



KIIS Costa Rica, Summer 2018

SPAN 455: Independent Explorations in Education, Health, and Leadership



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Syllabus subject to change

COURSE DESCRIPTION

KIIS Costa Rica offers independent studies in ESL, Education, Public Health, and Leadership. Through this form of experiential learning, students integrate knowledge and theory with practical application in a professional setting abroad. This independent study course is a partnership guided by the student, a faculty mentor, and an on-site supervisor in Costa Rica. In Costa Rica, students can choose between independent studies in local elementary schools, teaching ESL to college-aged students, and public health worksites. (Because we will have a professor of leadership studies in our group, we may also be able to arrange specific opportunities to learn about leadership abroad.)

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be afforded multiple opportunities to practice oral and written reflection. Students will share their reflections with the professor and during group discussions. They will also learn about reciprocity, an essential component in community-based learning. There will be opportunities to share collective and unique experiences, as well as challenges and concerns. In journals, students will respond to carefully framed questions that allow for a critical examination of their experiences. All independent study students will submit a culminating written report and deliver a public presentation to the KIIS Costa Rica group and community members about their overall experience. *This course requires proficiency in Spanish.*

COURSE COMPONENTS

Attendance Policy/Participation

Successful progress in a language course requires that students keep up with assigned material. Class discussions are also essential. For these reasons, daily attendance is mandatory.

****Please note that as with all KIIS Costa Rica classes, academic dishonesty will be reported to the Executive Director and to your home campus.**

Written Reflection Prompts

Writing in Spanish is fundamental to this course. You must complete the essay prompts on time. You should complete all of the essays as specified on the syllabus and be ready to share what you write with your fellow students. Please consult me *immediately* if you do not understand any aspect of your graded assignment.

Final Essay

There will be an eight-page written essay in Spanish due at the end of the course. It will incorporate and be developed from your shorter essays (see above).

COURSE POLICIES

1. **Come to class and go to your worksite.** Any absence will make it more difficult for you to succeed in the course.
2. **Talk and Participate.** Expect to speak in Spanish frequently while we are abroad in order to get an ‘A’ in participation. Those who do not (or who only rarely speak up) will “fail” this aspect of the course.
3. **Read the assignments before class.**
4. **Don’t cheat. I take this very seriously.** Plagiarism or cheating in any form will not be tolerated. Everything you write must be *entirely your own original work*. You cannot use the internet during exams. You cannot copy another student’s work. You cannot assist another students and allow them to turn in work that is yours. You cannot witness cheating and let it go unreported. This is also academic dishonesty. Any acts of cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the KIIS Executive Director and your home campus, and may result in failing the course, suspension or further disciplinary action.
5. **Turn off your phone.** DO not check your phone or send messages during class. This is not negotiable. Checking your phone during class is extremely rude and disrespectful. For the same reason we will **not use laptops** in class for any reason. (In fact, you are strongly discouraged from bringing a laptop with you to Costa Rica.)
6. **Do not eat in class.** Finish before we start. You cannot speak Spanish with your mouth full.
7. **Do not leave class.** I am serious—unless you are suddenly physically ill and leaving to go immediately to the hospital, don’t leave class. It is distracting and disrespectful. Plan your bathroom visits accordingly. Along these lines, do not arrive late to class. If class has already started and you arrive late, then you are interrupting. If you interrupt more than once in a summer then it is an **unexcused absence and your final grade will be lowered by 2%**.
8. You are responsible for knowing what happens in class. When you miss class, you are responsible for getting notes from another student. Do not miss my class and then email me to ask what I covered. If you are having trouble keeping up, make an appointment to see me.

Attendance Policy

Successful progress in this course requires that students keep up with assigned material. Class discussions and exercises are also essential. For these reasons, daily attendance is required.

Unannounced quizzes will be given throughout the summer to reinforce important homework assignments. These pop quizzes will be graded as homework assignments. There will not be any make-ups for pop quizzes.

Granting of Incompletes: A grade of Incomplete can only be issued under **rare** circumstances.

Classroom Accommodations for Students: Students with physical impairments and learning disabilities will sometimes need accommodations to help them have an equal opportunity to learn. These can include seating location preferences, permission to tape lectures, and extra time on tests and other assignments. Federal and state laws require the colleges to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities who request such accommodations. Whatever accommodations are provided, if any, should be the result of a discussion between the student and who will then provide a signed, dated accommodation sheet for the student to show professors and for professors to sign.

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) is legislation designed to protect your rights as a student. I will not share your grade information with anyone, even a parent.

GRADING SCALE

A	=	90-100	D	=	60-69
B	=	80-89	E	=	59 and below
C	=	70-79			

GRADE BREAKDOWN

Worksite participation	25%
Class discussion	10%
Written essay prompts	40%
Final written essay	25%
TOTAL	100%

Written Reflection prompts

Students use the following prompts and write reflective essays in their composition notebooks. You should finish all reflection essays by the end of your time at the worksite. Combine the reflections into one longer paper of 8–10 pages. This paper can easily be developed into an undergraduate conference presentation.

Reflection paper 1: Letter to self (expectations)

In the letter to yourself, write where you are working and with whom you expect to be working. What skills do you have that will make you a good match for this site? What do you think you will be doing? What are the challenges you expect to have? What do you hope to contribute to the worksite? What ethical issues might be involved in your work in the community? What precautions might you take to prevent ethical problems from occurring in your assignment? Now write three questions that you have about your worksite and service work in general that you hope to be able to answer by the end of the course. How do the readings you completed relate to your job?

Reflection paper 2: Roles

As a worker in Costa Rica you play a different role than you do as a college student. Describe this new role. What specific tasks and behaviors are expected of you? What obligations and rights do you have as a result of being in this role? Compare this new role with your role as a student at home on campus. Are you experiencing any strain, conflict or distancing?

Reflection paper 3: Space and Inventory

Setting: What are your most vivid first impressions of the worksite (school, office, facilities, or agency)? Describe settings, people, actions and positive or negative feelings you are having.

Inventory: Develop an inventory for the community being served, and in particular, the problem you are addressing or work you are doing. What are the resources, who are the local leaders, what roles to certain organizations play, what relationships exist, what other work has been done, what are the various attitudes about the project, what are the challenges, and *where* are they?

Reflection paper 4: Interview

Interview a classmate: Interview another student about their experience, take notes, and summarize what they report. Ask them where they work and how often. Write down one success they have had and one thing they still need to work on. What has been surprising to them? What is one piece of advice they have for other students who want to complete internships in the future?

Reflection paper 5: Community Impact

How do you think your presence in the community impacts the people with whom you work? What impact has this assignment had on you? Illustrate your points with specific experiences you have had this summer. Have you ever felt hopelessness, despair, discouragement or burnout related to your work? How

have you dealt with this? How can reflection help? What are some of the problems facing the world today? How does your work connect or address these issues?

Reflection paper 6: Different from you

Identify a person that you got to know during this experience who is significantly different from you. What are the needs or challenges facing them? What is one way you've allowed yourself to be changed from knowing this person? How do you think they will impact you beyond the time you spend at your worksite?

Reflection paper 7: Slideshow

Create a slideshow of at least ten photos of your worksite. Include important people, places and events. In your journal entry describe each of the photos. You can do this on your phone (consider downloading Google Slides).

Reflection paper 8: Race, ethnicity, wealth, poverty and equity

Have your feelings about race, ethnicity or class adapted or changed while working in your jobsite? How do race, ethnicity, wealth, and poverty impact the people at the place where you work? To what extent have you developed a basic knowledge of some cultural aspects of Costa Rica? How have you expanded your understanding of at least two different cultural perspectives? In what way did you enhance your ability to think critically about race, class, and social relations in Costa Rica?

Reflection paper 9: Network of mutuality

Martin Luther King said: "All . . . are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny . . . I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality." How does that quotation relate to your time here? How does the place you work fit into society? What is your place there? What have you learned there that will serve you in other venues?

Reflection paper 10: Leadership

Examine the leadership at the organization where you work from three levels: An individual and their leadership style, how a group responds to leadership, and the impact of the leadership at your organization outside of that organization.

Reflection paper 11: Typical day Describe what a typical day might be like for someone who uses the services of the organization you work with.

Reflection paper 12: You changed

How are you different now at your work location compared to the day you entered? How are you similar to and different from others there? In what ways did being different help or hinder the group? What have you learned about yourself?

Reflection paper 13: Challenges

What would you change about this organization if you were in charge? What were the best, worst, and most challenging things that happened?

Reflection paper 14: Reread your letter

Reread the first entry you wrote to yourself at the beginning of the summer. Describe what you have learned about yourself during this experience as a student, as a worker, teacher/educator, and as a person using the following questions as a guide. Are you able to answer any of the questions you had in the first letter? Which of your initial perceptions have changed? What have you learned about yourself? What have you learned about your community? What have you contributed to the worksite? What values, opinions, and beliefs have changed? What was the most important lesson you learned? How have you been challenged? What should others do about this issue? What impact did you have on the community?

**Print and bring a signed copy of the following contract.

COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING STUDENT CONTRACT

You have enrolled in a course with a community-based learning (CBL) component that requires ongoing involvement throughout your summer. Reflection and reciprocity are essential components in community-based learning.

Community Based Learning (CBL) is a pedagogical approach that is based on the premise that the most profound learning often comes from experience that is supported by guidance, foundational knowledge, and intellectual analysis. The opportunity for students to bring knowledge and ideas based on personal observation and social interaction to the course themes and scholarly material brings depth to the learning experience. The communities of which we are a part in Costa Rica can benefit from the resources of our faculty and students and the courses can be educationally transformative in powerful ways.

By enrolling in this course and participating at a worksite, you agree to the following:

1. I am committed to spend the minimum number of hours required by my professor at the community worksite.
2. I understand what days and times I am scheduled to work. If I am unable to make a shift I will contact my site supervisor as soon as possible (preferably no less than twenty-four hours notice).
3. I will not bring any unauthorized visitors or friends to my community service organization without permission of my work supervisor.
4. All contacts with other staff, volunteers, community members, and clients that my community service organization serves will be appropriate and professional. I understand that I am expected to act in a mature manner at all times.
5. I will record all hours worked/served on my Timesheet and Evaluation form and will obtain my supervisor's signature each time I serve my organization.
6. I will treat my community involvement as I would treat any other professional or academic commitment by arriving on time, dressing appropriately, and performing the tasks assigned to me with compassion and respect for others.
7. I understand that if my behavior comes into conflict with those expectations then I am subject to the consequences as outlined in KIIS policy and the Costa Rica Student Handbook, and that my academic evaluation for the course may suffer as a result.
8. **I will not divulge any private information about other staff members, volunteers, community members, or clients served by my community service organization.** I will abide by the rules of confidentiality as they pertain to my community site.

Student Signature

Printed Name

Date

Community Service Organization(s): _____