

Internship & Seminar

ITRN 3000 (4 credits / 120 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

Rwanda is currently depicted as a successful post-conflict nation. This is due to the country's efforts to sustain its economic growth while addressing political security as well as the psycho-social needs of its population, following the 1994 genocide against Tutsis and the civil war. Many actors are contributing to that success story and through a four-week internship with a community based organization, research organization, business, government institution or international NGO, students get to learn more about the challenges and opportunities of the reconstruction process. The aim of an internship is to enable students to gain valuable experience working in a post-conflict context and enhance their skills in an international internship environment.

SIT will use its extensive network to facilitate placement with an organization. SIT also ensures internship placements are in line with SIT academic policies and student health and security guidelines. In addition to that, regular reflection and assessment meetings are held with the academic director to review the progress of the internship and learning associated with the internship experience.

The students complete an internship and submit a focus project paper in which they process their learning experience on the internship, analyze issues important to the organization, and/or design a socially responsible solution to a problem identified by the organization. Approved in advance by the academic director, SIT's Local Review Board (for ethical clearance purposes), and the internship supervisor, the internship focus project may involve interviews and other data collection methods relevant to achieving internship learning goals. The paper and final presentation reveal how those goals are linked to the SIT program theme and its Critical Global Issue focus. The paper should also document a comprehensive schedule and the specific skills and knowledge acquired through the experience. Rubrics for the focus project paper and presentation will be shared with students.

Learning Outcomes

The Internship course comprises 120 hours of internship over four weeks. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate awareness of the ethics of internships in the context of Rwanda;
- Describe, analyze, and synthesize their learning experience in the internship in the form of an internship paper;
- Articulate the output of the internship experience in the form of an oral presentation;
- Assess the benefits, challenges and obstacles that the internship organization encounters in relation to the broad context of post-genocide reconstruction; and
- Gain a meaningful and practical internship experience in their chosen field.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in English but students will be exposed to vocabulary related to the internship through a wide range of venues and regional locales prior to the start of the internship.

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: Making the Most of Your Internship

During this module, students will prepare for the internship and the writing of the internship paper, have regular meetings with the academic director, reflect on the internship experience, and learn how to use their experience for future professional growth.

Session 1: Setting the Stage

This session reviews objectives for the internship. Students meet with the academic director following confirmation of their internship placement and discuss expectations, timeframes and other logistics, structural components of the final internship paper, content, layout, and general guidelines.

Sessions 2 & 3: The Internship Experience: Review and Reflection

Central to the successful internship experience is the development of the Internship Learning Agreement. The academic director will work with students individually and as a group to review the purpose of the Internship Learning Agreement. He or she will discuss student strategies for working with the internship supervisor to design the contents of the Internship Learning Agreement in adherence to internship learning objectives and in collaboration with the internship supervisor at the host organization. The agreement also helps to ensure a clear understanding of the objectives of the internship among the student, academic director, and internship supervisor.

Required Readings:

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

Ritzer, George. (1983). "The McDonaldization of Society." *Journal of American Culture*, 6 (1), 100-107

Miner, Horace "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema". *American Anthropologist*, 1956, 58(3), 503-507

Module 2: Internship Final Paper and Presentation Design and Content

This module focuses on the design and mechanics of the internship final paper. The module covers the final paper's structural design, organization, and guidelines for effective self-reflection on the internship experience and appraisal of acquired experience.

Session 1: Description of the Host Institution

This session focuses on the general guidelines for the description of the host institution. The session walks the student through samples of a brief description (one page) of the host institution for the internship, the nature of the services offered, and a profile of the customers who use them. The session also highlights the importance of including brochures or collateral material that further describes the institution.

Session 2: Description of Tasks Performed on the Internship

This session provides guidelines for effective ways of describing tasks performed as an intern. The session covers the importance of third-person narration (as if the student, acting as a manager, were writing it for a new employee/associate), outline form (except for the internship summary section), and headings for each of the sessions. A suggested outline for this description includes:

- Internship role/title and place of employment
- Internship summary—narrative summary of the activities of the position
- Qualifications—education and experience required and/or desirable
- Internship conditions—uniform requirements, physical surroundings, internship days, hours, etc.
- Internship relationships—who is the mentor and to whom does the student report
- Specific duties and responsibilities—a list should be provided to indicate all duties performed by the individual in this position

Section 3: Output of the Internship Experience

This session focuses on output of the internship experience, which may include a proposal for a strategic response to an existing problem, a creation of a sustainable plan, a grant proposal, or research that responds to the need of an organization that links back to the program theme and Peace, Human Rights, and Social Movements.

Session 4: Personal Assessment of the Internship Performance

This session provides guidelines for an assessment of the key learning milestones acquired on the internship experience, the challenges faced, and the possible impact of the experience on the student's academic and professional career. The session also covers a reflection on the internship

experience, including the output of the internship (addressed in Session 3), as it relates to the critical global issue central to the program theme.

Session 5: Oral Presentation of the Internship Final Paper

This module focuses on the mechanics and guidelines for the presentation of the internship final paper. The presentation should take 20 minutes and students are encouraged to use audiovisual aid/handouts to facilitate their presentations.

Session content includes:

- Presenting a brief overview of the internship experience
- Communicating assigned responsibilities and tasks performed
- Articulating major output of the experience
- Providing personal assessment of the internship performance.

Required Readings:

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

Module 3: Processing and Maximizing the Internship Experience

This module focuses on ways of processing and articulating the internship as well as equipping students with practical tips and strategies for making the most of the experience personally, academically, and professionally.

Session 1: Talking About the Internship Experience

This session 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 challenging environment, and may change the student's perspective of life projects or professional goals. The module discusses ways of acknowledging both the successes and failures of the internship, of completing tasks, handing over projects to and sharing insights with colleagues on the internship, and setting realistic goals for the future.

Session content includes:

- Processing the End of the Internship Experience
- Closure with Colleagues and Supervisors
- Articulating the Experience and Setting Plans for the Future

Session 2: How to Include Your Internship on Your Résumé

During this session, students will learn appropriate ways of including their internship on their résumés and in online professional platforms such as LinkedIn.

Session 3: Next Steps

This final session occurs in the final week of the program, as students plan their next steps, academically and professionally. Students discuss fears and strategies for building on this experience in other internship settings, opportunities for professional growth, and how to make optimal use of the internship experience. They will discuss ways to describe the experience gained and skills learned in their internship in cover letters and how to use this experience for future professional growth.

Required readings:

Switzer, Frederick and King, Mary (2013) "The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional and Civic development in Experiential Learning (4th Edition). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole. (Chapters 3, 9 & 12)

Weaver, Gary R. (2000) Culture, Communication and Conflict: Readings in Intercultural Relations 3rd ed. London: Pearson. Chapter 3: "Understanding and coping with cross cultural adjustment stress."

Kohls, Robert. "The Values Americans Live By".

Thomson S. Ansom A & Murison J (2013) "Emotional and Ethical Challenges for Field Research in Africa: The Story Behind the Findings". Chapter 1

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, 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.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

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

Description of Assignments

I. Discussion and Reflection Sessions

Discussion and reflection sessions take place on a weekly basis. Students are expected to share their personal experience in the internship and reflect on the professional learning process. These discussion and reflection sessions are key elements in the process of the learning experience and the student's professional achievements within the host organization. The following are some of

the reflection questions that students will discuss with the academic director at the end of every internship week:

Week One: Introduction, Positionality and Internship Ethics

Reflection Question: *How is the cultural environment at your internship placement different from what you are used to and how are you adjusting to this cultural difference? How is your identity (racial, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, class, etc.) influencing how you relate to others in this environment and how they relate to you?*

Week Two: Cultural Observations

Reflection Question: *What are you learning about working collaboratively in Rwandan culture? What difficulties and what joys are you experiencing? What might you change about your style (manner of dress, communication, demeanor and interactions) to enhance your learning and performance at the internship?*

Week Three: The Theory of Practice: Digging Deeper

Reflection Question: *How have your courses on this program (Language, RME and Thematic Seminars) informed your internship experience and your performance of the internship?*

Week Four: Learning Goals, Skills and Experience

Reflection Question: *Briefly describe what you have learnt from the internship placement. What could you have done differently to enhance your learning? Identify key talking points for presenting about your internship to your school back home.*

II. Progress Reports

The progress report should document the progress of the student's professional and personal learning on the internship. Students document aspects of the challenges they face and how they try to deal with those challenges. Students submit two progress reports in the course of their internship experience.

III. Internship Performance

This evaluation by the internship supervisor or someone at the internship organization assesses the student's internship experience, overall professional achievements, and self-growth.

IV. Oral Presentation

In the presentation, you should provide a succinct and clear description of the internship experience, a brief history of the organization where you interned, and the responsibilities undertaken. The oral presentation should relate the learning associated with the focus project and reflect on its relevance to the program theme and Critical Global Issue. You should demonstrate effective management of the discussion with the audience and attend to the aesthetic elements of the delivery. A summary of the oral presentation assessment rubric will be shared with students in advance.

V. Final Paper

Students are expected to submit a final paper at the end of their internship experience. The final paper should include a title, list of acknowledgments, and an abstract. The paper should also have

an introduction which summarizes the work and history of the organization and incorporates a number of references, detailed description of internship accomplishments, and strong and innovative aspects of the organization. The paper should be well-written, well-organized, and aesthetically pleasing. A summary of the final paper assessment rubric will be shared with students in advance.

Assessment of the Internship

Discussion and Reflection Sessions	10%
2 Progress Reports	10%
Internship Performance	35%
Oral Presentation	10%
Final Paper	35%

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

Expectations and Policies

Show up prepared, on time, and appropriately dressed for your internship. Comply with organization rules.

Have progress report assignments completed on schedule and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.

Ask questions when in the field/office. Engage yourself in 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.

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>.