



## Memory and Reconciliation in South Africa

POLI 3000 (3 Credits / 45 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:  
South Africa: Social and Political Transformation

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus represents a recent semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

### Course Description

Be it cease-fires, peace treaties, peace and reconciliation commissions, or judicial prosecution, individual and societal wounds incurred by years of violence always linger. Centuries old conflicts such as the American Civil War or the conflict currently raging in Syria leave trauma in their wake that is inherited and passed along to future generations. How do social activists reinvent their identities and purposes after the conflict? How do social movements and non-governmental organisations adapt to remain relevant after the crisis of conflict has seemingly passed?

Homestays, assigned readings, lectures, site visits, related discussions, and excursions from the program's base in KwaZulu-Natal to Cape Town, Swaziland and neighbouring Mozambique, provide students with a solid grasp of memory and reconciliation in post-conflict South Africa. South Africa is used as a lens through which to examine how memory and memorializing emerging from conflict continue to shape how society reinvents and reconciles with itself. South Africa's transitional phase that is as mature as it is raw provides an excellent setting through which to examine these processes. The course equips students with a solid grasp of the historical background of South Africa's apartheid system and contemporary developments leading to its dismantling, an anthropological and cultural perspective of South African society, the role of memory in trauma healing, and the political, economic, and social visions for the nation's future.

With these foundational understandings, students critically examine issues of transition in contemporary post-apartheid South Africa such as transformations in the political, educational, and health sectors and the socio-economic morphing of the lower, middle, and elite classes. Lessons, both positive and negative, learned from South Africa equip students with the knowledge and skills with which to analyze post-conflict dynamics in other parts of the world be they in the past or present in North America or the Middle East.

## Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will have attained the ability to:

- Articulate and assess issues of transition in post-apartheid South Africa from multiple perspectives, with demonstrable awareness of its complexity;
- Demonstrate critical understanding of South Africa's historical and contemporary political, social, economic, and cultural milieu;
- Discuss the role of memory in the process of healing trauma and seeking reconciliation;
- Demonstrate knowledge of the complex relationship between justice, reconciliation, and coexistence within the complex web of identity formation in contemporary South Africa; and
- Integrate knowledge from field-based experiences with a select community to information gathered from secondary sources on particular issues related to the course themes.

## Language of Instruction

This course is taught in English, but students will be exposed to local vocabulary (isiZulu) related to course content as well as the nuances of memory and reconciliation through in-country expert lectures and field visits in a wide range of venues and regional locales.

## Program Calendar

Course materials will be delivered through the examination of five interrelated modules, as found below. The approach will be integrative and experiential, and will aim to develop a multi-sided and historical understanding of the South African experience, with particular reference to memory and reconciliation. Please note that module-specific syllabi, with readings and other detailed information, will be made available to students as the course progresses.

### **Module 1: A brief history of South Africa**

This module provides a brief and comprehensive scan of South Africa's turbulent apartheid history. What is South Africa's post-colonial national narrative?

Session 1: Nationalisms

Session 2: Colonial Era

Session 3: Apartheid Era

Session 4: Post-Apartheid Era

#### *Required Reading:*

Sampson, A. (1999). *Mandela: The Authorised Biography*. New York, NY: Knopf.

South African Democracy Education Trust (SADET). (2004). *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 1 (1960 – 1970)*. Cape Town: Zebra Press.

South African Democracy Education Trust (SADET). (2006). *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 2 (1970 – 1980)*. Pretoria: Unisa Press.

Thompson, L. (2001). *A History of South Africa*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

#### *Supplementary Recommended Fiction Reading:*

There is a large and continually growing body of fictional writings on South Africa. Listed below are some South African authors along with their more noted works. Any of these texts will add to your knowledge base on South Africa.

Brink, André. (2007). *A Chain of Voices*. Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks Inc.

Coetzee, J.M. (2000). *Disgrace*. New York: Penguin Books.

Coetzee, J.M. (2004). *Waiting for the Barbarians*. London: Vintage Books.

Dlamini, Jacob. (2009). *Native Nostalgia*. Auckland Park: Jacana Media (PTY) Ltd.

Gordimer, Nadine. (2003). *Burgher's Daughter: A Case Study*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

La Guma, Alex. (1985). *A Walk in the Night: And other Stories*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Paton, Alan. (2003). *Cry the Beloved Country*. New York: Scribner.

### **Module 2: State of the nation**

This module will engage in a broad range of lectures that examine South Africa's current state in terms of socio-political and economic transformation and development deficits. It will focus on the challenge of undoing the past and will utilize a political simulation exercise/game to achieve its objectives. Herein, students will also write a seminar paper that explores, as would an anthology, a body of literature on a topic of particular interest. The seminar paper will, ideally, more fully prepare the student for the Independent Study Project (ISP).

Session 1: Politics and the State

Session 2: Economics

Session 3: Society

Session 4: NGOs, Social Movements and Former Activists in Post-apartheid South Africa

Session 5: South Africa and the Global Context

*Required Reading:*

T. Meyiwa, M. Nkondo, M. Chitiga-Mabugu, M. Sithole and F. Nyamnjoh (Eds). (2014). *State of the Nation 2014, South Africa 1994-2014: A Twenty-year Review of Freedom and Democracy*. Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council Press.

Plaatjies, D., M. Chitiga-Mabugu, C. Hongoro, T. Meyiwa, M. Nkondo, and F. Nyamnjoh, (Eds). (2016). *State of the Nation: South Africa 2016: Who Is in Charge?: Mandates, Accountability and Contestations in the South African State*. Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council Press.

### **Module 3: South Africa: remembering the past**

This module engages with notions of both individual and collective memory as a tool for collecting and re-collecting oral histories of past struggles in South Africa. It demonstrates to students the power of memory as a tool for moving between states of transition to that reconciliation. This module will include a focused study on memory. The student will be required to utilize archival sources or individual/collective memory from his/her host community in order to remember the past. This project is engineered in order to make the most of the homestay; the project seeks to generate conversation and thus develop themes that can be used in the 'memory board'. The findings are to be presented in the form of a storyboard of popular memory, the memory board, an illustration of how recollecting the past can inform the present and the future. Students will also visit some of the following popular sites of public memory: Luthuli Museum, Ohlange (Dube), Phoenix Settlement (Gandhi),

KwaMuhle, Inanda Seminary and the Umkhumbane Cultural and Heritage Centre (opening in 2018).

Session 1: Individual Memory

Session 2: Collective Memory

Session 3: Public Sites of Memory

Session 4: The Politicization of Memory

*Required Reading:*

Colvin, C. (2006). Shifting Geographies of Suffering and Recovery: Traumatic Story-Telling after Apartheid. In T. Luedke and H. West (Eds) *Borders and Healers: Brokering Therapeutic Resources in South East Africa*. Indiana: Indiana University Press. 166–84.

Denis, P. (2000). *Orality, Memory & the Past*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications.

Denis, P., R. Ntسامne and T. Cannell. (2010). *Indians Verses Russians: An Oral History of Political Violence in Nxamalala (1987-1993)*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications.

Draper, J., ed. (2003). *Orality Literacy and Colonialism in Southern Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications.

Field, S. (2006). Beyond 'Healing': Trauma, Oral History and Regeneration. *Oral History* 34(1): 31– 42.

Field, Sean. (2008). Turning up the Volume: Dialogues about Memory Create Oral Histories. *South African Historical Journal*. 60(2): 175-194.

Green, A. (2004). Individual Remembering and 'Collective Memory': Theoretical Propositions and Contemporary Debates. *Oral History* 32(2): 35–44.

Marschall, S. (2010). *Landscape of Memory: Commemorative Monuments, Memorials and Public Statuary in Post-Apartheid South Africa*. Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill.

Marinovich, G., & Silva, J. (2000). *The Bang Bang Club: Snapshots from Hidden War*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Marshall, S. (2010). The Memory of Trauma and Resistance: Public Memorialisation and Democracy in Post-Apartheid SA and Beyond. *Safundi*. 11(4): 361-381.

Mathabane, M. (1990). *Kaffir Boy: The True Story of a Black Youth's Coming of Age in Apartheid South Africa*. New York, NY: Touchstone.

#### **Module 4: The challenges of reconciliation**

This module will examine issues surrounding peace, reconciliation, and coexistence in South Africa. Specific topics will include the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), race, racism, identity, peace, and conflict resolution in South Africa.

Session 1: Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Session 2: Justice (Restorative)

Session 3: Conflict Resolution

*Required Reading:*

Krog, A (1998). *Country of My Skull: Guilt, Sorrow, and the Limits of Forgiveness in the New South Africa*. New York: Crown.

Marshall, S. (2008). An Inspiring Narrative with a Shadow: Tangible and Intangible Heritage at the Phoenix Settlement of Mahatma Gandhi. *Southern African Humanities*. 20: 353–374  
Pietermaritzburg, <http://www.sahumanities.org.za>

Posel, D. and Simpson, G. (Eds). (2002). *Commissioning the Past: Understanding South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Robins, Steven. (2007). 'Can't Forget, Can't Remember': Reflections on the Cultural Afterlife of the TRC. *Critical Arts: A South-North Journal of Cultural & Media Studies*. 21(1): 125-151.

## **Module 5: Identity**

This module will explore the delicate issues of identity, development, and reclamation in the new South Africa.

Session 1: Race

Session 2: Gender

Session 3: Sexuality

Session 4: Class

*Required Reading:*

Chipkin, I. (2007). *Do South Africans Exist? Nationalism, Democracy and the Identity of 'The People'*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

Dolby, N. (2001). *Constructing Race: Youth, Identity, and Popular Culture in South Africa*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Jones, M. and J. Dlamini. (2013). *Categories of Persons: Rethinking Ourselves and Others*. Johannesburg: Picador Africa.

Zegeye, A., (Ed). (2001). *Social Identities in the New South Africa: After Apartheid, Vol. 1*. Cape Town and Maroelana: Kwela Books and South African History Online.

## **Evaluation and Grading Criteria**

### **Assignments**

Students will be expected to prepare for, attend, and participate in the lectures, discussions, and field visits. They will be expected to complete all assignments in a professional, timely manner. The following breakdown of grades will be used to arrive at the final letter grade, which is determined by the academic director (AD) and the academic coordinator.

Seminar Paper	50%
Focused-Study: Memory (paper)	20%
Focused-Study: Memory (oral presentation)	10%
Participation	20%

**Seminar Paper:** Reading, thinking, and writing are essential components within field-based education. Critically exploring what others have written on a topic can help to suggest potential frameworks for both understanding what one experiences in the field, and interpretations that can be “tested” in your own

work in the field. One context where such an exploration of the literature would be useful is in relation to your ISPs.

The seminar paper offers you the time and space to explore the professional literature on a topic of your choice relevant to issues of transition, memory, and/or reconciliation in South Africa. While separate from your ISP for grading purposes, the seminar paper may be used as an opportunity to prepare for your ISP. You are not required to submit a seminar paper on the precise topic of your ISP, but reviewing complementary literature may indeed help you to develop a more grounded theoretical framework within which to frame your ISP and/or make sense of your ISP experiences. You are free to integrate the seminar paper into your ISP as a literature review (simply refer to it if appropriate), or not mention it at all – this is up to you. If you use any part of your seminar paper in your ISP, however, please note that the sections of the ISP taken or paraphrased from the paper do not count towards the page requirement of the ISP. Your seminar paper is to be based on the literature, i.e., secondary sources, while ISPs are, by definition, focused on the collection and analysis of primary data. We encourage you to carefully integrate the seminar paper into your ISP if appropriate, and doing so is likely to increase the overall quality, sharpen the argument, and contextualize the findings of the ISP. But please remember that the thrust of your ISP is upon the collection and analysis of primary data.

### Requirements

The seminar paper must be structured along the lines of a standard academic paper – clear introduction, thesis, engaging and rigorous argument, insightful conclusions and recommendations, and consistent referencing. While there is no formal page requirement for this assignment, it is difficult to imagine that one could adequately engage the literature on a particular topic relevant to the course in less than, say, 3000 words (about 8-10 pages, 12-point font, double-spaced).

### Objectives

The purpose of the seminar paper is to:

- Demonstrate substantive knowledge of a body of literature on a topic of particular interest.
- Provide an opportunity to read on and around a potential ISP topic in order to articulate a theoretical framework upon which to base their ISP field study.
- Encourage students to practice literature research, selection, synthesis, and writing skills.

### Assessment

The seminar paper will be based on the following criteria:

- It must be structurally sound. It should include a statement of the topic/question to be addressed and a quality literature review. It should be in essay form, not an annotated “list” of articles; emphasize findings of previous research; point out trends, themes and note gaps; express personal opinion regarding quality and importance of cited research; use direct quotations sparingly and only when appropriate; and contain a complete list of references for citations.
- Content: development of thesis, responsiveness to question; mature position, strong argument; supports case with evidence, accurate information; and works reviewed are recent and appropriate to the thesis, logical structure and sequence.
- Quality of the writing: grammar, syntax, spelling, and a clear, concise, and engaging writing style.

**Focused-Study: Memory:** You will be required to utilize archival sources or individual/collective memory from your host community in order to re-member the past. The results are to be presented in the form of a storyboard of popular memory, and illustration of how recollecting the past can inform the present and future.

### Requirements

Your storyboard should be mounted on a board no smaller than A2 size (similar to poster board size) and should include both visual and textual elements that illustrate the particular memories.

### Objectives

The purpose of the memory exercise is to:

- Engage students with the archive of individual or collective memory;
- Sharpen students' ability to incorporate different types of evidence (quotes, statistics, personal anecdotes, photographic, or material artifacts) within their story board and utilize the power of oral histories.
- Encourage students to practice creativity on assembling and analyzing data.

### Assessment

The storyboard will be assessed in relation to:

- Content: quotes, statistics, personal anecdotes, photographic or material artifacts;
- Quality of the text/interpretation supporting visual elements;
- Creativity: everyone's memory is unique, and you are encouraged to be creative with your presentation;
- Presentation of your storyboard to the class.

**Participation:** Criteria for assessment of participation, which counts for 20 percent of your grade, is as follows.

- *Attendance:* promptness to class, and positive presence in class.
- *Active listening:* paying attention in class/during field excursions, asking appropriate questions, showing interest and enthusiasm, entertaining contradictory perspectives, taking notes.
- *Involvement in class discussions:* either in small or large groups, sharing knowledge and information.
- *Group accountability:* participate as part of a group during field excursions and classes.
- *Respect:* culturally appropriate interaction with hosts, SIT program staff, SIT lecturers, and communities.

Attendance at all seminars and field activities is mandatory unless indicated as optional on the schedule. Failure to attend, or repeated late arrival, will lower your grade substantially, if not jeopardize your standing in the program. Please note that while strong participation on all the above matters will get you close to full points for this component of your grade, a failure to fully participate in any program activity, as determined by the academic director, is grounds not only for failure of the course, but also for academic and/or behavioral probation and other disciplinary action, up to and possibly including dismissal from the program.

**Grading Scale:** The grading scale for all classes is as follows:

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+
84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
67-69%	D+
64-66%	D
below 64	F

### **Grading Criteria**

All grades assigned will take into account the students' special circumstances and challenges they face as foreign students. An "A" grade for an assignment entails superior (not just "very good") performance in terms of structure and organization of assignments, analysis, logical argumentation and consistency, and the provision of factual, numerical and/or historical evidence. In terms of Class Participation, an "A" grade refers to full attendance, punctuality, attentive listening and active engagement in all academic lectures, discussions, field trips and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior. The level, frequency, and quality of the students' participation will be monitored and taken into account.

## Expectations and Policies

### Class Participation

Participation in class refers to attendance, punctuality, attentive listening, and active engagement in all academic seminar lectures, discussions, field trips and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior.

### Readings

You are responsible for all the required readings, and should be prepared to bring them to bear on discussions in class. The readings will help you place the classes in their context, to challenge and engage lecturers, to generate questions for class discussions, and to deepen your knowledge of particular topics or issues discussed in class. Engaging with supplementary readings will provide additional depth of understanding of the events leading up to South Africa's transition in 1994 which will inform your learning.

**PLEASE NOTE:** COURSE CONTENTS, LECTURERS AND READINGS MAY BE MODIFIED AS NEEDED. SHOULD ANY CHANGE OF CLASS TOPICS OR LECTURERS BE NECESSARY, STUDENTS WILL BE PROMPTLY NOTIFIED.

**PLEASE NOTE:** All classes leave  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the scheduled time for the purpose of class discussion of the lecture and/or readings

**Disability Services:** Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services at [disabilityservices@sit.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@sit.edu) for information and support in facilitating an accessible educational experience. Additional information regarding SIT Disability Services, including a link to the online request form, can be found on the Disability Services website at <http://studyabroad.sit.edu/disabilityservices>.

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