary dialogue and exchange of background information.

Module required readings:

Kumar, R. (2011). Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners, 3rd ed. London: Sage Chapter 4

Amr A. (2010). Steps in Research Design on Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution University for Peace, San Jose, Costa Rica.

Rossman, G. and Rallis, S. (2003). Learning in the Field: An Introduction to Qualitative Research. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Bhattacherjee A. (2012). Social Science Research: Principles, Methods and Practices. 2nd ed. University of South Florida, USA, Chapter 3.

Switzer, Frederick and King, Mary (2013) The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional and Civic development in Experiential Learning (4th Edition). Belmont, CA: Brooks (Chapter 2, 3,10)

Module 5: Research/Internship Implementation and Data Analysis

This module prepares students to go to the field to collect data or intern with the identified organization. They also learn how to treat the collected data and how to frame and process internship experiences. How do you behave as you conduct field research or participatory action research within a wounded society? How do you work with translators in such a sensitive context? Where and how do you find your informants? What does it cost? This module seeks to answer such questions. It prepares students not only ethically but emotionally and logistically as well.

Students are also taken through the process of treating qualitative data. Steps such as memoing, transcription, segmenting, and coding are discussed. Students who have conducted research before are given time to share their experiences with their colleagues.

Assigned readings:

Bhattacherjee, A. (2012). Social Science Research: Principles, Methods and Practices. 2nd ed. University of South Florida, USA, Chapter 13.

Amr, A. (2002). A Research and Evaluation Guide for Conducting Surveys, Focus Groups, Interviews, and Case Studies in Post Conflict Societies, School of Public Policy, George Mason University.

Kumar, R. (2011). Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners, 3rd ed. London: Sage. Step VII

Module 6: ISP/Internship Report Writing and Presentation

Students review the process of writing an academic research or internship paper and prepare a comprehensive presentation.

Assigned readings:

Silverman, D. 2006. Writing Your Report. In Interpreting Qualitative Data. London: Sage, Chapter 10, p. 336-344

Kumar, R. (2011). Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners, 3rd ed. London: Sage. Step VIII

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Assessments:

Participant observation assignment	20%
ISP proposal	60%
Processing sessions	10%
Participation	10%

Description of Assignments (please refer to the program calendar for due dates):

Participant Observation Assignment: Each student has to participate in at least two local events (it may be a wedding ceremony in the host family, community activity known as Umuganda, cultural fashion show, commemoration event, etc) and engage with local people about that event. Write an analytical reflection paper about that experience. What cultural differences did you notice and how do you think they may influence your work as a researcher as you conduct your ISP? What challenges did you encounter while engaging with local people? How did you mitigate them? Type a 2 page, typed double spaced reflection paper. (20%)

ISP/Internship Paper Proposal: Every student will write a research proposal, presenting and justifying the need to study a certain research problem or topic related to their internship. The proposal contains an extensive literature review and detailed methodology with a clear description of the practical ways in which the research and paper will be constructed. For ISP students, it must provide persuasive

evidence that a need exists for the proposed study. The outcome of this exercise will be a detailed 2500 word ISP proposal. (60%)

Processing Sessions: These are weekly student-lead discussion sessions. Students discuss issues related to the homestay experience, group dynamics, cultural adjustment, safety and security, site visits, readings, lectures etc. They have a right to use activities they think are appropriate for the group and foster everyone's participation. The processing session is a safe opportunity for students to do what they think is important and beneficial to the group. (10%)

Participation: Participation refers to class attendance, punctuality, attentive listening and active engagement in all academic seminar lectures, discussions, field trips, and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior. (10%)

Grading Scale
94-100%	A	Excellent
90-93%	A-	
87-89%	B+	
84-86%	B	Above Average
80-83%	B-	
77-79%	C+	
74-76%	C	Average
70-73%	C-	
67-69%	D+	
64-66%	D	Below Average
below 64	F	Fail

Grading Criteria:
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 full attendance, punctuality, attentive listening and active engagement in all academic seminar lectures, discussions, field trips and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior. The level, frequency, and quality of the students` participation will be monitored and taken into account.

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.

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. Also, refer to the specific information available in the Student Handbook and the Program Dossier given to you at Orientation.

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.