



## Internship & Seminar

ITRN 3000 (4 credits / 120 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:  
South Africa: Community Health and Social Policy

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.

### Description

This course consists of a four-week internship with a community-based, national, international or local public health delivery organization that is based in South Africa. The internship enables students to gain valuable work experience in the public health field and introduces students to the planning, delivery and management of public health using South Africa as the case study.

SIT will use its extensive network to place students in public health delivery organizations. These may include organizations at the cutting edge of public health work, in rural and urban water and sanitation improvement projects, health clinics, maternal and child health innovations, urban health infrastructure projects and mobile app innovations in the health care field. In addition, students may petition SIT for approval of internship placements that they find on their own initiative. However, SIT's academic director will approve of the student's internship duties and locations in both SIT and student initiated internship placements, and SIT will maintain oversight over internship placement in line with SIT academic policies, student health and security guidelines. Ultimately, each student takes responsibility for making optimal use of resources available at the organization and to be proactive in engaging with local experts to achieve internship objectives. Weekly two-hour reflection and assessment classes are held with the academic director or internship coordinator to review the progress of the internship, learning associated with the internship experience and to draw out broader issues related to positionality, culture and ethics as they relate to the public health field.

Students complete an internship and submit a paper in which they describe, assess and analyze their learning in the area of public health in South Africa. The paper also outlines the tasks that the student completed through the public health internship, reporting relationships, challenges encountered and how the student overcame them.

## Learning Outcomes

The internship course comprises of 120 hours, equal to 4 academic credits.

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate awareness of the ways in which local cultural practices shape public health outcomes in a context such as South Africa's;
- Show understanding of the dynamics that shape successes and/or failure of a public health project in a context such as South Africa's;
- Assess and articulate the benefits, challenges and obstacles that the internship organization encounters in their work;
- Describe, analyze, and synthesize their learning experience in the internship in the form of an internship paper and oral presentation;
- Gain meaningful and practical work experience in their chosen field.

## Language of Instruction

English is the official language in South Africa and students should expect that English will be widely spoken in work and field settings during the internship. The pre-internship part of the course, Social and Community Health Research Methods, prepares students by introducing them to the work norms, practices and ethics in the South African context, and is taught in English by the academic director and academic coordinator, assisted by local experts. Further, pre-internship prep work includes a three credit intensive isiZulu language course, a three credit Approaches to Community Health in South Africa Seminar and a three credit Practice and Provision of Community Health in South Africa Seminar to expose students to the broader theories and practices of reconciliation and peacebuilding in the South Africa context, and set the context for the internship experience in South Africa.

## Course Schedule

\*Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.

### 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. Complementary reading will be assigned by the academic director.

#### 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 Critical Reflection

These sessions focus on the review and reflection process of the internship experience. Students set weekly learning objectives, keep an internship journal, and write two progress reports on their learning experience.

#### Session 4: Talking About the Internship Experience

This session allows students to reflect on the internship experience and begin to process the learning that occurred in a safe and supportive context. The session 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 job, and setting realistic goals for the future.

### Session 5: Next Steps and How to Include Your Internship on Your Résumé

This final session occurs in the final weeks of the program, as part of re-entry discussions. Students discuss fears and strategies for successful re-entry into their home setting, 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, résumés and how to use this experience for future professional growth.

#### *Suggested reading:*

Switzer, Frederick and King, Mary (2013) *The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional and Civic development in Experiential Learning (4<sup>th</sup> Edition)*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole (chapter 12)

## **THE FINAL PAPER**

The final paper shall consist of the following four sections:

- Description of the host institution
- Description of tasks performed on the job
- Business plan design, grant proposal, or other major output of the internship experience
- Personal assessment of your job performance

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE FINAL PAPER**

Expectations for each section of the final paper are outlined below. These, however, are guidelines and may be adapted to the specificities of your internship.

**Description of host institution:** a brief description (one page) of the host institution for the internship. This should include the nature of the services offered and a profile of the customers who use them. The student may also provide brochures or collateral material that further describes the institution.

**Description of tasks performed:** this should be written in third person as if the student, acting as a manager, were writing it for a new employee/associate. It should be written in outline form, except for the job summary section. Headings should be used to identify each of the sections. A suggested outline for this description is listed below:

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

**Output of the internship experience:** this can be a proposal for a strategic response to an existing problem, a creation of a sustainable plan, a grant proposal, or a research that responds to the need of an organization. The proposal should also outline the human and financial resources needed for the implementation of the proposed model and measures of its success.

**Personal assessment of the experience:** in this section provide 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. Included in this section is a reflection on the internship experience, including the output of the internship (mentioned above), as it relates to public health in South Africa.

### **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**

Weekly two-hour reflection and assessment meetings are held with the academic director or internship coordinator to review the progress of the internship and learning associated with the internship experience.

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

#### Assessment of the Internship

Progress reports and reflection sessions:	20%
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

**Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad 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](mailto: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>.