

Politics of Race and Racism II

On-site in Cape Town, South Africa

AFRS-3500 (3 credits)

South Africa: Politics of Race and Racism

This syllabus is representative of a typical 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

This course builds on and expands the material covered in the July (AFRS-3000) Politics of Race and Racism I, emphasizing experiential learning and person-to-person engagement. Students will experience the spatial, linguistic and historical legacies of the constructions of race, and deployment of racist policies in Cape Town through excursions to various social history museums, such as Robben Island Museum, the District 6 Museum and others. Students will also explore site specific histories of Langa and Bo-Kaap where they will do homestays, and engage with how politics of race and racism play out in contemporary issues around land, housing, language, education and gentrification.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Describe the ongoing legacy of racist policies and their impact on the intersections of race and education, housing, space and economic opportunities;
- Compare and contrast experiences of living in Langa and Bo-Kaap;
- Illustrate the application of theoretical learnings from resources provided in the 3-credit online module to making sense of their experiences in Cape Town both inside and outside of the classroom; and
- Apply contextual learning and knowledge to a small-scale research paper related to the politics of race and racism as applied to a contemporary social issue noticed whilst in Cape Town.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in English, but students will be exposed to introductory Xhosa and Afrikaaps vocabulary.

Instructional Methods

SIT's teaching and learning philosophy is grounded in the experiential learning theory developed by Kolb (1984; 2015) and informed by various scholars, such as Dewey, Piaget, Lewin, among others. Experiential learning theory recognizes that learning is an active process that is not confined to the formal curriculum; "knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 2015, p. 49). Learning involves both content and process. Learning is holistic and happens through various life experiences upon which students draw to generate new ways of knowing and being. Learning involves

a community and is a lifelong endeavor. Learning is transformational. The suggested four step-cycle of a *concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation* embedded in the experiential learning model is not linear and might not always happen in that specific order, as any learning is highly context dependent. These stages of taking part in a shared experience; reflecting on that experience by describing and interpreting it; challenging their own assumptions and beliefs to generate new knowledge; and ultimately applying new knowledge, awareness, skills, and attitudes in a variety of situations and contexts are important for students to engage in to become empowered lifelong learners.

To this end, we use a variety of methods including guest lectures, in house lectures, excursions, readings, assignments and reflection sessions to generate a complex engagement and deeper understanding.

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*

The weekly schedule is geared heavily toward excursions and experiential learning, with regular reflection sessions and occasional guest lectures. Guided by SIT faculty, and with occasional local guests, the reflection sessions are aimed at exploring the links, connections, learnings and questions raised by comparing the experiential learning components of the program with selected texts, and material from the AFRS3003online course.

Module/Week 1: Getting Spatially Oriented

In this module, students are orienting themselves to the city, taking specific note of the spatial elements of race and racism in the city, as well as orienting themselves to the program itself, and being confident in navigating the city.

Excursions:

- Drop-offs
- Free Walking Tour – Apartheid & Social History tour of inner-city Cape Town
- Klipfontein Corridor Excursion – Visit to Langa Pass Museum, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, Gugulethu 7 Memorial, Trojan Horse Memorial
- Transforming History Walking Tour – a counter-narrative to the Free Walking Tour, this tour emphasizes the indigene and slave history of the Cape

Workshops:

- Academic workshop – introduction to assignments, expectations
- Ethical engagement workshop – introduction to thinking about being in the space
- Introduction to Xhosa – basic language introduction workshop in preparation for Langa Homestay.

Readings:

- Field, S. (2007). Sites of Memory in Langa in Field, S. Meyer, R. & Swanson, F. *Imagining the City: Memories and Culture in Cape Town*. HRSC Press. p21-36
- Kapoor, I. (2004). Hyper-self-reflexive development? Spivak on representing the Third World 'Other'. *Third World Quarterly*, 25(4): 627-647.
- Maxwell, M., Abrams, J., Zungu, T. & Mosavel, M. (2016). Conducting community-engaged Qualitative research in South Africa: Memoirs of intersectional identities abroad. *Qualitative Research*. 16(1): 95-110.

Module/Week 2: The Past is in the Present

In this module, students get to grips with the ways in which the past is re-presented, which histories are foregrounded, which stories are considered significant, and some of the issues linking to land, race and politics in the Western Cape

Excursions:

- Robben Island Museum
- District 6 Museum
- Kirstenbosch Gardens
- Constantia
- Bo-Kaap Museum
- Parliament

Workshops:

- Land and restitution in South Africa
- Introduction to Afrikaap(n)s in preparation for Bo-Kaap Homestay
- Introduction to Coloured Identities

Readings:

- Garuba, H. (2007). Museums, Mimesis, and the Narratives of the Tour Guides of Robben Island in Murray, N., Shepherd, N. & Hall, M. *Desire Lines: Space, memory and identity in the post-apartheid city*. Routledge. p129-144
- Adhikari, Mohamed. (2005). Introduction. *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough: Racial Identity in the South African Colored Community*. Cape Town: Double Story Books
- Erasmus, Z. (ed.) (2001). Introduction in *Coloured by History, Shaped by Place: New Perspectives on Coloured Identities in Cape Town*. Kwela Books, Cape Town
- Davis, R. (2019). Bo-Kaap's complicated history and its many myths. *Eye-Witness News*. <https://ewn.co.za/2019/09/20/bo-kaap-s-complicated-history-and-its-many-myths>
- Jeppie, S. (1987). Historical process and the constitution of subjects: I.D. du Plessis and the reinvention of the "Malay". University of Cape Town. <https://open.uct.ac.za/handle/11427/27601>

Module/Week 3: Personal Exploration

In this module, students will spend time exploring an area of their own interest, in relation to their final research project through consultation with local experts, excursions to places of interest and finalizing and writing up their research paper before presenting their findings to the class.

Excursions: Excursions will be devised by students in collaboration with local staff and advisors in order to gather observations about their research area of interest. We offer some sample examples, but these will need to be changed and adapted depending on requirements.

- Phillipi Horticultural Area (for those with an interest in food production)
- Various non-profit organizations in different areas (organized depending on interest)
- Hair salons (for observation of racial dynamics in relation to the politics of hair.
- Shopping malls (for observation of racial dynamics)
- Public transport (busses, trains, mini-bus-taxis).
- Churches
- Parliament (if in session)
- Public spaces
- Memorial spaces

Workshops:

- Staff consultation workshops for final research paper
- Final student led workshop where students present their research and observations
- Closure and re-orientation workshops

Readings:

- Student dependent

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

1) Weekly Reflection Paper x 2 (30%)

Each student is expected to write a 1-3-page weekly reflection paper which synthesizes prescribed academic articles, excursion experiences and previous material to reflect on, draw correlations and highlight learnings in relation to course content and experiences.

2) DIE x 2 (20%)

Using the D.I.E. format critically analyze a cross cultural incident, which you would like to share.

D.I.E. stands for Describe, Interpret Evaluate. It is an exercise designed to assist in being more systematic and strategic about cross-cultural experiential learning. Think about the 'Green Banana Reading' as a D.I.E. example. Think back over your time here, and pick an encounter, interaction, or experience. It could be from a classroom, an excursion, your homestays, or a social occasion that struck you as different.

1. **Describe** the event, be as descriptive and evocative as possible. What did you see, hear, smell, touch, taste? Who was there, what was done/said? First person language, and present tense really helps. You want the reader to be there with you. (e.g. "I move from the bright light of day through the blue door into a darkened room and take a moment to adjust to seeing things. I am so anxious about meeting my homestay mama for the first time that I am looking for faces and forget to look around. I am immediately struck by the smell of something cooking. It's a new smell to me....")
2. In your **'interpret'** section, you write about the emotions, meanings, thoughts and interpretations that went on during that encounter/occasion. What did you initially think, what was your first interpretation or judgement? What about your own history / socialization / personal story do you think influenced that first interpretation?
3. In the **evaluation** section, you go back and try and step out of your own perspective and explore alternative interpretations. If you 'step outside' of your own cultural interpretation, what else could be going on here? Back up some of these explorations with reference to a reading (about the topic), or preferably a person, or people (someone in the same household for example, or someone who knows the local context, culture and circumstance NOT another student) and ask them for their interpretation of what happened. See how their interpretation helps you to think about the original event differently, or perhaps confirms something about your own insider/outsider perspective in the US.
4. Bring it all together in the conclusion to show how you have learned to see differently (or not) having taken different views and perspectives into account. Use the marking rubric to help you think through what it is you need to include in each section. 850 to 1200 words.

3) Research Paper (40%)

Write a short 2500-3000-word research paper that explores the ways in which race and racism affects an aspect of everyday social life in Cape Town/South Africa today. You could focus on issues of inequality, responses to COVID-19, land, housing, education, politics and political representation, gender, homelessness, prisons, crime, faith & religious practices, fashion, music or any other aspect. Ensure that in your paper you make the links between historical, structural and personal experiences. (need to develop a rubric for this).

5) Participation (10%)

This includes active involvement in lectures, readings, discussions and excursions using the following criteria:

- Attendance - promptness to class and positive presence in class.
- Active Listening - paying attention in class and during field excursions, asking appropriate questions, showing interest and enthusiasm (this includes body language), entertaining contradictory perspectives, taking notes.
- Involvement in Class Discussions - either in small or large groups, sharing knowledge. This means challenging yourself to speak up if you usually don't and means allowing others to speak if you are a person who tends to dominate class discussions.
- Group Accountability – positive participation in the group during field excursions and classes; not keeping others waiting.
- Displaying Respect – culturally appropriate interaction with hosts, SIT program staff, SIT lecturers and communities.]

Assessment

Reflection papers - 30% (15% each)

DIE's - 20% (10% each)

Research Project - 40%
Participation - 10%

Attendance and Participation

Due to the nature of SIT Study Abroad programs, and the importance of student and instructor contributions in every class session, attendance at all classes and for all program excursions is required. Criteria for evaluation of student performance include attendance and participation in program activities. Students must fully participate in all program components and courses. Students may not voluntarily opt out of required program activities. Valid reasons for absence – such as illness – must be discussed with the academic director or other designated staff person. Absences impact academic performance, may impact grades, and could result in dismissal from the program.]

Late Assignments

SIT Study Abroad programs integrate traditional classroom lectures and discussion with field-based experiences, site visits and debriefs. The curriculum is designed to build on itself and progress to the culmination (projects, ISP, case studies, internship, etc.). It is critical that students complete assignments in a timely manner to continue to benefit from the sequences in assignments, reflections and experiences throughout the program.

Example: Students may request a justified extension for one paper/assignment during the semester. Requests must be made in writing and at least 12 hours before the posted due date and time. If reason for request is accepted, an extension of up to one week may be granted at that time. Any further requests for extensions will not be granted. Students who fail to submit the assignment within the extension period will receive an 'F' for the assignment.

Grading Scale

| | |
|----------|----|
| 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 |

Program Expectations

- 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.
- Storing Your Work: Keep several copies of your work as back up and keep one copy accessible to you through an online forum, such as an attachment in your email, the course learning management system, or cloud-based storage. This way your work will always be available to despite technical issues. Lost files, deleted drives, or computer crashes are not valid excuses for late submission or for missing work.
- Personal Technology Use: Cell phones and other personal electronics can be used for taking notes and other class activities. Off-task usage is not acceptable. You may be marked as absent for habitually using them for something other than classroom activities.
- Course Communication: Course documents and assignments will be posted on the learning management system, Moodle. Although the course calendar provides a broad overview and the general sequence of work and assignments for the course, what we accomplish in class will vary, and revisions to the calendar will be posted at the course site. You will need to check the course site regularly. You are responsible for letting me know about any network-related problems that prevent you from accessing or submitting assignments.
- Content Considerations: Some texts and activities you will encounter in this course delve into sensitive topics that may be emotionally and intellectually challenging. Our classroom is a space where we can engage with challenging ideas, question assumptions, and navigate difficult topics with respect and maturity. As possible, I will flag content and activities that are especially graphic or intense, so we are prepared to address them soberly and sensitively. If you are struggling to keep up with the work or participate in the course because of the nature of the content and activities, you should speak with me and/or seek help from counseling services.
- Classroom recording policy: To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

SIT Policies and Resources

Please refer to the [SIT Study Abroad Handbook](#) and the [Policies](#) section of the SIT website for all academic and student affairs policies. Students are accountable for complying with all published policies. Of particular relevance to this course are the policies regarding: academic integrity, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), research and ethics in field study and internships, late assignments, academic status, academic appeals, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and misconduct, and the student code of conduct.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook and SIT website for information on important resources and services provided through our central administration in Vermont, such as [Library resources and research support](#), [Disability Services](#), [Counseling Services](#), [Title IX information](#), and [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) resources.