

# Chile

## Cultural Identity, Social Justice, and Community Development

Explore Chile's recent political and social history and discover how Chileans are working to reconcile with the past while struggling to create a more equitable and culturally inclusive society.

## Coursework

### Cultural Identity, Social Justice, and Community Development Seminar

LACB 3000 / 4 credits / 60 class hours

An interdisciplinary course conducted in Spanish with required readings and relevant educational excursions. The course examines political and socioeconomic development trends of contemporary Chile from the cultural vantage point of Chilean, Mapuche, and Aymara communities. The course includes participation in a community work project with a local organization in the Valparaíso area. Lecturers are drawn from institutions such as the Universidad de Chile; the Universidad de Valparaíso; the HUMANAS feminist organization, Epifanía, a community-based nongovernmental organization (NGO); and other local NGOs. Academic seminars are taught at the Universidad Santa María in Valparaíso.

Seminar topics typically include:

#### History and Politics

Major historical periods—post-independence national consolidation; Chilean political system from 1925 to the 1973 coup d'état; social and labor movements and civil society; Pinochet dictatorship and the transition to democracy; Concertación (coalition) governments (1990 to 2010 bicentennial).

#### Human Rights

Conceptualization of human rights and justice; the dictatorship, human rights violations, and the Disappeared; the Pinochet case (1998–2007) and other landmark cases; marginalized groups in Chile including urban *pobladores* and gender equity issues.

#### Economics and Development

Allende government policies; the Chilean economic “miracle” based on the neoliberal model; inward versus outward development strategies; integration with the world economy; poverty and wealth distribution; environmental degradation and natural resource exploitation; community development and local social organizations.

#### First Nations

Concepts of First Nation and indigenous cosmopolitanism; migration and urban realities of Mapuche and Aymara: their struggles for cultural preserva-

tion and socioeconomic sustainability in the face of racism and often hostile state policies.

#### Educational Excursions

The program features excursions to points of interest in Valparaíso and Santiago. A longer 16-day trip focused on First Nations is taken to Temuco and the nearby coastal and mountain areas in southern Chile or to Arica in northern Chile, including the Chilean *altiplano*.

#### Intensive Language Study: Spanish

SPAN 2000–4000 / 6 credits / 90 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 small intensive intermediate or advanced classes, with further language practice during 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 use of appropriate methodologies; field study ethics and the World Learning/SIT Human Subjects Review Policy; developing contacts and finding resources; field study skills in observation and interviewing; organizing, analyzing, and communicating data; maintaining a field study journal.

#### Independent Study Project

ISPR 3000 / 4 credits / 120 class hours

Conducted in Valparaíso, Santiago, Temuco, Arica, or in another approved location in Chile appropriate to the project. Sample topic areas: The Disappeared, historical memory, and the human rights movement; urban Mapuche cultural organizations; women's reproductive rights and public health services; Chilean social policy and educational reform; environmental destruction and local community action; Aymara women's birthing practices; alternative theater in Chile; labor organizing in the mining industry; Chilean urban youth “tribes.”



**Credits** 16

**Program Base** Valparaíso

**Language Study** Spanish

**Homestay** Valparaíso, 7 weeks

**Rural Visit/Homestay** Mapuche or Aymara community, 7–10 days

**Other Accommodations** Hostels, private homes, or small hotels

**Independent Study Project** 4 weeks

**Prerequisites** Three recent semesters of college-level Spanish or equivalent and the ability to follow coursework in Spanish, as assessed by SIT.

Spring 2009 student Michelle Eilers (Tufts University) was awarded the **first Alice Rowan Swanson fellowship** to return to Chile to conduct a monthlong study focused on a maternal health and birthing program for Aymara women. This work builds upon the research Michelle conducted through her Independent Study Project. **Read more** about her experience studying abroad in Chile at [www.sit.edu/CIR](http://www.sit.edu/CIR).