

## Independent Research Projects

SSA Education Abroad offers students a unique opportunity to investigate topics of personal and academic interest for credit while on our semester and academic year programs in Spain, Argentina, and Puerto Rico. By pursuing an Independent Research Project (IRP), you can personalize your program with studies designed specifically to meet your needs and the requirements of your home institution. In past semesters, students have undertaken IRPs in the fields of music, literature, visual arts, theater, dance, and business, among others.

One student, for example, completed an IRP focusing on the works of celebrated Spanish poet and dramatist Federico García Lorca. She combined independent reading and research with acting classes and even worked on a production of García Lorca's 1936 play *La Casa de Bernarda Alba*. Another student researched the social, cultural, and political implications of graffiti art on the streets of Seville and, as a final project, did an interactive visual presentation that engaged other students, staff, and professors in a memorable and creative evening! Several students have taken private classes and combined them with an IRP for credit in various other academic disciplines.

If you wish to pursue an IRP, you must submit a one-page Independent Research Project Proposal Form at least 2 months before the start of your program overseas. The form asks for a description of the IRP, methods of evaluation of your work while abroad, and the signature of the approving faculty member or dean of your home institution. In some cases, work is evaluated on site and a grade assigned on the SSA transcript; in other cases, you may be required to submit your work to your home academic advisor for evaluation and award of grade and/or credit.

As a student with an approved Independent Research Project, you receive tutorial support from a member of our faculty or administration through regular meetings and discussions during the semester. This tutor monitors your progress and serves as a resource while your investigation progresses.

The SSA Independent Research Project option provides you with almost limitless possibilities for specialized study while in Spain, Argentina or Puerto Rico. If you wish to discuss this program and your ideas further, please contact the SSA office.

## Independent Project Research Proposal Form

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Location & Term: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Please attach a one-page description of your project, being as specific as possible. Describe its requirements and aims, and how you plan to achieve them. If there is a direct relation between the research topic and the host country, please elaborate further on this point.*

### Academic Guidelines for the IRP:

- Students meet with the tutor (generally a professor or graduate student from the host institution) for an average of 12-15 clock hours throughout the semester. Some students may need additional hours depending on the level of complexity of their research.
- Students receive a comprehensive reading list and study questions to begin research.
- The objectives of the tutorials are for students to discuss their research findings with a specialist and to engage in dialogue and analysis.
- Once the IRP is concluded, students receive a final grade based on their participation during the tutorials, attendance, and the quality and content of the final project.

### The Expectation of Credit Transfer for this Project to the Home Institution:

SSA awards 3 credits for an IRP. If you need to earn more credits for the IRP, please specify the total number of credits and your petition will be submitted to the Director of Academic Affairs for approval.

Type of Report (research paper, oral presentation, audiovisual project, etc.) required by the Home Institution:



Approximate Number of Pages of Report (applies only to research papers):

Specific requirements of the home institution for this project or for the transfer of these credits:

Specify the IRP title that should appear on the SSA transcript (example: IRP on 20th-century Spanish Theater):

Home Institution's Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor/Professor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date (mm/day/yyyy) : \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Signer: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTES:**

*\*Independent Research Projects at SSA are normally for 3 semester hours of credit and require prior approval by the home college or university. This form must be submitted to SSA at least 2 months before the start of the student's program abroad.*