

Independent Study Project ISPR-3000 (4 credits)

Chile: Public Health, Traditional Medicine, and Community Empowerment

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

One of the most important parts of the cross-cultural learning process is the Independent Study Project (ISP). The ISP offers students the opportunity to undertake a specific and individualized independent field study project. Students may choose to incorporate a guided practicum experience into the project as well. The ISP provides access to material and human resources in Chile and facilitates greater understanding through further immersion into the host culture. Orientation, Spanish language training, homestays, excursions, and the academic seminars provide the information, resources, and additional skills training for the study. The direction and monitoring of the students during the ISP phase includes methods of learning as well as progress towards the finished project. The final paper, in turn, provides the material evidence of the capability of applying methodological approaches to field-based research and in synthesizing experiences in the host culture.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Introduce students to the concept of scientific method and research question formulation
- Enable students to convert their academic inquisitiveness into meaningful field research and results
- Allow students to engage in and conduct original research
- Provide students the opportunity to put into practice the theoretical material, methodologies, language abilities, and intercultural skills acquired during the course of the semester
- Put forth to students the ethical implications of conducting field research and the necessary preparative processes having to do with consent and the Local and Institutional Review Boards

Course Requirements

The project should be based on field study and designed to take advantage of the unique human and material resources available in Chile. To help determine the appropriateness of your preliminary proposal, you should ask yourself the following questions:

1. Could this project be done in the US? (If so, inappropriate topic)
2. Does this project require extensive library research? (If so, inappropriate topic)
3. Can I reasonably expect to complete this project in the actual ISP period (actual study period = 1 month) given the limitations of time, transportation, linguistic problems, access to resources, and costs? (If not, inappropriate topic)
4. Will this project involve me in extensive contact with Chileans/Mapuche/Aymara and their cultures? (If so, possibly an appropriate topic)

Could this project yield interesting, specific insight into some aspect of Chilean culture as well as new learning skills? (If so, possibly an appropriate topic)

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

Project Requirements

- Satisfactory completion of Research Methods and Ethics (RME)
- A majority of the ISP work is conducted in the field (as opposed to libraries, e.g.)
- At least 120 hours of work for a four credit ISP project
- Periodic progress conferences held with the academic directors
- A final project in the form of a major paper or material project (e.g., a portfolio of drawings, a photographic essay, weavings, etc.)
- A well prepared 20-minute oral presentation on the ISP to the program group at the final evaluation session.

Primarily, students must demonstrate the ability to synthesize the various components of the SIT Chile program. In addition, the project should contribute to a greater understanding of some aspects of a Chilean Health topic or Mapuche or Aymara reality. The quality of the oral presentation given at the final evaluation will form an important part of the final ISP grade as will the quality of the finished ISP. The paper's structure and mechanics also will be given serious consideration.

The following criteria will also be considered:

- Productive and appropriate use of 120 hours dedicated to the completion of the ISP;
- Demonstration of increased depth of understanding, analytical clarity, and cross-cultural sensitivity;
- Demonstration of the implementation of techniques learned in RME
- Accuracy of information

- Use of a diversity of primary sources of information (especially people)
- Use of library resources to analyze information from primary sources
- Effective oral and written presentations of the project
- Written evaluation of the project by a Chilean Project Director/Advisor
- Successfully meeting the ISP deadline

Assessment

Written Paper	65%
Oral Presentation	25%
Advisor Evaluation of Project	10%

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.

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.