Africa in a Globalizing World:
Technology and Social Realities in Ghana

AFRS 3000 (3 Credits / 45 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:
Ghana: Africa in the 21st Century

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

Contemporary Africa, like most of the developing world, is undergoing massive transformation as forces of globalization set foot and take root on the continent. Capital inflows and outflows are fast reconstituting class structure as gated communities sit side by side with slum settlements. A cellphone revolution is reshaping how Africans interact with each other and with the rest of the world. Banks, and credit cards (Visa, MasterCard) are now visible in many of Africa's cities as are supermarkets, fast food chains, KFC, McDonalds, etc. And yet amidst these capital inflows Africans are reinventing, redefining and reconstituting their livelihoods in ways that are producing new social realities, consumption and production patterns. Ghana's private sector is drawing on these emerging trends to lead revolutions in mobile money applications, solar power, rural water supply technologies and market information systems. How are new and emerging technologies being articulated in Africa's social landscapes? How does technological innovation in Ghana and its social consequences aid our understanding of massive transformations currently unfolding in Africa?

These massive transformations are unfolding in Ghana and it is in this sense that Ghana provides an excellent setting through which to explore these overarching questions. A growing middle class in Ghana is adopting globalization's multi-national capital and transforming it in their own terms. This course draws upon theoretical and analytical perspectives in African Studies in ways that both illuminate, complicate and unsettle these frameworks. The course does this in part to equip students with new terms and concepts with which to analyze contemporary Africa. Site visits to a broad spectrum of social class sites, rural and urban spaces, and the changing gender relations draw attention to the fast paced change in Ghana, ahead of the still images and perceptions perpetuated by popular media. The course emphasizes the need to understand multiple and complex technologies and their social realities, as well as how they evolve in relation to local and global politics and power.

Learning Outcomes
By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Explain the limitations of popular contemporary perspectives in taking stock of social realities in contemporary Ghana;
- Describe the forces that are transforming Ghanaian society; and
- Demonstrate a critical awareness of the complexity of Ghanaian society.

Language of Instruction
This course is taught in English, but students will be exposed to vocabulary related to course content as well as the nuances of economic change and development through in-country expert lectures and field visits in a wide range of venues and regional locales.

Course Schedule

> ***Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.**

Module 1: Introduction: Contemporary Ghana in Historical Context

This introductory module provides students with a basic introduction to contemporary politics, ethnicity and culture in Ghana, and a grasp of the process out of which the current political and social conditions have emerged. The module draws upon visits of sites of historical, political and cultural significance to Ghana. Students visit sites such as museums, the Parliament and various government departments.

Session 1: Contemporary Ghana: Politics and government in Ghana
Required Reading:
- Paul Darby. "Let us rally around the flag: football, nation-building, and pan-Africanism in Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana." Journal of African History. (54)2 (July 2013): p. 221-232
- April Gordon & Donald Gordon. Understanding Contemporary Africa. 4th Edition Ch. 3, "The Historical Context", 2007. p. 235-259.

Session 2: Culture and ethnicity in Ghana
Ghana's ethnic groups, geography, political systems and cultures.

Required Reading:
- Carola Lentz and Paul Nugent. "Ethnicity in Ghana: a comparative perspective" in Ethnicity in Ghana: The Limits of Invention. Edited by Carola Lentz and Paul Nugent. Macmillan Press Limited. 2000. p. 1-28.

Module 2: Contemporary Perspectives on Africa: An Introduction
This module surveys contemporary media portrayal of Africa in popular media. The module draws on student online surveys of the New York Times, CNN and BBC, three of the major international news sources. The academic director facilitates a discussion on the following assigned reading.

Gettleman J, 'Africa Rising'? 'Africa Reeling' May Be More Fitting Now. The New Yok Times. Oct 17, 2016.

Ferguson, J. (2006). *Global shadows: Africa in the neoliberal world order.* Durham [N.C.]: Duke University Press. Introduction and chapter one.

Module 3: Technology, Technological Innovation and Livelihoods
What are the new and emerging technologies and how are they impacting Ghana's social landscapes? How are these technologies impacting, comparatively, livelihoods in rural and urban Ghana? What processes are simultaneously facilitating and inhibiting technological application? This module draws on site visits to mobile money operators, Ghana's rural and urban water supply systems and site visits to solar power systems retailers and consumers.

Session I: Cellphone and mobile money applications
- Moseley, W. (2012). Do Cell Phones and the Internet Foster "Leapfrog" Development in Africa? In W. Moseley (4th Edition), *Taking Sides, Clashing Views on Controversial African Issues.* New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education.

Session II: Solar energy
- Atsu Devine, et al (2016) Solar electricity development and policy support in Ghana. Renewable and sustainable energy Reviews. Vol 53, January 2016, pp 792-800.
- Gyamfi Sam, et al (2014) Improving electricity supply security in Ghana—The potential of renewable energy. Renewable and sustainable energy Reviews. Vol 43, March 2015, pp 1035-1045.

Session II: Rural and urban water supply systems

- Kulinkina et al (2016) Piped water consumption in Ghana: A case study of temporal and spatial patterns of clean water demand relative to alternative water sources in rural small towns. Science of the Total Environment. Vol 559, pp 291-301.
- Fischer M et al (2015) Understanding handpump sustainability: Determinants of rural water source functionality in the Greater Afram Plains region of Ghana Water Resources Research, Vol 51, No. 10. Pp 8431-8449)
- Thompson Michelle (2015) A critical review of water purification technology appropriate for developing countries: NorthernGhana as a case study. Desalination and Water Treatment. Vol 54, No 13, pp 3487-3493.

Session V: Agricultural commodity market information systems
How do rural farmers draw on social and popular media to leverage agricultural commodity markets? What role is played by the popular media and how could it be leveraged to better serve the interests of farmers?

- Posthumus B, et al (2013) The Diffusion of Mobile Agricultural Information Services in Ghana: A Case study. Conference: IST-Africa Conference and Exhibition Location: Nairobi, KENYA Date: MAY 29-31, 2013.

Module 4: Urbanization I: Place, Space and the Dynamics of Inequality:
How is class structure in Ghana changing and what processes are driving this change? How is this changing class structure in turn transforming Accra's spatial formations and use of public space? This module draws upon insights derived from site visits to various upper, middle and lower income areas in Accra.

Session I: Inequality: Convergences and divergences

Required reading:
- Osei-Assibey, Eric. "Nature and Dynamics of Inequalities in Ghana." Development, 2014, 57 (3-4) p. 521-530
- Johnson, David. "Ghana: The 'Rising Star' of Inequality. Review of African Political Economy http://roape.net/2016/04/28/ghana-rising-star-inequality/

Session 2: Cityscapes, housing and space I
Required reading:
- Sharon Benzoni "Crowded House: Accra Tries to Make Room for a Population Boom" p. 1-21 https://nextcity.org/features/view/crowded-house
- "Artists in Accra are using kiosks to rethink space in the city" January 21, 2016 *by* Billie Adwoa McTernan.   http://africasacountry.com/2016/01/the-kiosks-in-accra-that-are-reshaping-space-in-the-city/

Session 3: Cityscapes, housing and space II
- Godwin Arku, Isaac Luginaah and Paul Mkandawire. "You Either Pay More Advance Rent or You Move Out": Landlords/Ladies' and Tenants' Dilemmas in the Low-income Housing Market in Accra, Ghana." Urban Studies. 49(14) 3177-3193, November 2012

Module 5: Urbanization II: Commodities, Consumption and Production
What do changing patterns in the production and consumption of cocoa/chocolate reveal about contemporary Ghana and the future prospects of Ghanaian society? This module draws on case studies of the textile industry in Accra and the Gold and Cocoa industry to explore the translation of global capital flows in Ghana's consumption, production and cultural repertoires. The module draws upon site visits to Adanwomase located outside Kumasi, the GTP factory located in Tema and various Cocoa processing companies and retailers.

Session 1: Case Study I: Textiles and dress in Accra

Required reading:
- Esi Dogbe. "Unraveled Yarns: Dress, Consumption, and Women's Bodies in Ghanaian Culture" Fashion Theory The Journal of Dress Body & Culture 7(3-4):377-395 · August 2003.

Session 2: Case Study II: Gold and Cocoa

Required Reading:
- Matthew Davies. "Why many of Ghana's gold miners are giving up." Business reporter, BBC News, Ghana. http://www.bbc.com/news/business-25417492
- Cameron Duodu. "Ghana: The murky world of galamsey." 3 March 2015. http://newafricanmagazine.com/ghana-murky-world-galamsey/
- "Tracing the bitter truth of chocolate and child labor" http://news.bbc.co.uk/panorama/hi/front_page/newsid_8583000/8583499.stm
- **Kuapa-Kokoo cocoa co-op.** http://www.divinechocolate.com/uk/about-us/research-resources/divine-story/kuapa-kokoo

Module 6: Changing Gender Relations and the Status of Women
What does the evolving status of women and gender relations reveal about a changing political economy and social dynamics in Ghana? This module traces the contemporary formations in gender relations and the status of women, and employs these insights to further examine how Ghana's contemporary society is responding and adapting to a changing global environment. The module is complemented by excursions to Makola market in Accra and to Kejetia and the Royal Palace in Kumasi.

Session 1: Introduction: Gender relations in Ghana's social and cultural settings
Required reading:
- Steegstra, Marijke. "Krobo Queen Mothers: Gender, Power, and Contemporary Female Traditional Authority in Ghana." *Africa Today*, Vol. 55, No. 3 (Spring, 2009), pp. 105-123

Session 2: Changing Gender relations
Required reading:
- Overa, Ragnhild. "When men do women's work : structural adjustment, unemployment and changing gender relations in the informal economy of Accra, Ghana." Journal of Modern African Studies. 45, 4 (2007), pp. 539–563

Final Session: Submit Research Paper & Concluding Synthesis and Analysis of Course Themes

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Description of Assignments:

Assessment:

Reflection on media perspectives	25%
Excursion reflection papers	25%
Critical essay	40%
Participation	10%

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

Grading Criteria
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, evidence of having completed assigned readings, attentive listening and active engagement in all lectures, discussions, field visits 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 lectures, discussions, field trips and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior. In addition, the following are expectations of all participants:

- Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (classmates', lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

Disability Services: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services at 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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