

Public Health Research Methods and Ethics RSCH-3500 (3 credits)

Argentina: Public Health in Urban Environments

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

The course introduces students to the conceptual and practical tools for gathering primary data and the knowledge and skills that are essential to forming constructive relationships with organizations and/or individuals, which are necessary for completing an academic project in the cultural context of Argentina. In particular, the course enhances students' skills at building rapport; initiating purposeful dialogue in the cultural context of Argentina; gathering, recording, and analyzing primary data; and writing a scholarly academic report. The course also pays particular attention to local and US higher education ethical considerations that guide primary data collection and how these could be translated within the local cultural context of Argentina and Public Health. Broadly, the seminar introduces students to both qualitative and quantitative approaches of social science field research.

The main emphasis of the seminar is on the development of empirical tools and ethics of interactive research skills involving the collection of primary data in different settings. The seminar includes lectures and discussions on the meaning and practice of experiential learning and student's positionality as researchers or interns in a study abroad context. Methodological contents prepare students for developing a research proposal using qualitative or quantitative methods of research in social sciences applied to Public Health area. Ethical contents provide the information and knowledge necessary to apply for proposal's ethical review and to conduct research work according to ethical rules. All students will participate in an overview of research design and methodological approaches to program themes. The overall aim is to help students hone their experience-based learning processes and prepare them for the development of an Independent Study Project (ISP).

Learning Outcomes

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

- Show an acute sense of positionality and perspective and operate independently, using cultural sensitivity, language skills, and local networks of trust built over the course of the semester;

- Demonstrate awareness of appropriate methods, including qualitative and quantitative, and ethics used in field research in the critical global issue of Public Health.
- Analyze and process primary data gathered in the field and draw valid and ethical interpretations and conclusions;
- Produce an Independent Study Project proposal that is in strict observance of ethical academic standards and local values and that includes a research question, sample review of the relevant literature, outline of the research methods, and anticipated ethical challenges and ways of addressing them.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in Spanish.

Instructional Methods

The SIT teaching and learning philosophy is based on experiential learning theory. This theory recognizes that learning is an active process that is not limited to the formal curriculum, but that learning takes place through various life experiences in which students are inspired to generate new ways of knowing and being.

This learning process is distinguished by approaching its study object from various access roads, which are synthesized and integrated into a final experience in which students apply what has been learned in social, academic and health care practice contexts.

Active learning transits in shared activities and spaces, which allow spontaneous groupings between participants to be transformed into groups and work teams. In the context of collaborative and coordinated work, students are encouraged to share with each other their expectations regarding learning experiences and training. Among other actions and attitudes that favor construction and application of teamwork skills participants are challenged to assume and assign roles in work situations; to be willing to recognize and work-out differences, barriers, conflicts between them and review attitudes that may affect the work group dynamic of the group work.

To encourage an active learning process, the Program:

- **Offers concrete and shared experiences, located in real contexts:**
 - Every day's life: Insertion in local culture by sharing daily life with a home stay family.
 - Learning: Immersion and interaction in different academic and non-academic, social and geographical environments that correspond to different institutional experiences (interacting with public or private institutions, including non-governmental organizations)
 - Teamwork: both in class-room activities and in health care practices, which favors collective learning (with others and from others).
- **Encourages reflexive observation, through classroom and outside of classroom peer's exchanges and collective reflection dynamics about what has been done. As a result of these exchanges, learning arises, both during and after them.**

→ For example, conducting interviews and case studies

- **Promotes abstract conceptualization by confronting previous ideas, beliefs and assumptions, with systematic knowledge. To do this:**
 - It offers the opportunity to participate in dialogical lectures in academic field and exchanges with experts in health field. These classes may have the format of expository classes as well as workshops.
 - Requires specialized readings
 - Requests the elaboration of conclusions, research project design, presentation of reports.
- **Provides opportunities for active experimentation in which students can apply new knowledge, awareness, other attitudes and skills, in different situations:**
 - Participating in real institutional and labor contexts that correspond to different levels of care, related to the area of interest (Health Internships).
 - Conducting an independent research project, promoting effective knowledge construction and authorship in writing (ISP projects).

Required Texts

See Course Schedule for a full listing. Students are required to have access to Canvas (provided by SIT).

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

Bibliographic review (15%): Students will prepare a synthesis of the readings highlighting main authors' findings, identifying different approaches, topics on debate etc.

CITI Training (5%): Complete online IRB training through CITI programs. This training addresses human subjects research protocols and ethical considerations essential for conducting ethical research. You can find a FAQ for students which includes guidelines on how to access the training at this link: [CITI - FAQ Doc for SIT students.docx](#).

Practice Interview (10%): Students will put into practice observation and systematization skills, summarizing information collected in an interview with NGOs representative in the Province of Misiones.

Survey Design (10%): Students will develop a draft survey with 10-15 fixed-response questions (open-ended questions can be included as well). Questions must align with the student's chosen research question. Students are not required to administer the survey, but rather include a 500-word written reflection on the process of designing the survey, with

consideration for ethics, local cultural norms, language, and possible implementation strategies.

Field Journal (15%): The Field Journal is the concrete application of experiential education, Students are encouraged to integrate personal experiences as a way of learning in a different cultural context. This learning will be developed through observation, reflection and analysis.

Draft Research Proposal (5%): Students will make a coherent and feasible draft ISP proposal in which they will manage to integrate the different necessary steps to carry out an investigation.

Research Proposal (30%): Students will make a coherent and feasible ISP proposal in which they will manage to integrate the different necessary steps to carry out an investigation. The proposal must include all ethics forms information completed and a model of informed consent for interviews.

Participation (10%): This includes active involvement in lectures, readings, discussions and excursions using the following criteria:

- Attendance - promptness to class and positive presence in class.
- Active Listening - paying attention in class and during field excursions, asking appropriate questions, showing interest and enthusiasm (this includes body language), entertaining contradictory perspectives, taking notes.
- Involvement in Class Discussions - either in small or large groups, sharing knowledge. This means challenging yourself to speak up if you usually don't, and also means allowing others to speak if you are a person who tends to dominate class discussions.
- Group Accountability – positive participation in the group during field excursions and classes; not keeping others waiting.
- Displaying Respect – culturally appropriate interaction with hosts, SIT program staff, SIT lecturers and communities.

Assessment

Bibliographic review	15%
CITI Training	5%
Practice Interview	10%
Survey Design	10%
Field Journal	15%
Draft Proposal	5%
Research Proposal	30%
Participation	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.
- Audience Considerations: Writing for this class will be read by your classmates, me, and whomever else you choose. Do not make public what you wish to remain private. In keeping with accepted practice within the discipline, other students and other professionals who provide instruction and academic support for SIT may use writing from this course for instructional training and assessment. All identifiers are removed when student writing is used for these activities.
- 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.
- Course Communication: Course documents and assignments will be posted on the learning management system, Canvas. Although the course calendar provides a broad overview and the general sequence of work and assignments for the course, what we accomplish in class will vary, and revisions to the calendar will be posted at the course site. You will need to check the course site regularly. You are responsible for letting me know about any network-related problems that prevent you from accessing or submitting assignments.
- Content Considerations: Some texts and activities you will encounter in this course delve into sensitive topics that may be emotionally and intellectually challenging. The readings I've assigned handle these topics thoughtfully and artistically; I wouldn't have assigned them otherwise. Our classroom is a place where we can engage with challenging ideas, question assumptions, and navigate difficult topics. That said, no student generated works should deliberately offend or disparage others, artistically or not. 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](#), [Accessibility Services](#), [Counseling Services](#), [Title IX information](#), and [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) resources.

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 N° 1 - Experiential Learning and Positionality in Field-Based Research			
This introductory module is designed to introduce students to field-based research experience in a study abroad context. Students learn how to relate to local communities and individuals. Most particularly, this module allows students to discover the power of experiential learning and use it as a tool to connect to local communities and individuals and develop into reflexive researchers who are attentive to their own positionality in relation to the local communities in which they engage for their research. Also, students are introduced to the topic of research ethics.			
N°	Topic and required readings	Professor	Student Activity
Session 1 RME 1	<p>The cultural context in research and action on the field. The Field Journal</p> <p>The role of observation as a research strategy (DIE Method). The ethical approach to fieldwork.</p> <p>SIT Study Abroad. Research Methods and Ethics in Public Health Handbook. Public Health Program in Urban Environments, 2020. Chapter I: Registration and Observation</p>	Valeria Lliubaroff	<p>1. Dialogue about Observation as a strategy for research. Student's exercise: the DIE Method applied to the analysis of a social reality portrayed in a photo. Assignment: Field Journal</p>
MODULO N° 2 – Introduction to the ISP			
This module will describe the ISP process and help students to brainstorm ideas and set goals for their ISP. The health research agenda. The local and the global health agenda. Links between the health agenda, research and public policies.			
N°	Topic and required readings	Professor	Student Activity

Session 1 RME 2	<p>Introduction to the ISP & Internship.</p> <p>The ISP and the Internship as integration and application of knowledge acquired in the Program. The ISP Proposal and its steps. The process of choosing the research topic. The internship experience and its steps. The process of choosing an internship opportunity. General guidelines for the preparation of the ISP and internship proposal, its structure and design.</p>	Ana Clara Camarotti PhD & Romina Ramirez	1. Active participation in a dialogue about ISP experiences and main requirements to conduct research in public health field.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SIT Study Abroad. Research Methods and Ethics in Public Health Handbook. Public Health Program in Urban Environments, 2020. Chapter II: Introduction to the ISP & Annex 1 		
Session 2 RME 3	<p>The ISPs according to thematic fields. Steps in elaborating the ISP proposal and RM&E Seminar schedule.</p>	Ana Clara Camarotti, PhD	<p>Dialogue on topics of interest to students for their ISP</p> <p>First approach of students to the structure of the ISP Proposal. Proposal design worksheet</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SIT Study Abroad. Research Methods and Ethics in Public Health Handbook. Public Health Program in Urban Environments, 2020. Chapter III: The ISP proposal. (Pages 15 to 18). Asamblea General ONU: Transformar nuestro mundo: la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible - páginas 1 y 2 / de 6 a 11 / de 15 a 31 Marradi, A., Archenti, N., & Piovani, J. I. (2007). <i>Metodología de las ciencias sociales</i> (1.ª ed.). Emecé Editores. 		
Field Journal review			

Module N°3 – Research Design			
The ISP proposal: steps for its elaboration. First approach to an area of interest. Defining the research topic and research problem: from topics to questions, from questions to problems. Defining general and specific objectives. The theoretical framework in research and theoretical knowledge as a basis for action & the tools and methods required for elaborating a research proposal and conducting a quantitative and/or qualitative field research.			
N°	Topic and required readings	Professor	Student Activity
RME 4	<p>Research design. The ISP Proposal and the steps for its preparation.</p> <p>Research design: definition of a topic, the construction of a research problem. And definition of research objectives</p>	Ana Clara Camarotti, PhD	<p>Definition of problems and objectives</p> <p>Exercise in class</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SIT Study Abroad. Research Methods and Ethics in Public Health Handbook. Public Health Program in Urban Environments, 2020. Chapter III: The ISP Proposal. (Pg. 15 to 29.) Güelman, M. (2024). <i>Encontrar el sentido de la vida: Consumo de drogas, rehabilitación y religión</i>. Imago Mundi. Menazzi, L. (2019). Acerca del proceso de investigación: Aprendizajes para construir un problema de investigación, avanzar en el trabajo de campo y redactar una tesis sin morir en el intento. <i>Revista Latinoamericana de Metodología de las Ciencias Sociales</i>, 9(1), e051. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definition of research questions Go from a topic of interest to a research problem Definition of the general objective and specific objectives.
RME 5	<p>The theoretical framework in research and theoretical knowledge as a basis for action.</p> <p>The definition of research objectives: general and specific. The development of the theoretical framework. The bibliographic review and the reading notes. Citation Forms (APA Style)</p>	Ana Clara Camarotti, PhD	<p><i>Exercise in class</i></p> <p>Selection of authors and key investigations for your own proposals.</p> <p>Preparation of bibliographic cards.</p> <p>Homework: reading and registering relevant papers to your research (it takes 2 weeks to read and register key investigations).</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SIT Study Abroad. Research Methods and Ethics in Public Health Handbook. Public Health Program in Urban Environments, 2020. Chapter III: The ISP Proposal. Anexo III. Information sources for the bibliographic review. APA Style citation Farji Neer, Anahí. (2023). La salud trans en Argentina: una revisión de publicaciones en revistas científicas (2012-2021). <i>Cuadernos Inter.c.a.mbio sobre Centroamérica y el Caribe</i>, 20(2). Jones, D. (2022). Estado del arte sobre paternidad de adolescentes en Argentina, 2000-2021: qué se conoce y por dónde seguir. Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires: Fundación Kaleidos. https://fundacionkaleidos.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/informe-paternidades.pdf 		
RME 6	Individual Meeting: review of the investigations selected for the ISP theoretical framework	Ana Clara Camarotti, PhD	Assignment: bibliographic review
Submit Bibliography Review			
Modulo N° 4: The ISP Proposal			

This module prepares the student for the ISP experience. It examines work-based norms and practices related to conducting research in Argentina. The module highlights the importance of applied methodology in the ISP experience and the expectations and responsibilities of the student. Based on learning and engagement in the preceding course modules, this module focuses on ISP final proposal development and guides students through the development of the Human Subjects Review (HSR) application. This critical phase in the course involves both large student group meetings and individual student meetings with the academic director, ISP program coordinator and the ISP advisor.

N°	Topic and required readings	Teacher	Student Activity
RME 7	Workshop: research process review.	Ana Clara Camarotti, PhD	Review of the proposal outline Individual Meeting: progress of the proposal draft. What is The Work Journal?
RME 8	Methodological strategy. Techniques for data collection from primary and secondary sources. Introduction to Quantitative, Quantitative & Mixed Methods Research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Core principles of quantitative research: objectivity, measurement, numerical data, statistical analysis, hypothesis testing ✓ Key concepts in quantitative research: variables (independent, dependent, control), operationalization, measurement scales (nominal, ordinal, interval, ratio)Introduction to quantitative research designs: surveys, experiments, correlational studies (brief overview of their basic structure and purpose) ✓ The role of hypotheses and research questions in quantitative research ✓ The opportunities to try out various data collection and analysis techniques in the course 		<i>Exercise in class</i> Selecting the methodology to be used in your ISP. Definition of who I am going to interview for my ISP Assignment: Interview Report (Misiones) & Survey desing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SIT Study Abroad. Research Methods and Ethics in Public Health Handbook. Public Health Program in Urban Environments, 2020. Chapter III: The ISP Proposal. • Vasilachis de Gialdino, I. (coord.). (2006). <i>Estrategias de investigación cualitativa</i>. Barcelona: Gedisa. 		
Submit Interview report			

Session 1	<p>Meeting with ISP Advisors: the ISP in the context of Argentina and the advisor's role</p> <p>Working with the ISP advisor during the ISP period.</p>	ISP Advisor	Dialogue about the role of the advisor in the ISP process. Discuss students and advisor's responsibilities and work organization during the ISP period.
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Module N°5 – Ethics in Public Health research and standard procedures for ethical conduct			
Ethical issues involved in scientific research in general and in the work in health field in particular. The historical development of ethics in scientific research. Basic concepts of informed consent, privacy, confidentiality, damage are analyzed in the light of practical experience in research in the field of health. Exploring institutional norms, issues of language, and expectations for ethical behavior while conducting research. The role of the Research Ethics Committee. Codes of ethics and institutional policies.			
N°	Topic and required readings	Professor	Student Activity
Session 1 RME 9	<p>Ethics in Public Health research</p> <p>Definition of Ethic. The historical development of ethics in scientific research. Basic concepts of informed consent, privacy and confidentiality of information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SIT Study Abroad. Research Methods and Ethics in Public Health. Public Health Program in Urban Environments, 2020. Chapter III: "The ISP proposal." (pg. 60 to 62). Corrine Glesne, (2005). Becoming Qualitative Researchers. An Introduction. Boston, Pearson, 3rd Edition. Chapter 6. 	Ana Rita Diaz Muñoz	<p>Active participation through bringing questions and sharing comments about bibliography</p> <p>Application of what has been worked for the resolution of ethical dilemmas in the field of research.</p>
Session 2	<p>The Role of the Ethics Committee in Research.</p> <p>The ISP proposal and possible ethical dilemmas. Hints and tips for field work.</p>	Ana Rita Diaz Muñoz Ana Clara Camarotti, PhD. & Romina Ramirez	<p>Active participation through bringing questions and sharing comments.</p> <p>Proposal design worksheet: steps 12 and 13</p>
Session 3	<p>Applying for the Methodology and Ethical Review Board.</p> <p>CITI Training</p>		Work with the ethics forms of your proposal that will then be reviewed by the Program Ethics Committee.

- SIT Study Abroad. Research Methods and Ethics in Public Health Handbook. Public Health Program in Urban Environments, 2020. Annex V and VI.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT CITI TRAINING - Instructions and link on CANVAS

Submit ISP draft proposal

Students must be prepared to submit a draft proposal of their ISP and receive feedback before final submission.

Submit ISP final proposal

Module N°6 – The research process: applying research methods and techniques.

The research process is analyzed through a practical case. Defining a topic and research objectives, building the conceptual framework, collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative information. Research methods in the field. Data base design and the analysis of basic statistical measures. Analysis of qualitative/quantitative information (interview / surveys). Writing the research report and presenting research results. Students will also review the ISP assessment rubric.

N°	Topic and required readings	Professor	Student Activity
Session 1 RME 10	<p>The analysis of qualitative information.</p> <p>Grounded Theory: C Coding and constant comparisons. Basic steps for the qualitative analysis of interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SIT Study Abroad, Research Methods and Ethics in Public Health Handbook, Public Health Program in Urban Environments, 2020. Chapter IV: "Data analysis for your ISP". Chapter V: "Work process recording." • Interviews transcriptions. • Camarotti, A. C., Jones, D. E., & Dulbecco, P. (2020). El impacto de los tratamientos en los modelos de masculinidad de varones con consumos problemáticos de drogas en el Área Metropolitana de Buenos Aires. <i>Revista Española de Drogodependencias</i>, 45(2), 47-63. 	Ana Clara Camarotti, PhD	<p>Active participation through bringing questions and sharing comments</p> <p>Students will work on the qualitative analysis of the interviews and the observations made in the field work for the preparation of the final report.</p>