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Internship & Seminar

ITRN-3000 (4 credits)

Ghana: Globalization, Cultural Legacies, & the Afro-Chic

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.

Course Logistics

Students will be informed of the types of internships available and the placement process early in the semester as well as through pre-launch modules. 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.

Students complete an internship and submit a culminating portfolio 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 portfolio should also document a comprehensive schedule and the specific skills and knowledge acquired through the experience. The focus will be on linking internship learning with the program's critical global issue focus and overall program theme.

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Internships through SIT Ghana will provide students with the opportunity to apply theory and practice, expand their analytical capacities, develop skills to work with local civil society organizations, concretely in western Africa with a longstanding tradition of grassroots organization, international cooperation and institutions at work in the African context.

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

Each student will be required to submit a final reflection 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, as part of their portfolio. Approved in advance by the Academic Director and the internship supervisor, the internship reflection paper will involve interviews and other data collection methods relevant to achieving internship learning goals. Students will also prepare a presentation (like 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 final reflection 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 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 specific country or region;
- Describe, analyze, and synthesize their learning experience in the internship in the form of a culminating portfolio inclusive of a reflection paper;
- Articulate new learning from the internship experience in the form of an oral presentation;
- Show understanding of the fundamental principles of CGI focus here and the responsibilities and obligations of;
- Assess the challenges organizations face in designing, delivering, or facilitating programs, services, and initiatives, or in carrying out mission that address community needs in diverse contexts;
- Gain meaningful and practical experience in their chosen field.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in English, and 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

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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.*

Pre-Arrival Preparation and Placement Process

- Students will complete a core competency seminar (~1 hour in Canvas), predetermined by Site Director and/or Academic Director from career specific themes (minimum of 4 core competencies).
- Students will receive a sample of available internship hosts and will start the preparation for the placement process (~1 hour). Internship placements will be finalized upon arrival within a week after orientation.

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*

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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 is an orientation and induction at the internship site. The student will be assigned a place and given an orientation into the organizational structure, introduction to staff, discussion on the rules and expectations of the internship organization. A meeting with the internship advisor to confirm the internship goals and tasks and to reviews objectives for the internship.

Required Readings:

Robinson, E. L. (2022). "The Impact of Experiential Learning on Social Work Education," *Journal of Social Work Values & Ethics*.

Sessions 2: The Internship Experience: Review and Reflection

Students will also meet with their instructor and other internship students for reflection and discussion during the internship. The reflection session will include conversation about cultural observations, progress in skill acquisition and achieving learning goals.

Required Readings:

Cheng, I. H. (2024). "The Impact of Ethics Instruction and Internship on Students' Ethical Perceptions."

Sweitzer, H. F., & King, M. A. (2021). *The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional, and Civic Development in Experiential Learning* (5th ed.). Cengage Learning.

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: Processing the End of Internship Experience

This session will include a group reflection on the overall internship experience including the progress made toward achieving the learning goals, the challenges and ethical dilemmas encountered, and how the internship helped students to better understand the concepts and themes of the program.

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Required Readings:
Banerjee, M. (2024). “A Case for Equity in Experiential Learning: Work-Based Learning as a Viable Alternative to Internships.” *Experiential Learning & Teaching in Higher Education (ELTHE)*

Adams, M. K., & Jessup-Anger, J. E. (2025). “The Roles of Supervisor Care and Trust and Sense of Belonging in Promoting Internship Satisfaction.” Teaching & Learning Inquiry.

Session 2: Closure with Colleagues and Supervisors
This session will include a group reflection on the overall internship and a presentation of the internship experience at the internship organization. You and your internship supervisor and colleagues need to assess whether you managed to use this unique opportunity to engage in mutually beneficial partnership with an organization committed to making a tangible contribution to its beneficiaries with the ultimate goal of contributing to a better world.

Session 3: Articulating the Experience Through an Oral Presentation
The presentation should take 20 minutes and students are encouraged to use audiovisual aid/handouts to facilitate their presentations. The presentation should include a brief overview of the internship experience, tasks performed, major output and a personal reflection and overall assessment of the experience

Required Reading:

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). (2025). *The Integration of Career Readiness into Experiential Learning and High-Impact Practices.*

Recommended Reading:
People in Aid, & Davidson, S. (2003). *Code of good practice in the management and support of aid personnel*. People in Aid. Retrieved from: http://peopleinaid.org
Al Gharaibeh, F. M. (2012). Obstacles in Formulating a Code of Ethics for Social Workers in Jordanian Institutions. *Asian Social Science*, *8*(1), 125-133.

Session 4: Internship and Job Opportunities
This session will discuss ways to build on the internship experience in addition to learning how to frame the internship experience in a cover letter and use to support job and graduate school applications.

Required Reading:
Rigby, J., Herring, C., Polledo, D. (2013). An Examination of Internships and Job Opportunities. Volume 29, Number 4.

Recommended Reading:
Switzer, F. and King, M. (2013). *The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional and Civic development in Experiential.*

Ethics
The internship experience must reflect SIT’s ethics policy and commitment to the values of
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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

Assignment Description and Grading Criteria
Brief Description of Assignments (additional details will be made available during the program)

Discussion and Reflection Sessions (15%)
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.

Progress Reports (15%) 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.

Internship Performance (30%): This assessment conducted by the Academic Director aims to evaluate the student's internship experience, encompassing their overall professional achievements and personal development. The performance evaluation will be carried out during a field visit organized by the Academic Director to the students' respective organizations. During this visit, the Academic Director will assess various aspects, including the students' commitment to attending, participating, and fulfilling their responsibilities in accordance with ethical guidelines as reported by their supervisors. Additionally, the evaluation will consider the students' accomplishments and contributions to their organizations. Additionally, there will be 2 feedback/evaluation reports throughout the internship experience (initial, mid (as needed), and final). Students will complete self-assessments at the start of each report and the internship supervisors will provide feedback from forms provided.

Internship Reflection Portfolio: Culminating Reflection Paper, Internship Projects, and Oral Presentation (40%): Students are expected to maintain an internship reflection journal throughout their internship experience. The electronic journal is confidential between the student and appropriate Internship Coordinator or Academic Director. All entries need to be weekly and dated; however, it is recommended students keep notes daily but complete the journal at the end of each week to capture all relevant internship information. In responding to the reflection prompts, students should include any event, issue, conversation, experience, information, impression, emotion, or conclusion that seems relevant. The journal should be well-written, well-organized, and capture thoughtful reflection of internship practice. The portfolio consists of various elements: any internship projects completed (reports, campaigns, graphics, etc.), progress reports, the final

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reflection paper, and the oral presentation.

Culminating Reflection Paper:
Students are expected to submit a 8-10 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 & Reflections Sessions		15%
Progress Reports	15%	
Internship Performance		30%
Internship Reflection Portfolio		40%

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

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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, 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, Accessibility Services, Counseling Services, Title IX information, and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion resources.

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RUBRIC: Internship Reflection Paper	
Category	**Possible Considerations**
Title / Structure/Technical Aspects	-The title is clear, engaging, and reflects the themes of personal growth or reflection -The paper is well-structured (introduction, body, conclusion) with smooth transitions between sections -In-text citations and references are used appropriately if outside sources or course materials are referenced. -Writing is clear, free from grammar, and spelling errors, and professional in tone. -Formatting (spacing, font, headings) follows academic standards and is visually organized.
Contextualization of Experience	-The context of the experience (setting, role, environment) is described with enough detail for the reader to understand the backdrop of reflection. -Background is concise and avoids excessive focus on organizational history; emphasis is on how the setting shaped the reflective experience. -The community, stakeholders, or people involved are described respectfully and thoughtfully.
Goals, Expectations, and Learning Objectives	-The paper identifies the students' initial goals, expectations, or assumptions before/during the experience. -Shifts or evolutions in these goals and expectations are clearly explored. -Connections to broader academic, professional, or personal development themes are articulated.
Self-Reflection & Positionality	-The student critically reflects on how personal identity, background, values, or beliefs shaped their perspectives. -Ethical awareness is evident (respect, responsibility, cultural sensitivity, confidentiality when relevant) **-**The paper shows honesty and depth in acknowledging challenges, tensions, or moments of growth.
Critical Reflection on Experience	- The student describes and reflects on key tasks, responsibilities, or moments of significance. -Reflection goes beyond description by analyzing why experiences were meaningful and what was learned from them. -Lessons learned are specific, supported by examples, and connected to future professional or personal growth. -The student identifies strengths and areas for improvements in their own performance.
Integration with Broader Themes	-The paper connects personal insights to larger academic, professional, or societal themes (e.g., intercultural communication, global leadership, ethical engagement, career readiness). -Reflection incorporates relevant theories, concepts, or frameworks discussed in the program/course. -Clear evidence is provided of growth in understanding critical themes or competencies.
Conclusions & Forward-Looking Insights	-The student synthesizes main insights gained through the reflective process. -Future applications of the learning are articulated (e.g., how insights will shape academic paths, career goals, or community engagement). -If appropriate, suggestions for peers/future participants are included.

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Effort & Depth of Reflection	-The paper demonstrates sustained, thoughtful engagement with the reflective process. -Ideas are developed in depth rather than surface-level description. -The 8-10 page requirement is met with substance and quality (not filler).

RUBRIC: Internship Portfolio	
Category	**Possible Considerations**
Portfolio Organization & Technical Aspects	- The portfolio is complete (weekly journals, projects, culminating reflection paper, oral presentation). -All elements are clearly labeled, organized, and easy to navigate (digital files or electronic submission). -Written work is free of grammar and spelling errors, well-formatted, and professional in appearance. -Multimedia files (video, audio, graphics) are functional, accessible, and professional in quality.
Reflection Journal	-Journal entries are weekly and dated (recommended: daily notes compiled weekly). -Entries capture thoughtful, honest reflection on experiences, events, emotions, and insights. -Writing demonstrates critical thinking, personal growth, and self-awareness. -Journal is well-organized and responsive to provided prompts. -Confidentiality and professionalism are maintained.
Internship Projects (Multimedia/Deliverables)	-Projects (reports, campaigns, graphics, videos, podcasts, etc.) are complete, relevant, and demonstrate substantive effort. -The content is clear, accurate, and connected to the student's internship role and goals. **Format-Specific Guidelines:** • **Written reports**: 5–10 pages, professional structure, clear objectives, references if appropriate. • **Video projects**: 5–7 minutes, clear audio/visual quality, well-edited, professional tone. • **Podcasts**: 8–12 minutes, clear audio, engaging structure (intro, main content, conclusion). • **Graphic campaigns/designs**: Minimum of 3–5 polished pieces, coherent theme, professional quality. -Projects demonstrate creativity, professionalism, and alignment with organizational and course learning outcomes.
Culminating Reflection Paper (8-10 pages)	- Paper is well-structured with introduction, body, and conclusion. -Context of the internship is described concisely (setting, role, tasks). -Critical self-reflection demonstrates growth, challenges, and lessons learned. -Paper integrates broader academic/professional themes (career competencies, intercultural learning, ethics). -Writing is clear, professional, and adheres to academic standard; follows rubric provided)
Oral Presentation	- Presentation clearly communicates key insights, experiences, and learning outcomes. -Organization is logical, with an engaging introduction, body, and conclusion. -Presentation style is professional (clear voice, appropriate pace, confident delivery). -Visual aids (slides, graphics, examples) are clear, effective, and professional in design. -Time is respected (10–12 minutes).

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Depth of Reflection & Integration	-Portfolio demonstrates consistent, thoughtful reflection across formats. -Connections are made between internship experiences, academic concepts, and personal/professional development. -Evidence of growth in NACE-aligned competencies (self-development, intercultural communication, collaboration, global leadership, equity/inclusion, etc.). -Student articulates how the experience will influence future goals or practice.
Effort & Professionalism	-Evidence of consistent effort across all elements of the portfolio. -Work reflects professionalism, respect for host organization, and responsiveness to feedback. -Multimedia and written work meet expectations for quality and completeness. -Submission is on time and follows all guidelines.

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