

Chile

Social, Economic, and Political Transformation

Explore the political, social, and geographic dynamics shaping Chile's economic development.

Coursework

Social, Economic, and Political Transformation Seminar

LACB 3000 / 6 credits / 90 class hours

An interdisciplinary course conducted in Spanish with required readings and relevant educational excursions. The course provides an overview of Chile's recent socioeconomic and political development and explores the validity of the country's reputation as a "success story" within Latin America. Lecturers are drawn from institutions such as the Universidad de Santiago, Centro de Estudios Nacionales de Desarrollo Alternativo, the Universidad Católica del Norte, and the Universidad de Concepción.

Seminar topics typically include:

Historical Background: Chilean Society and Politics

Contemporary issues; political system formation; Chilean transitional process; limits of electoral democracy; the authoritarian legacy in the current economic model.

Latin American Development Models and Theory

Latin American development theory: from import substitution to export-led growth; dependency models of development and primary product exports; world markets and local production strategies; alternative development paradigms; monetary and fiscal policy in relation to trade; regional development.

Globalization, International Relations, and Trade

Theories of globalization and the changing role of nation-states; transnationalization of the Chilean economy; promotion of export-oriented economy; international and regional trade agreements; US foreign policy toward Latin America.

Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises

Small-scale production and microenterprises in competitive markets; culture and association of Chilean entrepreneurs; limits to technological development and financing.

Social Development Alternatives

Inequality and poverty in Chile: labor issues; privatization of health care and educational systems; labor and gender roles; human development; transnational social movements and popular

responses to global change; local perspectives on social change.

Educational Excursions

The program includes visits to businesses, human rights organizations, and social institutions in the Santiago region, as well as field trips to the world's largest copper-producing region near Antofagasta, the forestry region near Concepción, and the agro-industrial complex in the Maule region. Sessions are conducted with local faculty, industrial representatives, labor and community leaders, and government representatives.

Intensive Language Study: Spanish

SPAN 2000–3000 / 4 credits / 60 class hours

Emphasis on speaking, reading, and writing skills through classroom and field instruction. Based on in-country evaluation, including oral proficiency testing, students are placed in intensive intermediate or advanced classes, with further language practice in homestays, lectures, and field visits.

Field Study Seminar

ANTH 3500 / 2 credits / 30 class hours

A course in the concepts of learning across cultures and from field experience. Introduction to the Independent Study Project. Material includes cross-cultural adaptation and skills building; project selection and refinement; appropriate methodologies; field study ethics and the World Learning/SIT Human Subjects Review Policy; developing contacts and finding resources; developing skills in observation and interviewing; gathering, organizing, and communicating data; maintaining a work journal.

Independent Study Project

ISPR 3000 / 4 credits / 120 class hours

Conducted in Santiago or in another approved location appropriate to the project. Sample topic areas: foreign investment and export production; role of shipping and transport in the export-led economic model; Latin American dependency in a new light; gender relations and households in the new global economy; poverty, income distribution, and changing patterns of labor participation; indigenous societies and global capitalism; US foreign policy and the Chilean economic model.



Credits 16

Program Base Santiago

Language Study Spanish

Homestay Santiago, 5 weeks

Rural Visit/Homestay Valle de Elicura (Mapuche region), 4 days

Other Accommodations Hostels and small hotels

Independent Study Project 4 weeks

Prerequisites Previous college-level coursework in economics, political economy, and/or development studies, as assessed by SIT. Three recent semesters of college-level Spanish or equivalent and the ability to follow coursework in Spanish, as assessed by SIT.

"I had an absolutely amazing time. I now consider Chile a second home and hope to return one day for a longer stay. SIT has no doubt changed my life."

Fall 2009 Student