

# The WSP Handbook

## An Insider's Guide to the World Studies Program

Fall 2010

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### Introduction

The World Studies Program (WSP) is a four-year course of study that integrates the best traditions of liberal arts learning and international studies with a six-to-eight-month working internship in a foreign culture. Upon completion of the program, you receive a Bachelor of Arts or Science in International Studies and graduate with the combined advantages of a liberal arts education and an international resumé— a head start in the world of international work.

WSP students have interned in journalism, business, education, human rights, public policy, agriculture, epidemiology, ecotourism, relief work, gender studies, development and scientific research. They have studied global issues from a wide variety of disciplinary perspectives: anthropology, environmental studies, computer science, literature, history, sociology, political science, economics, chemistry, biology and the arts. Graduates of the program have attended many prestigious graduate schools, including the University of Chicago, the University of Pennsylvania and New York University. And today, the program's graduates are working in such fields as law, environmental policy, social work, education and medicine.

Marlboro's World Studies Program degree is granted in association with the School for International Training (SIT) in Brattleboro. SIT, a world leader in international education

and exchange, sponsors programs for students and professionals from many different countries and offers opportunities for personal encounters with students, professionals and scholars from all over the globe.

WSP demands strong motivation on the part of its students. For those who rise to the challenge, the rewards are great. Often students in the program bond together based on common interests in global and cross-cultural issues. Students who complete the program develop self-knowledge, confidence and cross-cultural skills only the rarest undergraduates possess; and they become prime candidates for work in international fields.

## **Goals**

The World Studies Program is designed to help you acquire the cultural framework, practical skills, intellectual tools and methods necessary to analyze local and global developments against the backdrop of history and in the light of differing values and traditions. You will acquire foreign language proficiency, develop skills in international job hunting and project design and gain first-hand experience living and working side-by-side with people of other cultures. In the World Studies Program you are expected to develop:

- An introductory knowledge of world history and cultures
- An understanding of contemporary issues of global significance
- Competence in cross-cultural communication, including proficiency in a second language, work experience in another culture, recognition of differing cultural values and reflection on your own values and place in the world
- A deeper understanding of a particular world region, including its geography, culture, history and political, economic and environmental systems
- A grasp of one or more academic disciplines, the Fields of Study in which Marlboro students do Plan work, and an ability to apply the concepts and methods of these disciplines to a particular problem or issue
- The integration of academic and experiential learning, including the practical application of academic learning during the internship and the integration of internship experiences and learning into Plan work
- An ability to communicate clearly through the written and spoken word

## **Curriculum/Requirements**

From your first days on campus you and other WSP students begin building a foundation for a lifetime of international work. During your freshman and sophomore years, you

study broadly in the liberal arts, learn to think analytically and improve your writing skills. You study languages. You explore the world's civilizations from a variety of disciplinary perspectives in an effort to identify a particular area of interest that will serve as a focus for your final two years of study and lead to an individualized Plan of Concentration with an international or cross-cultural dimension.

By the end of the second year you choose a faculty sponsor and Field of Study. WSP graduates receive a Bachelor of Arts or Science in a particular degree field such as biology, sociology, visual arts or history (or a combination thereof) and International Studies. Therefore, in addition to the overview that follows for WSP, you should refer to the plan of study in the Course Book for your own chosen field of study.

The WSP curriculum has five components: **foreign language skills, foundation courses, internship preparation, internship** and **senior year synthesis**. Each component relates to one or more of the stated goals.

## **1. Language Skills**

### **Language Study**

Competence in a foreign language is an integral part of the World Studies Program. Formal language study is highly encouraged for all WSP students. Marlboro offers Arabic, French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, German, Greek, Latin and Chinese. Other languages may be studied through small group tutorials, guided self-instruction and study abroad. Combining language study at Marlboro and SIT may also be arranged. It is a good idea to continue language study throughout your first three years. Consult with the language faculty to assess your present skills and to make plans for additional study.

**Oral Proficiency.** Students expecting to graduate from WSP are required to demonstrate oral proficiency in at least one foreign language by achieving an ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) rating of “Intermediate” or “Advanced” in the target language. Check with the World Studies Office or language faculty for more specific guidelines for language study.

ACTFL will administer the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) and assess your functional speaking ability. Here are some guidelines used to characterize a student’s language proficiency:

- participate actively in conversations in most informal and some formal settings on topics of personal and public interest
- deal effectively with unanticipated complications through a variety of communicative devices
- Sustain communication by using, with suitable accuracy and confidence, connected discourse of paragraph length and substance
- satisfy routine demands of work and/or school situations.

The ACTFL OPI is a valid and reliable means of assessing how well a person speaks a language. A telephone interview between a certified ACTFL tester and a WSP student lasts about 15-30 minutes. The OPI test is arranged through the language department. Students must pass the exam at least two months before graduation but are encouraged to take the exam just after internship. Proficiency guidelines and testing is available through ACTFL's Website [www.languageTesting.com](http://www.languageTesting.com).

Students who have mastered English as a Foreign Language are considered to have met the language proficiency requirement by virtue of having submitted a TOEFL score for admission.

**Note:** You may pass the language proficiency test at any time. If you are already fluent in a second language, get the test out of the way soon. If you intend to intern in an English-speaking country, you won't have that time to increase your fluency, so it's all the more important to complete the language requirement by first semester of your junior year.

## **2. Required Courses**

Anyone expecting to work effectively abroad needs to have a broad understanding of contemporary world events and their historical and political background. Interpreting those events takes skill in looking at issues and values from a different cultural perspective. The required courses provide the essential background for a degree in international studies. As the core curriculum for all WSPs, they also provide links across many different academic disciplines.

Students gain admission to the World Studies Program by submitting an essay in the first semester of their first year on campus. Students complete the essay in November at the end of a one credit course, **World Studies Colloquium**, that introduces new students to the program courses, goals and requirements. In the essay students describe how they intend to fulfill the goals of the program and how those goals coincide with their own for international work and study. Students who transfer into Marlboro in their sophomore year are also required to take the colloquium and submit an essay. In addition to the goals essay these students will be required to explain their plans for meeting all the WSP requirements. Transfer juniors into Marlboro will be required to meet a number of times with the Director of World Studies to develop and submit their essay.

## **WSP DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

### **FIRST YEAR**

***World Studies Colloquium*** (1 credit, pass/fail, fall semester) – A forum for discussion of cross-cultural experience and international work, with participation by faculty, alumni, and current students. The sessions include an introduction to the World Studies Program (WSP) as well as to international resources at Marlboro and SIT.

***Topics in Human Understanding: Writing Strange*** (4 credits, fall semester) - This class considers the condition of strangeness as well as different strategies available to cope

with this condition. Some of the authors practice the close reading of an anthropologist, savoring the differences with thick description. Others use global paradigms (many of which come from Marx) to connect seemingly disparate situations within the needs of an expanding capitalist economy. **This class will vary slightly depending on the instructor. Can also be taken in the sophomore year.**

***Origins of the Contemporary World*** ( 4 credits, spring semester) - An introductory seminar designed to help students situate themselves in time and place, and to begin to think historically, culturally, and geographically. Students will select a region of the world to focus on, and provide weekly presentations tracking their region's developments,

decade by decade, over the last century. The class will also consider major themes of the recent past including: colonialism, genocide, human rights, socialism, globalization, and environmental change. **Can also be taken in sophomore year.**

***Electives*** (three 4-credit courses, to be fulfilled before the internship) – Electives allow students flexibility in selecting courses with regional or global content of interest to them. Before setting off for the internship, WSP students must take at least three 4-credit courses, the three (1) dealing with different world areas (one may be global in scope); (2) taught by different faculty; and (3) taught in different fields of study. (Note: foreign students can take a course in American Studies towards one of these WSP electives.)

### ***Language study***

#### **SECOND YEAR**

##### ***Topics in Human Understanding and/or Origins of the Contemporary World***

(If not taken in the first year)

***Finding an Internship*** (1 credit, pass/fail) – A course devoted to resume and cover-letter writing, networking, interviewing, and researching organizations doing international work. Students begin writing drafts of their WSP internship proposals.

***More electives*** (see above) and ***language study*** (see below) during this and the third year at Marlboro.

### ***Language study***

#### **THIRD YEAR**

***Designing Fieldwork*** (3 credits, fall semester) – A course focused on fieldwork methods, designing projects for the field, writing field notes and reports, and theoretical, ethical, and practical issues surrounding all of this.

***Tutorial*** (1 credit) – In the semester before internship, students need to work closely with faculty sponsors. This requirement can be met in one of two ways: (1) a one-credit tutorial with a faculty sponsor focusing on internship goals and projects and background readings on

the internship site; (2) one credit's worth of work on internship goals, projects, and background readings folded into an existing tutorial or course with a faculty sponsor.

***The Internship*** (12-18 credits) – A six-to-eight month working internship in a foreign culture complemented by 12-18 credits of independent academic projects conducted via e-mail with different Marlboro faculty.

### **SENIOR YEAR**

***SIT Course*** (2-3 credits) – WSP students are required to take a 2 or 3-credit graduate course at SIT in such areas as sustainable development, peace and conflict studies, and intercultural communication. **NOTE:** Students need to plan carefully due to different academic calendars. Marlboro students are recommended to take an SIT class the fall semester of senior year. Consult with Plan sponsors and SIT's course listings ([www.sit.edu](http://www.sit.edu)).

***Senior Seminar*** (1 credit, pass/fail): An eight-week seminar addressing re-entry issues and the integration of international field experiences into senior Plan work.

### **3. Internship Preparation**

Preparation for the internship usually begins in the second semester of the sophomore year, with the selection of a Field of Study and a Plan sponsor, and the completion of a Preliminary Plan Application. Working in close cooperation with your sponsor(s) you begin to identify long-term learning goals, needed skills and academic preparation for field work and a focus for the Plan of Concentration in your chosen discipline.

- **Internship Proposal:** You write an internship proposal describing the specific internship position, the goals of the internship and the program of independent academic projects to be undertaken while working abroad. This proposal is due one month before the end of the semester prior to the internship semester (**November 15 for Spring and April 15 for Fall**). Proposals should be turned into the director and associate director of world studies and to all faculty sponsors who are signed up for credit bearing academic projects.
- **Proposal Review:** All students meet with faculty with whom they will work on academic projects while abroad, as well as the director and associate director of world studies to review and critique the proposal. These meetings typically last 60 to 90 minutes. You are responsible for organizing the review meeting and allowing sufficient time to make alterations to the proposal. **A final copy of the proposal including revisions based on discussion and suggestions raised in the review meeting must be turned in to the World Studies Office before you leave on internship.** Find out all you can about your destination. Use a variety of sources: books, magazines, internet, films, people and especially a cultural mentor—someone who is from the country or has lived there for some time.
- **Research Policy and Ethical Guidelines:** All students who undertake college-sponsored research using human or animal subjects are required to comply with

the guidelines for ethical practices established by their discipline and to submit a research proposal to the Research Review Committee.

**“How else can I get ready for my internship?”** is a question students often ask. Even before you know exactly what you want to do or where you want to go, it is wise to begin preparing for internship. Here are some key areas for preparation:

- **Networking:** Develop a network of friends, faculty, family, alumni, colleagues, contacts—anyone who could possibly be a connection to what you want to study, what kind of job you want to do or where you want to go. Gather information about pertinent organizations, experts in your field, journals and other publications, listservs, web sites, etc. that you can use for future internship possibilities.
- **Regional and Cultural Research:** Find out all you can about your destination. Use a variety of sources: books, magazines, internet, films and people, especially a cultural mentor—someone who is from the country or has lived there for some time. Check SIT’s current student body.
- **Academic Course Work:** You should work closely with your faculty sponsor(s) to build a solid academic background for your internship position and independent research. Make sure you also have the skills to carry out your internship goals.
- **Pre-Internship Tutorial with Plan Sponsor(s):** The semester before you depart, you need to meet with your Plan sponsor(s) to discuss the academic projects you will do while on internship, the general expectations you have for how the internship will fit into your Plan and general cultural and academic preparation. The important thing is to be in close contact with your Plan sponsors throughout the pre-internship semester so that together you design an internship that will support and enhance your Plan. (See description of one-credit tutorial under WSP Requirements, Third Year.)
- **Problem Solving Skills:** How resourceful are you? Cross-cultural internships always challenge the intern’s ability to deal with crises, whether these are issues with your internship job, the family you are living with or an academic project that needs to be revisited. Work on developing the ability to analyze a problem and come up with multiple creative solutions. Think about how you deal with stress in your own culture and how you that might effect your ability to function abroad.
- **Professional Skills, Employment, Portfolio Development:** How well do you understand your own learning and working styles? How well can you articulate your goals and present yourself to future employers or supervisors? These are questions you will need to consider and answer before you go on internship.
- **Visa and Travel Planning:** Research which documents you need to live in the country of your internship. Apply for a passport (or make sure a current one will be valid until six months after your internship ends) and any necessary visas and

start to plan your travel. It can take months to obtain these documents, so plan wisely.

- **Health and Safety:** Educate yourself on general international travel precautions as well as those specific to your country destination. The Total Health Center has a variety of resources for and experience with international travelers. Because most cross-cultural experiences can be physically and mentally stressful and medical assistance can be either expensive, difficult to obtain or non-existent in some places, it is best to start an internship in optimal health. Use SIT's Overseas Travel Clinic for necessary immunizations and recommendations.
- **Readiness for Internship:** In addition to completing WSP courses and having an approved internship proposal and Plan application on file, you must: 1. Be in good academic standing, 2. Participate in health and safety orientations, and 3. Demonstrate the ability to work independently and meet deadlines. *Note: A sponsor or the Director of World Studies may recommend postponing the internship for the student who needs more time to meet the above criteria.*

#### **4. Internship**

For most WSP students, the internship is the centerpiece of their education. It is the means by which theories and ideas studied in the classroom are put to test in the real world. The experience is inevitably one of intense educational impact and personal growth. Living and working side-by-side with people in another part of the world, you will learn first-hand about different cultural values while gaining a deeper understanding of yourself and the society in which you were raised.

##### **Internship Essentials are:**

- **Six to eight months of work and study abroad.**
- **A working position (20 hours/week for at least 20 weeks) in an organization abroad. Ideally, this will contribute to your host community.**
- **An academic component consisting of 12-18 credits of independent research projects worked out, in advance, with your faculty sponsors. These independent research projects may or may not be directly related to your internship job.**
- **Structured supervision by a resource person in the internship organization.**
- **Frequent contact with Marlboro College members as noted in your timeline.**

The program strongly recommends that you obtain a **letter of invitation or job description** from the organization **prior** to departure. This should show that the people you will be working with understand your role as an intern there.

Whenever possible, you should work at an organization where your academic interests can be pursued in the course of your internship. Otherwise, you may have difficulty finding time to complete the academic projects while working.

**Note: Other study abroad programs, even one with an internship component, cannot be substituted for the WSP internship.**

**Goals of the WSP internship:**

- cross-cultural immersion and skills development
- practical training in your academic area and data collection for your Plan
- pre-professional work experience to help your career after graduation

**Timing:** Preferably second semester of your junior year. Total time in the foreign country must be six to eight months or longer, with at least 20 weeks (20 hours per week) spent on the job.

**Credits:** Up to 18 credits are awarded for academic projects, although most students on internship take closer to 12-15 credits. Note that you do not get credit for the internship experience itself, but rather for the academic work that comes out of your internship and experiences abroad.

**Oversight:** Marlboro faculty sponsor your independent projects, but you take on a major role in designing the research, staying focused in the field, monitoring your progress and reporting back your findings. At times, you will be both teacher and student in the field, since even with email, faculty feedback may be delayed. Your monthly submissions of work-in-progress will help keep you on target. Faculty provide progress grades at midterm, so they need to have information from you. **All internship work must be submitted before the first faculty meeting of the semester following your internship.** You will also be required to make regular reports to the World Studies Office via three evaluation forms which will be emailed to you during internship.

**Support:** An important source of emotional support on internship is the network of contacts you begin to develop before you leave the U.S. This consists of Marlboro and SIT alumni, other interns, friends, friends of friends, colleagues in your internship organization, etc. This invaluable “safety net” of friends and associates is one of the most important resources you will have in the field.

**Academic Projects:** The academic work done during WSP intership varies according to student interests and Plan work. Common projects include:

- Cross-cultural journal
- Language project
- A project having to do with your internship organization
- Other interns have worked with archival materials, made photographic essays, collected and wrote about material objects or ephemera, made sound collections or amassed statistical information.

## **5. Senior Year Synthesis**

Senior year is a time of synthesizing what you have learned on internship with what you have learned in classes. Most of your time will be spent working on Plan projects with your sponsors in addition to the two senior WSP courses.

**Senior Seminar:** A seminar addressing re-entry issues and the integration of field experience into the wider context of a liberal arts education. WSP students are required to revisit their internship proposals and evaluate their experience according to their own goals and the WSP goals stated in the Handbook.

**Plan of Concentration:** Like all Marlboro College students, World Studies students complete a Plan of Concentration, an individually designed two-year inquiry that results in a body of work that may include papers, projects, exhibits, lectures and performances. WSP students may work in any of the academic disciplines, choosing a topic with an international or cross-cultural dimension and placing that topic in the context of a global issue.

**SIT Graduate Course:** The WSP association with SIT allows Marlboro students access to graduate courses like Conflict Transformation, Intercultural Communication, Cross-Cultural Counseling, Conflict and Identity, etc. Due to different academic calendars, it is best to take an SIT course during the fall semester. You need to register for the course on both campuses. Check with the World Studies Office for available courses.

### **World Studies Program Suggested Sequence of Study**

#### **First year:**

World Studies Colloquium and Application for WSP (Fall)  
Acquaint yourself with resources at SIT  
Start foreign language study  
Topics in Human Understanding (Fall)  
Origins of the Contemporary World (Spring)  
Electives that meet WSP criteria

#### **Second year:**

Topics in Human Understanding (Fall-if not taken in the first year)  
Origins of the Contemporary World (Spring-if not taken in the first year)  
Finding an Internship  
Electives that meet WSP criteria  
Start work on finding an internship and continue with language study  
More language study

### **Third year:**

Designing Fieldwork (Fall)

One-credit tutorial with sponsor in preparation of internship

Internship proposal and review – with sponsors, director and associate director of WS

**Note: Due dates for proposals are November 15 for Spring and April 15 for Fall**

Six to eight month internship and 12-18 credits of academic work

**Note: All work to be finished and submitted before the first faculty meeting of the semester after which you complete your internship.**

### **Fourth Year:**

Senior Seminar

SIT course (2-3 credits non-language, preferably in Fall)

Language proficiency **Note: To be fulfilled at least two months before graduation.**

## **The School for International Training (SIT)**

The WSP degree is granted in association with the School for International Training. SIT offers master's degrees that fall into two areas: international and intercultural management and teaching of languages. It also offers several professional programs in international policy advocacy, NGO leadership and management, grassroots development and language education. Its international student population is enhanced with on-site intensive English training through the Center for Intercultural Programs.

WSP students may take graduate level courses at SIT after completing their internships. SIT courses are practicer-oriented and draw on international work experience from faculty and students. SIT has a strong philosophy of experiential learning that involves reflection, direct application and group work. Their pedagogy may be new to Marlboro students. For a list of courses available at SIT, see the Marlboro registrar or associate director of world studies.

All WSP students are encouraged to get to know people on the SIT campus and make use of the many resources and facilities there. It may be difficult at first, but getting to know students at SIT is definitely worthwhile. By taking classes, using the library and Professional Development Resource Center, attending events or just hanging out, you will meet a lot of interesting people from around the world!

Van transportation is available to SIT **by request**. Check with World Studies.

### **Resources at SIT**

**Donald B. Watt Library:** The SIT library has a good selection of volumes in development, gender studies, international education, intercultural communication,

language learning and teaching, multicultural studies, human resource and intercultural management. They also have several periodicals in different languages and ones related to international study. The library is located in the Rotch Learning Center in the middle of the SIT campus. You will need to show your Marlboro College ID to check out materials.

**Language Learning Resource Center:** Houses several different types of resources (books, cassettes, videos, computer software, maps, periodicals, etc.) for language study, including ESL. It is located on the second floor of the Rotch Learning Center. You may check resources out through the library.

**Career Center:** Located just upstairs from the library, SIT's career center has an international and multicultural focus. Here you will find information on international job-hunting skills, resumés, cover letters, directories for international and domestic companies and hundreds of postings for jobs and internships. Since all SIT students do an internship, they receive many postings for short and long term internships in the US and abroad.

**Center for Intercultural Programs(CIP):** Located in Oak, offers language courses designed for oral/aural proficiency, language study through Guided Self-Instruction (GSI), files on language study abroad opportunities, oral proficiency testing and intercultural events on campus.

**El Café:** El Café is a small café with Internet access in the Student Center. Coffeehouse and open mike performances are often held there in the evenings. The café and adjoining patio are a great place to hang out and meet other SIT students.

**International Events:** The Student Activities Office sponsors several international events throughout the year that are often open to the public. These events draw on the student population at SIT and include musical and theatrical performances, topical lectures, panel discussions, films, ethnic fashion shows, presentations, etc. Events in the past have been Africa Month, Asia Month, drumming workshops, Japanese tea ceremonies and a "Human Rights Lecture Series."

## Study Abroad

Many WSP students do a semester of study abroad before internship as a way to improve language fluency, enhance cross-cultural skills, gain contacts in country, test out their own sense of independence and adventure as well as give direction and focus to their overall academic plan. Sometimes a structured study abroad program can be an excellent pilot for a WSP internship. Several programs have mini internships that can give students additional hands-on, professional experience. There are study abroad programs for nearly every academic field and almost every country. A semester abroad, especially for WSPs, should be carefully planned according to the larger course of study.

SIT is well known for its semester abroad programs in over 40 countries offering homestays, intensive language study, thematic seminars, field research methods seminars

and the opportunity to do an independent study project. Such programs have served as a way to gain valuable cross-cultural skills as well as contacts in-country for internships.

The World Studies Office, in the World Studies Center, has lots of information about study abroad. Also, on Marlboro's web site, check out study abroad options under International Opportunities. Beverly Behrmann, ([behrmann@marlboro.edu](mailto:behrmann@marlboro.edu)) Associate Director of World Studies, can help you choose a program abroad in coordination with your faculty advisor.