

## Internship & Seminar

ITRN-3000 (4 credits)

### Morocco: Human Rights, Social Justice, and Cultural Transformations

*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.

The program works with organizations renowned in the fields of human rights, the politics of identity, culture, and minority rights. Internship placements and topics may include the following:

- NGOs advocating human rights
- NGOs promoting indigenous cultural rights
- Local associations providing support for HIV
- NGOs combating corruption and discrimination against minorities
- Promoting women's rights local or international organizations
- Organizing workshops on particular human rights topics with Moroccan NGO

- Assisting with the promotion of youth activism

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 Morocco;
- 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;
- Assess the challenges of human rights and multiculturalism in the context of Morocco;
- 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.

### **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: The Internship Experience in the context of Morocco:

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.

**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: Work Based Norms and Practices in Morocco

Students will gain a unique local experience by working with a diverse population in Morocco. They will develop their own understanding of professional customs and practices and gain skills that can make them effective leaders in their future careers. They will gain an insight into the multilingual situation and gender contrast in the work place. They will reflect on adapting to a different workplace dynamic.

#### Session 2: The Internship Experience : Review and Critical Reflections

During this session, the academic director or another designated collaborator with the program facilitates discussions through which students review and critically reflect upon their internship

experience. Assigned relevant readings and notes from the internship journal guide discussions.

*Required Readings:*

Arter, Michael L. et al. (2016). The Use of Reflective Journals to Stimulate Critical Thinking in the Academic Internship. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*, 27(1), 140- 156.

Green, M. E. (1997). *Internship success: real-world, step-by-step advice on getting the most out of internships*. McGraw Hill Professional.

Examine Your Lens: A Tool for Cross Cultural Understanding Retrieved from:

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1062113.pdf>

*Recommended Readings:*

Sweitzer, F. and King, M. (2013). *The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional and Civic Development in Experiential Learning (4<sup>th</sup> Edition)*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole. Section 1: Foundations and Section 2: Beginnings.

## **Module 2: Internship Final Paper and Presentation Design and Content**

This module focuses on the design and mechanics of the internship final paper. The module covers the final paper's structural design, organization, and guidelines for effective self-reflection on the internship experience and appraisal of acquired professional experience.

### Sessions 1 & 2: Internship Final Paper

The internship Final Paper provides an opportunity for the students to reflect on their entire internship experience. This report should summarize what they learned, assess how successful they were in achieving their learning objectives, and highlight any other insights about the organizations that hosted them.

### Session 3: Articulating Experience through an Oral Presentation

This module focuses on the mechanics and guidelines for the presentation of the internship final paper. The presentation should take 20 minutes and students are encouraged to use audiovisual aid/handouts to facilitate their presentations.

### Session 4: Including Internship in a Résumé and Cover Letter

This session will focus on the best ways to frame the internship in a cover letter, and how to highlight the internship experience in a résumé.

*Required Reading:*

Sweitzer, F. & King, M. A. (2014). *The Successful Internship*. Belmont: Brook/Cole. Section 3: Rythms and Section 4: Crescendos.

## **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) 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+
64-66%	D
below 64%	F

### **Expectations and Policies**

- Show up prepared, on time, and appropriately dressed for your internship. Comply with organization rules.
- Have progress report assignments completed on schedule and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions when in the field/office. Engage yourself in everyday life of the organization and initiate interaction.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (those of your internship supervisor and colleagues, classmates, lecturers, local constituents engaged with onsite 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.

