

Internship & Seminar ITRN-3000 (4 credits)

Spain and Ireland: Geopolitics and the Future of Europe

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 seminar consists of a 4-week internship with either a local community/international organization, research center, business, or government agency. The aim of this internship is to provide students with valuable experience and to enhance their skills in a career/professional environment related to core program themes. The Internship and Seminar course includes various components that support the student through the internship learning process. They include meetings while at the internship, seminar lectures, discussions, and reflections, writing of progress reports, research and writing the final paper, and preparation for the final presentation for a total of 185 hours.

The SIT Spain and Ireland program located in the city of Bilbao will use its extensive community and governmental networks in the Basque Country to facilitate rewarding internships that match students' interests and capacities. Interviews are often conducted to ascertain students' suitability. Selection process is dependent on available placements, intern skills, internship proposals, and language requirements. The organization and the student's internship activities must be approved by the academic director. Regular 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. The academic director along with the host organization will approve students' internship activities and their Internship Learning Agreement. The program will maintain oversight over internship placements to ensure that they meet academic policies along with student health and security guidelines. Ultimately, each student takes responsibility for being proactive in engaging with internship colleagues and the internship supervisor to achieve internship objectives.

Students complete an internship and submit a paper in which they process their learning experience on the job, analyze an issue important to the organization, and/or design a socially responsible solution to a problem identified by the organization. The paper should also document a comprehensive schedule and the specific skills and knowledge acquired through the experience. A focus will be on linking internship learning with the program's critical global issue focus and overall program theme.

Internships through SIT Bilbao will provide students with the opportunity to apply theory and practice, expand their analytical capacities, develop skills to work with local Spanish civil society organizations, concretely in the Basque Country a region of Spain with a longstanding tradition of grassroots organization, international cooperation and institutions that work in the context of the EU and the Spanish autonomic political organization.

**Topics and placements may vary according to the availability of each institution.*

Each student will be required to submit a final paper in which they process their learning experience throughout the internship, analyze an issue important to the organization, and apply what they learned to core themes of the program. Approved in advance by the Academic Director, SIT's SIT Study Abroad Review Board (for ethical clearance purposes), and the internship supervisor, the internship paper will involve interviews and other data collection methods relevant to achieving internship learning goals. Students will also prepare a presentation (similar to the one required of students who are in the independent study seminar) to demonstrate how the internship experience enhanced their understanding of the SIT program themes and its Critical Global Issues focus. The paper should also include a comprehensive schedule, specific skills and knowledge acquired through their experience. Rubrics for the focus project paper and presentation will be shared with students when in country. Lastly, as a practice of reciprocity, students will be required to submit a report directly to the placement organization about their learnings.

Learning Outcomes

The *Internship & Seminar* course comprises of 185 hours for four academic credits. Upon completion students will be able to:

- Demonstrate awareness of the ethics involved in an internship in the context of Spain;
- Describe, analyze, and synthesize their learning experience in the internship in the form of an internship paper;
- Articulate new learning from the internship experience in the form of an oral presentation;
- Show understanding of how Spain's civil society and institutional frameworks work in the context of the EU
- Assess the challenges and tensions that may emerge in a context with autonomous communities and self-determination demands such as Spain
- Gain meaningful and practical experience in their chosen field.

Language of Instruction

This seminar is conducted in English, but students will be exposed during the semester to vocabulary related to seminar content through in-country field visits in a wide range of venues prior to the start of the internship. Considering some internship placement requirements, and in order to fully accomplish learning outcomes, a certain level of language (Spanish) capacity may be expected before the start of the internship. Students should note that the main learning outcome is **not** to improve their Spanish level, but more to engage in experiential learning where their Spanish may be applied.

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 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.

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

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.

Required Readings:

Vallejo, F. and Herrera, J. (2016) "University Internships in Spain: What is missing for its stakeholders?", OBETS. Revista de Ciencias Sociales Vol. 11, n.º 2, 2016, pp. 547-566

Sides, Ch. Mrvica, Ann (2007) "Internships As Learning Experiences" in *Internship, Theory and Practice*, Routledge.

Module 2: The Internship Experience: Review and Reflection

This module occurs while students are fully participating in their internship. Critical and guided reflection will play a key role in student development and learning throughout the internship. Students will keep an internship journal in which they will reflect on questions and issues listed below. Journaling should be undertaken daily while keeping in mind the learning objectives of their observations and documentation. Students will submit two progress reports on their successes and limitations toward achieving learning objectives. Students will also meet with their instructors for reflection and discussion during the internship.

Cultural observations: *How is the professional environment different from what you are used to? What are you learning about working collaboratively in this culture? How do you find yourself reacting to and adjusting to cultural practices that are different from what you are accustomed to? How does it feel to be a foreigner in this environment?*

Theory and Practice: Digging Deeper: *How does the work of your internship site connect to important program themes? How has the experience at your internship challenged or affirmed the arguments in a reading or lecture from this semester?*

Skills and Experience: *What insights into this field have you gained through your internship? What skills are most valuable for this internship site and what opportunities have you had to improve your skills in this area? What has challenged you and how are you handling those challenges? How do you see this experience preparing you for future opportunities?*

Learning Goals: *How much progress have you made toward your learning goals? What experiences or activities have contributed to your ability to meet them? Are you learning something important you didn't anticipate and would like to add to your Learning Goals at this time?*

Required Readings:

Kapiszewski, D, et al (2015). *Field research in Political Science. Practices and Principles*, Cambridge University Press, p.234-265.

Recommended 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 12).

Module 3: Processing and Maximizing the Internship Experience

The final module occurs toward the end or after the internship and 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. Students will 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 and setting realistic goals for the future.

Additional seminar content will include:

1. Processing the End of the Internship Experience
2. Closure with Colleagues and Supervisors
3. Articulating the Experience through an oral presentation
4. Next Steps: How to include your internship on your résumé, how to frame the internship in a cover letter, and other ways to build on this experience.

Required Readings:

Kara, Helen (2018). *Research Ethics in the Real World*, Policy Press, Chapters 3 and 4.

Recommended Readings:

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

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 work 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.

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

1) Discussion and Reflection Sessions (10%)

Discussion and reflection sessions take place during the internship period. Students are expected to discuss experiences in the internship, reflect on the professional learning process, and respond to any prompts assigned by the internship instructor. These discussion and reflection sessions are key elements for personal, academic, and professional development during the internship. Depending on the circumstances, these sessions may be held in person or virtually.

2) Progress Reports (10%)

The progress report should document the student's progress toward achieving their learning objectives during the internship. Students also document 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.

3) Internship Performance (35%)

This evaluation by the academic director assesses the student's internship experience, overall professional achievements, and self-growth.

4) Oral Presentation (20%)

In the presentation, you should provide a succinct and clear description of the internship experience, a brief history of the organization where you interned, the activities undertaken, and key insights gained that are related to the core program themes. You should demonstrate effective management of the discussion with the audience and attend to the aesthetic elements of the delivery.

5) Final Paper (25%)

Students are expected to submit a 15-20-page 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 the activities accomplished, and strong and innovative aspects of the organization. The final paper must include thoughtfully articulated analytical writing that connects learning at the internship to the broader themes of the semester program and/or the investigation of one or more specific questions. Students will also reflect on the learning and research process throughout their placements through autoethnography, critical self-reflexivity, and intercultural lenses. 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% (5% each)
- Internship Performance – 35%
- Oral Presentation – 20%
- Final Paper – 25%

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: Internship Paper	
Category	Possible Considerations
Title / Abstract/Technical Aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The title is succinct and captures the essence of the internship experience -The acknowledgements are complete and professionally written -The abstract clearly summarizes the internship experience and learning outcomes -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
Contextualization and Organizational Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Important themes and background information are provided so reader understands the field in which the internship organization operates -The history and work of the internship organization, how its work relates to the program theme, and how it fits into the context of other similar organizations are all accurately described -The organizational structure, including division of responsibilities and the goals, objectives and activities of the organization are well elaborated -Care is taken not to harm by criticism, nor evaluate -The community served by the organization is described in sufficient detail
Internship Focus/Objectives/Justification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The paper specifies the focus area of the internship within the organization's broader work -The objectives of the internship are clearly presented and appropriate; how the objectives relate to the program theme and/or Critical Global Issue are clearly described. -The student's internship tasks/duties at the organization are presented and justified.
Information Acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -How information was gathered in order to compose the final internship paper is explained in a clear and accurate manner and supporting materials are included in appendices (if applicable) -A clear and complete description of the work undertaken is given, including dates and hours worked (put in an addendum).
Positionality and Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The paper acknowledges the intern's views, values, beliefs and other aspects of their personal background that influence their worldview. - The paper demonstrates ongoing self-reflection throughout the internship experience in relation to their positionality. -Human Subjects policies and ethical guidelines are adhered to and thoroughly discussed -Appropriate consideration is given to informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality of participants, in keeping with human subjects protocols and the SARB - approved internship learning agreement -The internship strengthens relationships and contributes to mutual trust between the author, the organization and its clientele in ways that are respectful, culturally appropriate, and collaborative -The internship project is responsive to host organization and/or host community needs, as applicable

Critical Reflection on Internship Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The description of tasks and responsibilities is clear. -The paper examines the extent to which objectives were achieved, how objectives changed or evolved over the course of the internship experience. -Key professional lessons learned through the internship experience are described with specific examples -A personal evaluation of performance in the internship is included with suggestions of how it could have been improved. -Ways in which student identity may have shaped their insights of the internship experience are described
Analysis of Critical Issues/Themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The manner in which the organization and its work are linked to the core themes of the program is described. -Analysis is given by comparing and contrasting the theory of the work/field studied throughout the semester with the practice of the work at the specific internship site. -Clear articulation of how the intern's knowledge and understanding of the core themes of the program were enhanced through the internship experience.
Conclusions & Recommendations for Future Interns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The main insights and lessons learned through the internship experience are detailed -Recommendations of opportunities or projects for future interns are described.
Effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Determinations of effort vary by program.