

Xhosa

XHOS-1003 (3 credits)

South Africa: Identity, Multiculturalism, & Social Political Transformation

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 Overview

This course aims to provide you with basic communication skills in the language of the Xhosa people, known as isiXhosa, focusing upon communicative language abilities. Language is best studied alongside analysis of the cultural context, and as such, this course will serve as a “gateway” for your entrance into and exploration of Xhosa society. Emphasis is on basic conversation and cultural cues with practical relevance to your stay in South Africa. As such, language skills needed in a number of “real world” situations are emphasized, e.g., shopping at the local market, transportation, greetings, speaking about oneself and asking questions, etc. In order for you to succeed in your study of isiXhosa, you will need to cultivate an attitude of active experimentation; have fun with the language, and use it whenever you can – in your homestay, while waiting for the bus, in talking with the Academic Director (AD) and program staff, etc. Do not worry if you are starting off with only a phrase or two, as your attempts to speak the language will open doors and make your South African experience much more enjoyable and meaningful. It is up to you to make as much as you can of the many opportunities available to you for practicing IsiXhosa. If you have young children in or near your homestay, they will almost always be happy to teach you their language (you can even ask them to teach you to sing a Xhosa song or two). Watching TV or listening to the radio in IsiXhosa can also be beneficial. The course is delivered primarily in Cape Town, though we will have many opportunities to speak IsiXhosa while on excursion, in the Western as well as the Eastern Cape Provinces. Early in the program you will meet the three isiXhosa tutors who will help us to learn and practice the material. The structure of the course will primarily be group lectures in the mornings, followed by tutorial sessions and occasional excursions in the afternoons.

Course Objectives

- To prepare students to participate successfully in IsiXhosa language and culture;
- To develop the fundamental conversational skills in IsiXhosa that will allow for deeper cultural engagement;
- To learn basic grammatical structures that facilitate the practical and functional use of

the language;

- To develop a broader cultural awareness of what it means to be “Xhosa.”

Expected Outcomes

By the end of the course, students should have attained the following:

- The capacity to express oneself in routine conversational settings using IsiXhosa including self-introduction, market contexts, asking for directions, or culturally appropriate greetings;
- The ability to demonstrate understanding of basic linguistic structures in IsiXhosa;
- Increased proficiency in IsiXhosa by two sublevels – i.e., if entry level is determined at “novice low”, students successfully completing the course should achieve “novice high”.

Course Requirements

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 aspects discussed in class. They are not necessarily tailor-made for each and every class.

Fischer, Arnold. *English-Xhosa Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Munnik, Anne. *Learn Xhosa with Anne Munnik*. Pietermaritzburg: Shuter & Shooter, 1994.

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

1) Classwork and Quizzes (40% continuous assessment)

Class work will be assigned individually or in small groups. Students are required to complete the tasks assigned during the class time. Short quizzes may accompany the class activities, this may include but not limited to proper use of verbs and grammar.

2) Written and Oral Work & Assignments (30% various assessments; final exam)

Students will be given a task to research or interview a person who is fluent in the language, they will then write up the task in the target language and give a short oral presentation of the topic. Student may learn songs and perform such songs to the class and then share the meanings of the songs.

3) Language use Outside of Class (20% continuous assessment)

Student use of the language outside class, when exchanging greetings with locals, in shops during excursion and how students are using the language among themselves outside class

4) Participation (10% - continuous assessment)

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/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, asking questions.
- *Group accountability*: participation as part of a group during field excursions and classes.
- *Respect*: Engaging in culturally-appropriate interaction with hosts, SIT program staff, SIT lecturers and communities.

Assessment

Classwork and Quizzes - 40%

Written and Oral Assignments - 30%

Language Use Outside of Class - 20%

Participation - 10%

Attendance and Participation

Due to the nature of SIT Study Abroad programs, and the importance of student and instructor contributions in each and 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. 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 excuses for late, 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, Canvas. 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.

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 course will be taught utilizing both classroom and field-based activities. Class work will involve student conversations and dialogues, narratives, and role-playing. Field activities will include assignments, homework, and independent practice to be completed in the field. The mornings begin with a program-wide lecture session, introducing vocabulary and new concepts to the whole group. Later in the day, students will meet in smaller groups with their IsiXhosa tutors for reinforcement and practice of the day's lesson. As the preliminary schedule in the *Program Handbook* outlines, the IsiXhosa-language course runs for approximately five weeks early in the program. The textbook used in the course has been designed by the instructor specifically for foreign IsiXhosa-language learners. Any required supplemental handouts will be available in class. Anne Munnik's *Learn Xhosa* (2003) is available as a reference guide. It is also advised that students purchase a small IsiXhosa-English dictionary early in their stay in South Africa. A limited number of dictionaries are available for reference purposes in the SIT Office.

Topics Covered Include:

Basic Functions

Greetings

Introduction (talking about oneself, and one's family)
Buying and selling
Transportation (modes of transport)
Daily activities at home
Telling time, calendar, weather days of the week and seasons
Asking and giving directions
Health, illness, and treatment
Recreational activities

Daily Needs

Making Telephone calls
Changing money/ Internet café
Visitors/visiting
Religion and naming customs