



Independent Study Project (ISP)

ISPR 3000 (4 Credits / 120 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:

South Africa: Social and Political Transformation

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 course carries a total of four credits. Although students have indicated a tentative topic before arriving at the program site, these will most likely change as the semester proceeds, in consultation with the academic director (AD) and academic coordinator (AC). A local advisor, who specializes in the student's particular field of interest, must be selected by the student, and approved by the AD. All topics must be finalized and approved by the AD, and advisors selected and confirmed before the project commences. Meetings will be held throughout the semester with the AD and senior staff members to finalize the topic, select an appropriate advisor, and identify potential sources of information.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Select, design and implement an individual project that investigates a dimension of South African life and culture relevant to the theme of the program;
- Effectively utilize a field study format; and
- Develop self-confidence and an understanding of experience-based learning.

Requirements

- 3 – 4 meetings with a project advisor/s and at least two with the AD/AC
- Completion of approximately 120 hours of field work toward the completion of the ISP
- A 20-25 minute oral presentation on completion of the project
- A paper of about 40 typed pages presenting findings of the project, including methodology, results, discussion, conclusion and recommendations.

All aspects of Research Methods and Ethics seminar link directly to the ISP, providing ideas on techniques to be used in gathering and interpreting information, and the opportunity to practice these in assignments. **A key feature of the ISP is that it needs to be based primarily but not exclusively on primary sources (e.g. oral histories, interviews, observation, and documents generally not available in the USA).**

Assessment

In conjunction with the academic advisor, the Academic Director evaluates student performance if the ISP. Assessment of the written work and oral presentation is based on the accuracy of the information conveyed; the breadth and appropriateness; the depth of analysis and insight; the level of cultural sensitivity displayed; and the quality of expression. Special emphasis will be placed on the student's ability to integrate primary and secondary sources and to present the findings in a clear, organized and well-synthesized format. The final grades are determined by the Academic Director in the following proportions:

Assignment	Percentage
Written ISP	80 percent
ISP Presentation	20 percent

Please note that a separate ISP Handbook will be distributed ahead of the ISP period offering detailed information on requirements and expectations.

Grading Scale: 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

Grading Criteria

All grades assigned will take into account the students' special circumstances and challenges they face as foreign students. 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.

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

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>.

Student research (Independent Study Project, Field 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 ISP/FSPs 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/FSP for non-commercial use, for preservation purposes, and to ensure future accessibility. World Learning/SIT Study Abroad archives my ISP/FSP 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/FSP. Students retain all ownership rights of the ISP/FSP 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 and FSP form.