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Independent Study Project
ISPR-3000 (4 credits)

South Africa: Community Health and Social Policy

This syllabus is representative of a typical 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 four-week Independent Study Project (ISP), scheduled in the final portion of the program, provides students a unique opportunity to study in-depth a key aspect of health in South Africa. The ISP draws upon the knowledge and various skills gained from the thematic, language, and Research Methods and Ethics seminars. At this point students will have worked with the academic director and various other in-country experts to develop their ISP proposals and to schedule interviews, arrange for translators if they will be required, and arrange other logistics that are essential to completing the ISP. They will also have developed the competence to act in culturally appropriate ways and to find resources in South Africa needed for ISP completion. The ISP allows the students to practice and hone their primary data gathering skills and to practice various other skills learned in the Research Methods and Ethics seminar such as navigating unfamiliar cultural norms, building rapport, and navigating local bureaucracies. Further, students practice and hone their skills in gathering and analyzing data from primary sources, managing this data, and making a coherent argument in a scholarly manner. Each student finds or is assigned an ISP advisor with whom they work collaboratively to identify and schedule data collection appointments, review research tools for appropriateness and feasibility, and resolve any logistical and ethical issues that may arise during the course of their ISP. Students are also required to submit an ISP itinerary to their academic director and to check in with program staff regarding the progress of their ISP.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Analyze and synthesize data gathered from primary sources into a well written scholarly report and to compose an oral presentation from this report;
- Understand the importance of ethics and human relations in field research;
- Demonstrate competence in the processes involved in independent research, from choosing a viable topic and appropriate methodologies to final analysis, and interpretation; and
- Demonstrate awareness of the contingencies and complexities of working across cultures.

Language of Instruction
This course is taught in English, but students will be exposed to vocabulary related to course content as well as the nuances of economic change and development through in-country expert lectures and field visits in a wide range of venues and regional locales.

Instructional Methods
SIT's teaching and learning philosophy is grounded in the experiential learning theory developed by Kolb (1984; 2015) and informed by various scholars, such as Dewey, Piaget, Lewin, among others. Experiential learning theory recognizes that learning is an active process that is not confined to the formal curriculum; "knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 2015, p. 49). Learning involves both content and process. Learning is holistic and happens through various life experiences upon which students draw to generate new ways of knowing and being. Learning involves a community and is a lifelong endeavor. Learning is transformational. The suggested four step-cycle of a *concrete experience*, *reflective observation*, *abstract conceptualization*, and *active experimentation* embedded in the experiential learning model is not linear and might not always happen in that specific order, as any learning is highly context dependent. These stages of taking part in a shared experience; reflecting on that experience by describing and interpreting it; challenging their own assumptions and beliefs to generate new knowledge; and ultimately applying new knowledge, awareness, skills, and attitudes in a variety of situations and contexts are important for students to engage in to become empowered lifelong learners.

Course Requirements
Students will spend a minimum of 185 hours on the ISP. This includes time spent reading, developing contacts, interviewing, making field observations, writing, meeting with the academic director and advisor, and actual hands-on work in the organization (if you choose to complete a practicum). The final product is a typed and spiral-bound 30- to 40-page paper, double spaced, 12-point standard font. A highlight of the assignment is a 20-minute presentation to fellow students, program staff, your advisor and other invited guests.

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

Traditional and Non-Traditional ISP Projects:
You may choose as follows:

Traditional: Most students choose this option. For example, a student interested in traditional healing may focus her or his study on understanding the social context of traditional healing in a particular community. Depending on the specific focus of the project, data may be sought from interviews and observations of *Isangomas* (healers), nurses at the local clinic, families who use the healers, government officials, academics, etc. Where informants are difficult to access, students may seek out current opinions and statements in the media to complement the data. Methods are to be expressly stated so as to make obvious how the primary data

gained is reflective of biases inherent in the process and the extent to which that data is truly reflective of specific or general communities. Documenting the process is extremely important, especially in cases where students find themselves unable to access much useful data.

Non-Traditional: Students who wish to take advantage of the opportunity to gain creative skills so as to express their acquired knowledge artistically or through other approved alternative research techniques can do so. In the same way that we insist that traditional ISPs be grounded in primary data, we insist that **alternative ISPs** be grounded in knowledge obtained from South Africans and that knowledge produced is faithful to its source.

Creative projects (art, storytelling, music, poetry, video, etc) see students devoting themselves to a considerable period of time during which they create in response to South African stimuli, in collaboration with South African artists/writers/poets. The skills acquired need to be documented on media that can be kept in our library with other ISPs, on disks, photographs, or cassettes. The work must be complemented by a written description of the social context, and all works must be described so as to make plain the links between the ISP experience and the works produced. Excellent projects will explain the methodologies of collaboration and provide self-critical analysis of the artistic merit of the productions, thereby including most aspects of the traditional ISP paper, but in less detail. Students demonstrate that they possess a talent for creative expression and their creations must be accessible to those in the community in which they create.

ISP To Do List
1. Decide on a topic
This stage can often be difficult in narrowing down topics of interest. This is where the student asks: "What do I want to study? What do I want to explore and learn from the ISP? Where do I want to spend my ISP month? Is there a topic I have always been interested in and want to learn more about?" Think about the ISP as an opportunity for self-fulfillment and both a personal and academic growth, or as a steppingstone for further research or studies in a particular area.

The student must be able to define a distinct and feasible project. By the time the final ISP proposal is submitted, students will be required to clearly state their overall research project in one short paragraph.

2. Define your research questions and research methods (draft research proposals)
In the process of submitting draft proposal and through regular consultations with the Academic staff of the program, students will have to clearly define their ISP topic and research questions. Focusing their interest on a clear and precise question will enable students to begin their ISP period with necessary clarity and focus and will help them complete the task successfully within a given period of time.

3. Complete a final research proposal
The final ISP research Proposal should provide a clear description of the topic, research question(s) and methodology and annotated bibliography. The proposal will help anticipate what the student is going to do during the research period and potential challenges that may

arise. The proposal should also help students to clearly define the focus of the research at hand so that students end with a project that can be accomplished within the given period of time.

4. **Contact an ISP advisor – share your ISP research proposal**
   In order to complete the project, each student is matched with an advisor. The AD will match students with appropriate advisors who can best support chosen topics and research question. All academic advisors are part of the SIT academic network in South Africa.

   The following aspects are taken into consideration when choosing ISP advisor for each student:

   - The advisor should be a person with an expertise in the field of interest, who is able to work with a student to create, plan and successfully complete their ISP, and subsequently evaluate it. The person should have an academic degree (MA or PhD) in relevant field and should be able to give necessary guidance and support.
   - Once students start their ISP, they are required to meet with ISP advisor at least three times, in order to define, discuss, and evaluate their progress, i.e., by discussing and defining parameters of the research, determining research methodology, suggesting sources and contacts, assisting in organization of collected information, and reviewing the student's final submission.
   - It is **STUDENT'S** responsibility to initiate contact with ISP advisor and to make (and keep) appointments with them. It is student's responsibility to form respectful relationship and communication with their ISP advisor.
   - A failure on the part of the student to regularly communicate and meet with the ISP advisor three times – as required – will be reflected in the final ISP grade.
   - ISPs that are not supported by the assistance of ISP advisor will not be accepted.

5. **Complete, sign and hand in SIT forms: site approval form, ethical guidelines, and SIT Study Abroad Review Board (SARB)**
   In addition to completing their ISP Research Proposal, students are also required to submit a Site Approval form that clearly states their whereabouts on each and every day of the ISP; the AD and program staff must be able to reach the students during the ISP period in case of any emergency (global or local). Ethical guidelines include completion of both reading/agreeing to adhere to our written ethical policy, but also successful completion of our SIT Study Abroad Review Board (SARB) process. This will be discussed in detail in RME classes. Please note that until items 4 and 5 above (ISP Proposal, Site Approval, and Ethical Guidelines Forms) are satisfactorily completed, students will not be allowed to embark on their ISP. Funds for ISP accommodation and food will not be released to a student until all pre-ISP requirements are successfully met.

6. **Arrange accommodation for the period of your ISP (4 weeks)**
   It is STUDENT'S responsibility to arrange accommodation for the ISP period . The Program Assistant will be available to assist with and advise students in this process. Depending on the choice of the ISP location, students may be able to reside with a homestay family or find

an alternative accommodation approved by the Academic Director in accordance with SIT guidelines of safety and security.

Human Subjects Review
All ISP proposals must reflect a thoughtful and culturally appropriate consideration of the effects of the student's inquiry on the participants in the project. To that end, you are required to submit an "Application for Review of Research with Human Subjects," which includes questions about any potential harm that might come from your study; appendices include interview and survey protocols. If the Academic Director believes that you have not sufficiently addressed the concerns of this policy, he/she may ask you to revise your proposal. Standards for this review are developed in country and reflect local academic practice.

If a student's research has been funded by a US government agency or if she/he plans to take this research back to his/her home school or community for further dissemination, then the student must follow more stringent standards, i.e., not only those of the host community, but also those of the Office for Human Resource Protections, with which SIT is registered. Any questions or concerns are forwarded to SIT's Institutional Review Board for review.

ISP Written Format—Organization and Presentation

    I.   Title page

    II.   Table of Contents
Your table of contents should contain heading of chapters or sections into which your ISP is divided, and the main headings and subdivisions in each section, noting all page numbers. *The table of contents falls into technical aspects that are also subject to evaluation.*

    III.   Abstract
A tightly written (no more than 200 words) summary of your paper. In one paragraph only summarize the introductory and conceptual aspects of your study, your main research question, methods used and the main final conclusion/analysis of your study.

    IV.   Introduction
Length can vary considerably depending on the topic and your style of writing. Aspects of your ISP that might be covered should include:
        A. Objectives of the study: discuss your motivation and academic interest in chosen topic, and in your research question (RQ), articulate the relevance of your chosen topic. This should come first – make sure your reader gets to know your RQ in very early stages of your paper.
        B. Clarification of research question(s) and topic of study.
        C. Definition of major terms (if necessary). If you use a large number of non-English terms, include them in a Glossary or Appendix ONLY at the END of the ISP.

Please note: In the evaluation rubric, Introduction falls into the category of Context (i.e. background information) and Literature Review.

V.   Literature Review
A brief overview of existing literature and work available on your topic of inquiry forming a background and entry discussion prior to your analysis. The literature review is extremely important as it reveals the extent of your overall research and reflects your ability to identify theoretical underpinning fitting a given contextual background, necessary to inform yourself sufficiently and develop greater understanding of the topic of your research.

VI.   Methods & Ethics
A. Field study methods employed
   i. When conducting semi-structured interviews, you are expected to complete minimum 4 interviews. When discussing your methods, you should specify the following:
      a. Explain the choice of selected participants in your study
      b. Specify the number of interviews you conducted (include a chart in Appendix)
B. To protect the identity of your interviewees, you should refer to them as Interviewee or Participant, and when designating more of them, use either numbers (Interviewee/Participant 1, etc.), or letters (Interviewee/Participant A, etc.).
C. Discussion of your positionality and how it may affect the ethics of your paper.
D. Reflect on broader ethical dimension of the research and of the entire project.

VII.   Findings
You will want to use section headings, and most likely, sub-headings, to maintain a strong sense of organization of your paper. This section will form the bulk of your ISP, and must specifically include sections containing findings, your own reflection, discussion and analysis. Quotations and references to other works should be accurately cited. Any diagrams, figures or tables should be labeled properly.

VIII.   Conclusions
Your conclusions should demonstrate how your ISP fulfilled the objectives outlined in your introduction, and summarize the main outcomes of your study. This section is not always given the attention it deserves – it is common to find only a half-page of discussion of conclusions – as if the writer has run out of petrol! This section should bring out the best in you as a researcher. You need to make powerful arguments at this point, relate your findings to larger public issues, and derive implications. Please, also include Recommendations for further study in this section: this should consist of a short list of recommendations on how your study might be expanded upon, or be used as the basis for future ISPs & Limitations of the study: though optional, this section is highly recommended. Legitimize your study by pro-actively pointing out its shortcomings and biases (all studies have them, of course).

IX.   Bibliography
This should include all literature and documents used and cited from using APA style (follow research methods in-class instructions).

X.   Appendix

    A. Interview Questions
    B. A chart of the interviews conducted [see below the format you should follow].
    C. Relevant (and cited) statistical information, charts, maps, photographs or any additional relevant material.

Technical Aspects

<u>Quotations & Paraphrasing</u>
Every use of quotes, reference and bibliography should follow the format discussed in class. You will never quote an entire interview in the paper, nor should you copy and paste entire interviews. Should you use a quote that is *more than 3 lines long,* indent and single space it.

<u>In-text citations and Bibliography</u>
Whether you provide a direct quotation, or merely express another's idea in your own words, you should (by both academic and personal ethical standards) give the individual credit for that idea. You should do this by including in-text citation that, in conjunction with Bibliography list, provides proper information about your sources. Many of your citations will come from interviews conducted. All interviews should be cited respecting the anonymity of interviewees' identities and their names. You also need to cite all information taken from secondary sources.

You should follow the standard APA style. *Please note, when quoting from any text, page numbers are required in your in-text citation!*

<u>Page Limit</u>
The final paper is a 30 - 40-page paper, double spaced, 12-pt standard font (not including Bibliography and Appendix).

<u>Page Layout</u>
- The body of the text should be in font size 12
- The footnotes should be in font size 10
- All text should be in the same font you choose to use
- Your text alignment needs to be justified

Basic Requirements for Site Approval
ISPs may be conducted in any area of South Africa that meets with the approval of the academic director, and for which the program has existing affiliate relations and reliable contacts who can provide a liaison between students, the program base, and local communities. ISPs may also be completed in other areas of South Africa, but such cases are rare and require a stricter site approval process. Any travel away from the ISP site during the ISP period must be directly relevant to your project, i.e., independent travel during the ISP is not allowed.

Students must be able to return to the program base if directed to do so within any 24-hour period. It is therefore important that students are familiar with transportation routes to and from the ISP location and have at least two options for travel plans. SIT must have reliable phone numbers through which you can be easily contacted throughout the ISP period; during periods

in which you may be outside of areas with easy access to a phone, SIT must have a phone contact with a trustworthy local contact who can locate the student within any 12-hour period and assist in your evacuation from the field, when and if a situation requiring evacuation of the program arises.

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.

Assignments and Evaluation

<u>Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria</u>

Assignments
Assessment of the written work and oral presentation is based on the accuracy of the information conveyed; 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, with attention to the ethical context of field study. The following aspects will be used to determine the final grade for the course.

- Work independently and respectfully within South Africa and in cooperation with institutions and advisors;
- Develop a logical and coherent framework for the study project and clearly justify how the chosen topic lies within the scope of the program and region;
- Critically discuss and evaluate available and relevant theories, papers, and published materials on the proposed project;
- Clearly present the main objectives of the project, further developing them when needed;
- Present and justify a reasonable methodological framework to achieve the proposed objectives;
- Critically describe the data collected, analysis performed, and results;
- Present and discuss problems, findings, and conclusions based on the methods used, data and information collected, and/or analysis performed;

- Be able to present all steps of the project clearly and coherently in a written and oral format for an independent audience.

1) Independent Study Project (ISP) (90%)
Students will spend a minimum of 185 hours on the ISP. This includes time spent reading, developing contacts, collecting data (by interviewing, taking field observations), writing, meeting with the academic director and advisor. The final product is a typed and bound 30 – 40- page paper, double spaced, 12-pt standard font. A highlight of the assignment is a 20-minute presentation to fellow students, program staff, and other invited guests. Alternative forms of Independent Study Projects are a possibility students may explore in consultation with the academic director.

Assessment of the ISP is done on the basis of SIT's assessment rubric for the Independent Study Project as provided at the end of this document .

2) Oral Presentation (10%)
Assessment of the ISP Oral Presentation is done on the basis of SIT's assessment rubric for the Independent Study Project Presentation
Evaluation criteria for oral presentation include:
- Organization of presentation, with a view to holding audience interest;
- Use of appropriate examples and personal experiences;
- Clear explanation of ISP strategy and implementation;
- Ability to field comments and questions .

Assessment
     Independent Study Project (ISP) – 90%
     Oral Presentation – 10%

Attendance and Participation
Due to the nature of SIT Study Abroad programs, and the importance of student and instructor contributions in each and every class session, attendance at all classes and for all program excursions is required. Criteria for evaluation of student performance include attendance and participation in program activities. Students must fully participate in all program components and courses. Students may not voluntarily opt out of required program activities. Valid reasons for absence – such as illness – must be discussed with the academic director or other designated staff person. Absences impact academic performance, may impact grades, and could result in dismissal from the program.

Late Assignments
SIT Study Abroad programs integrate traditional classroom lectures and discussion with field-based experiences, site visits and debriefs. The curriculum is designed to build on itself and progress to the culmination (projects, ISP, case studies, internship, etc.). It is critical

that students complete assignments in a timely manner to continue to benefit from the sequences in assignments, reflections and experiences throughout the program.

Example: Students may request a justified extension for one paper/assignment during the semester. Requests must be made in writing and at least 12 hours before the posted due date and time. If reason for request is accepted, an extension of up to one week may be granted at that time. Any further requests for extensions will not be granted. Students who fail to submit the assignment within the extension period will receive an 'F' for the assignment.

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

Program Expectations
- Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (classmates', lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the 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.
- Storing Your Work: Keep several copies of your work as back up and keep one copy accessible to you through an online forum, such as an attachment in your email, the course learning management system, or cloud-based storage. This way your work will always be available to despite technical issues. Lost files, deleted drives, or computer crashes are not excuses for late, missing work.
- Personal Technology Use: Cell phones and other personal electronics can be used for taking notes and other class activities. Off-task usage is not acceptable. You may be

marked as absent for habitually using them for something other than classroom activities.

- Content Considerations: Some texts and activities you will encounter in this course delve into sensitive topics that may be emotionally and intellectually challenging. Our classroom is a space where we can engage with challenging ideas, question assumptions, and navigate difficult topics with respect and maturity. As possible, I will flag content and activities that are especially graphic or intense, so we are prepared to address them soberly and sensitively. If you are struggling to keep up with the work or participate in the course because of the nature of the content and activities, you should speak with me and/or seek help from counseling services.
- Classroom recording policy: To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

SIT Policies and Resources
Please refer to the [SIT Study Abroad Handbook](#) and the [Policies](#)section of the SIT website for all academic and student affairs policies. Students are accountable for complying with all published policies. Of particular relevance to this course are the policies regarding: academic integrity, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), research and ethics in field study and internships, late assignments, academic status, academic appeals, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and misconduct, and the student code of conduct.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook and SIT website for information on important resources and services provided through our central administration in Vermont, such as [Library resources and research support](#), [Disability Services](#), [Counseling Services,](#) [Title IX information](#), and [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) resources.

RUBRIC: Independent Study Project Paper	
Category	**Possible Considerations**
Title / Acknowledgements / Abstract	-The title is succinct, interesting, and engaging; and it clearly explains the project -The acknowledgements are complete and professionally written -The abstract clearly summarizes the project
Research Question / Objectives / Justification	-The study/research question is relevant, thought-provoking, and original -The project aims to contribute information on a topic relevant to the local community and/or other researchers -The objectives of the study are clearly presented and appropriate -The justification for the project is clear and contextualized
Context and Literature Review	-Context: The content is relevant. Important themes and background information are provided so reader understands study/research question and its place within the field of research -Literature Review: The paper includes appropriate, high-quality of relevant background sources, including several from refereed journals, indicating familiarity with key publications on the topic -Creative projects: background information is relevant to both the thematic topic being explored and the previous history of artistic work in this field. -Practica: the goals of the practicum are meaningful and are stated clearly; a focus project and how it relates to the program theme are clearly described. The history and work of the practicum organization, how its work relates to the program theme, and how it fits into the context of other similar organizations are all accurately described.
Methods	-The explanation of methodology is clear and accurate and supporting materials are included in appendices (if applicable) - Implementation of methods through the research process (e.g., interviewee recruitment) is thoughtful and handled with care -The methods are appropriate -Practica: a clear and complete description of the work undertaken is given, including dates and hours worked
Ethics	-Human Subjects policies and ethical research guidelines are adhered to and thoroughly discussed -Appropriate consideration is given to informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality of research participants, in keeping with human subjects protocols and the SARB-approved ISP proposal -The ISP strengthens relationships and contributes to mutual trust between the author and research participants in ways that are respectful, culturally appropriate, and collaborative -Natural science ISPs not involving human subjects show an awareness of and respect for environmental ethics, as appropriate to the topic -The ISP is responsive to host community needs, as applicable
Presentation of Results / Findings	-The findings are complete and are logically and convincingly presented -The findings are clearly differentiated from discussion or interpretation -The prose discussion of findings is clear, succinct and logical -Any tables, graphs, photos and direct quotes are relevant and support the argument -Creative projects: The thinking and concepts behind the creative work, as well as the messages contained within it are clearly explained, and the intended audience (and availability to that audience) is described.

Depth of Analysis	-Important implications raised by the findings are included -The argument is well-structured and different sources of information are well-integrated -Patterns in the findings (or a lack of a pattern) were identified and discussed -The author gives logical explanations of what findings mean -The author clearly and specifically related his/her findings to the study/research question -The findings are linked to previous research in the field -Creative projects: An analysis of the creative piece is given, including an assessment of its educational value and asthetics -Practica: A description and analysis of how the organization/focus project is set up and functions are given; the organization's strengths, weaknesses and challenges are discussed; observations of the organization or project are placed in the context of the existing literature
Conclusions	-The main findings are summarized and discussed within the broader implications or concerns of the study -The author made research-based recommendations, as appropriate, and made recommendations for future study -Practica: a range of lessons learned from the practicum are detailed
Technical Aspects	-The paper is organized into major sections (and sub-sections, as appropriate) and/or follows guidelines established in accordance with the orientation of the program/discipline -Table of contents, In-text citations, and reference list or bibliography are done correctly and completely -There are no mistakes in writing & grammar, spelling & punctuation -The paper is clean, legible, well-formatted, professional in appearance, and aesthetically pleasing
Effort	Determinations of ISP effort vary per program
Creative Project, Performance, or Practicum	Criteria for review of creative works or performances, or for successful completion of practica, will be determined by the program academic director