Internship & Seminar
ITRN-3000 (4 credits)

Tunisia and Italy: Politics and Religious Integration in the Mediterranean

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 four-week internship with a local community organization, research organization, business, government agency, or international NGO. The aim of an internship is to enable students to gain valuable experience and enhance their skills in a career field/professional environment related to the core program themes.

SIT will use its extensive network to facilitate an internship placement for students where interviews may be required. The organization and the student’s internship activities, including the Internship Learning Agreement, must be approved by SIT’s Academic Director. SIT will maintain oversight over internship placements in line with SIT academic policies and student health and security guidelines. Ultimately, each student will need to take 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 program themes, positionality, culture, and ethics in the context of the internship.

Students will be informed of the types of internships available and the placement process early in the semester. Students must decide whether they want to undertake an internship by the fourth week of the program and will have ample opportunities to consult with SIT program staff. Internship placements may include associations promoting women’s rights, youth employment, microfinance, LGBTQ awareness.

Each student will be required to submit a final paper in which they process their learning experience on the internship, analyze an issue important to the organization, and apply what they are learning at the internship site to the core themes of the program. Approved in advance by the Academic Director, SIT’s Study Abroad Review Board (for ethical clearance purposes), and the internship supervisor, the internship paper may involve interviews and other data.
collection methods relevant to achieving internship learning goals. Students will also do a final presentation to demonstrate how the internship experience enhanced their understanding of the SIT program theme and its Critical Global Issue focus. The paper should also briefly document a comprehensive schedule and the specific skills and knowledge acquired through the experience. Rubrics for the focus project paper and presentation will be shared with students in country.

Learning Outcomes
The Internship and Seminar course comprises 185 hours of internship, briefings, in-class instruction and reflection, preparation of final assignments, interactive learning, and research activities. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate awareness of the ethics involved in doing an internship in the context of Tunisia;
- 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 Tunisia’s democratic consolidation and its main actors, especially civil society organizations;
- Assess the challenges related to Tunisia’s post-revolutionary political, economic, social challenges;
- Gain meaningful and practical experience in their chosen field.

Language of Instruction
This course is taught in English, but students will be exposed to vocabulary related to the internship through a wide range of venues and regional locales prior to the start of the internship. Knowledge of French is definitely an asset in the context of Tunisian administration; and so is Tunisian Arabic dialect.

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*

Internship Guidelines and Requirements

Strict guidelines seeking to protect vulnerable groups, such as refugees or undocumented migrants are respected. They include:

1. Full review by the SIT Study Abroad Review Board (SARB) for proposals involving research on refugees or migrants;
2. Organizations and institutions that host SIT interns are approved by the Academic Director and made aware of SIT’s statement of ethics;
3. Students are not placed at internship sites involving vulnerable groups;
4. The Research Method and Ethics course comprises an important component on internship and research on vulnerable groups;
5. For sensitive topics that can trigger stress, the interviewer should have training in counseling and psychosocial support.

Module 1: 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 during the internship. Students will keep an internship journal in which they respond to the questions/issues listed below as instructed. Journaling should be done daily; keeping in mind the learning objectives. Students will submit two progress reports on their successes and limitations toward achieving learning objectives. Students will also meet with their instructor and other internship students 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?

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; and content, layout, and general guidelines.

**Required Readings:**

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:**

Module 2: 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.

Session 1: Description of the Host Institution
This session focuses on the general guidelines for the description of the host institution. The session walks the student through samples of a brief description (one page) of the host institution for the internship, the nature of the services offered, and a profile of the customers
who use them. The session also highlights the importance of including brochures or collateral material that further describes the institution.

**Required Reading:**


**Session 2: Description of Tasks Performed on the Job**

This session provides guidelines for effective ways of describing tasks performed on the job. The session covers the importance of third-person narration (as if the student, acting as a manager, were writing it for a new employee/associate), outline form (except for the job summary section), and headings for each of the sessions. A suggested outline for this description includes:

- 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 does the student report
- Specific duties and responsibilities—a list should be provided to indicate all duties performed by the individual in this position

**Required Reading:**


**Section 3: Output of the Internship Experience**

This session focuses on output of the internship experience, which may include a proposal for a strategic response to an existing problem, a creation of a sustainable plan, a grant proposal, or research that responds to the need of an organization that links back to the program theme and the program’s critical global issue, Migration | Identity | Resilience.

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

This session allows students to 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 working 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, of completing tasks, handing over projects to and sharing insights with colleagues on the job, and setting realistic goals for the future.

Session content includes:
- Processing the End of the Internship Experience
- Closure with Colleagues and Supervisors
- Articulating the Experience and Setting Plans for the Future

Required Reading:

Session 5: How to Include Your Internship on Your Résumé
During this session, students will learn appropriate ways of including their internship on their résumés and in online professional platforms such as LinkedIn.

Session 6: Next Steps
This final session occurs in the final week of the program, as students plan their next steps, academically and professionally. Students discuss fears and strategies for building on this experience in other work settings, 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 and how to use this experience for future professional growth.

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.

Assignments and Evaluation
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.

Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

1) Discussion and Reflection Sessions (10%)
Discussion and reflection sessions take place on a weekly basis. 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) Two 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 (10%)
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 (35%)
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. 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. (Example at the end of syllabus.)

Assessment:
- Discussion and Reflection Sessions - 10%
- Two Progress Reports - 10%
- 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+

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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 (those of classmates, lecturers, and local constituents).
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.