CIEE Prague, Czech Republic

Course title: Directed Independent Research
Course code: INDR 4900 PRAG
Programs offering course: Central European Studies, Communication, New Media, and Journalism
Language of instruction: English
U.S. semester credits: 3.00
Contact hours: 45.00
Term: Spring 2021

Course Description

CIEE supports qualified students who wish to pursue an academically rigorous independent research project while abroad. In order to enroll, students must submit a research proposal including a clearly defined research topic, explanation of research plans, description of preparation in the planned area of study, list of resources, tentative outline of a final paper, and suggested schedule of progress. Each student completes a total of 100-120 hours of research and meets regularly with an advisor to complete an academically rigorous, ethically sound, and culturally appropriate research project and final research paper. Approval for participation in Directed Independent Research must be obtained from CIEE and the student's home institution prior to arrival on the program.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Use critical thinking, literacy, digital literacy and problem-solving skills in the context of conducting research.
- Analyze primary and secondary sources.
- Apply ethical standards and academic integrity in the research.
- Collect and evaluate data gathered through the research project.
- Develop a scholarly research paper with a defensible argument, supported by evidence and accurate citations.
- Defend the research before a panel of experts.
- Suggest additional research to be conducted in prospective fields.

Course Prerequisites

Research proposal with a clearly defined research topic, explanation of research plans, description of preparation in the planned area of study, list of resources, tentative outline of a final paper and suggested schedule of project must be submitted to the CIEE Prague Academic Director for approval. The student must also secure an approval by his home institution which is to be submitted alongside the research proposal.

Methods of Instruction

The student will meet with his/her research advisor regularly, the total of these meetings comprising approximately 15 hours. This will ensure academic integrity and direction throughout the research process. Additionally, the student will conduct approximately 100 independent research hours.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Faculty Advisor Meetings 20%
2. Research Paper 40%
3. Annotated Bibliography 10%
4. Final Presentation 20%
5. Field Journal 10%
TOTAL 100%

Course Requirements

Faculty Advisor Meetings
The student will meet with his/her research advisor regularly throughout the semester. The schedule of meetings will be determined based on mutual agreement between the student and the advisor and submitted via the Canvas course page no later than by the end of Week 2. The research schedule and project milestones will be submitted via the Canvas course page by the end of Week 4. During the meetings, the student will present the progress and advances in the field work and research based on the research schedule. The student will submit the first draft of the project and main findings by the end of Week 6.

**Research Paper**

The student will conclude the term with a research paper (4,000-6,000 words) that evidences the proposed project. The paper will include a literature review, an outline of the methodology used and suggestions for future research. The exact scope of the paper will be determined upon an agreement between the student and his/her research advisor.

**Annotated Bibliography**

The student will develop and submit an annotated bibliography together with the research proposal. The bibliography will be assessed by the research advisor as to the adequacy in scope and depth for the research.

**Final Presentation**

The student will present and defend his/her findings before a panel consisting of faculty and experts in the field of research. The presentation will address the main questions for the project, milestones and final results. Following the presentation, the student will answer questions concerning the research project raised by the faculty and experts and defend his/her research findings. The Final Presentation notes or PowerPoint slides are to be submitted via Canvas prior to the Final Presentation, by the end of Week 12.

**Field Journal**

The student will keep a journal of his/her notes and findings. Journal entries will be submitted to the research advisor via Canvas on a regular basis, at least 5 days before the scheduled student-advisor meeting, and will be graded on organization and progress of research.

**Attendance**

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program.

If you will miss a class for any reason, notify the Program Coordinator and your instructor beforehand via Canvas. You are responsible for any materials covered in class during your absence, and except in the specific cases listed below, credit will not be granted for missed assessments.

Excessive absences will result in a notification letter, and finally a warning letter, sent to you and your home school, based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of course hours missed</th>
<th>Number of CEE classes</th>
<th>Minimum penalty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 10%</td>
<td>One to Three 90-min. classes; or One 180-min. class</td>
<td>No penalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10% - 20%</td>
<td>Four 90-min. classes</td>
<td>Written notification* to the student, followed by a warning letter to the student and home school; 3% reduction in the final grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Five 90-min. classes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two 180-min. classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>More than 20%</td>
<td>Six 90-min. classes; or Three 180-min. classes</td>
<td>Automatic course failure, and possible expulsion with notification to the home school</td>
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* The notification letters are intended to ensure that you are well advised in advance of any potential for failure or dismissal, so that you can take steps to avoid this.

As the table shows, **missing more than 20% of any class (e.g., due to undocumented illness, travel delays, flight cancellations, over-sleeping, etc.) results in automatic failure of the course.**

If you miss an assessment in class due to an absence, you will be able to make it up in the following instances:

- You provide a relevant doctor's note from a local medical professional to your Program Coordinator within 24 hours of your absence (a scan or photograph sent via e-mail are acceptable)
- A CIEE staff member verifies that you were too ill to attend class.
- You provide evidence of a family emergency to your Program Coordinator.
- You have an approved absence related to the observance of a religious holiday from the Academic Director based on a request submitted before you arrived onsite.

**Please note:** Absences incurred due to documented illness, documented family emergency or the observance of a religious holiday approved before arrival onsite do not count towards the total of absences. Students may self-certify one absence due to illness without providing a doctor's note as long as they notify the Program Coordinator within 24 hours of their absence by e-mail or a text message.

**Other attendance-related policies**

If you transfer from one CIEE class to another during the Add/Drop period, you will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of the new class provided you were marked present for the first session(s) of the original class.

If you are over 15 minutes late for a class, the instructor is required to mark you absent.

In case of class conflicts (irregularities in the class schedule, including field trips and make-up classes), always contact the Academic Department to decide the appropriate course of action.

Please remember to track your attendance on the Canvas Course Sites and report any errors in the record to the Academic Department within one week of the discrepancy date, as later claims may not be considered.

These attendance rules also apply to any required co-curricular excursion, activity, or event, and to for-credit internships.

CIEE staff does not manage absences at partner institutions providing direct enrollment classes (FAMU, ECES and FSV), but they have similar attendance policies and attendance is monitored there. Grade penalties may result from excessive absences.

*N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.*

**Weekly Schedule**

**Week 1**
Class: Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography

**Week 2**
Class: Research Particulars and Schedule

**Submission of the student-advisor meetings schedule by the end of Week 2**

**Week 3**
Class: Research Milestones

Field Notes (to be submitted at least 5 days prior to the student-advisor meeting)

**Week 4**
Class: Independent Work

**Submission of the research schedule and milestones by the end of Week 4**

**Week 5**
Class: Methodology and Literature

Field Notes (to be submitted at least 5 days prior to the student-advisor meeting)

**Week 6**
Class: Independent Work

**Submission of the first draft of the project and main findings by the end of Week 6**
Week 7
Class: Discussion of the first draft and main findings

Week 8
Class: Research Status

Field Notes (to be submitted at least 5 days prior to the student-advisor meeting)

Week 9
Class: Independent Work

Week 10
Class: Findings

Possible extra meeting to discuss key components of the Final Paper and Presentation

Week 11
Class: Independent Work on the Final Paper and Presentation

Week 12
Class: Independent Work on the Final Paper and Presentation

Submission of the Final Presentation by the end of week 12

Week 13
Class: Final Presentation and Defense of the Research Project

Submission of the Final Paper by the last day of the Program

Course Materials
Readings

Readings and other resources will be specified based on a discussion between the student and the advisor. During the first meeting, the student will propose a list of materials to explore and the advisor will comment on it, approve and propose additional readings. The reading list will further develop throughout the semester, reflecting the progress and direction of the research.