

Wildlife Conservation and Political Ecology Seminar

ENVI-3000 (3 credits)

Tanzania: Ecology, Wildlife, & Natural Resource Management

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

The Wildlife Conservation and Political Ecology (WCPE) Seminar seeks to understand the impact of human activities on the ecosystems of Tanzania with a strong focus on the importance of cultural diversity, conservation approaches and natural resource management. This interdisciplinary course integrates methodologies from natural sciences and social sciences. Students will engage directly with the material as they learn by doing. Self-assessment is also major component of the course.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Understand the impact of human activities on the ecosystems of Tanzania; Interrogate political ecology, conservation and preservation issues in Tanzania and East Africa;
- Assess effective resource management programs;
- Evaluate the effects of protected areas on wildlife;
- Articulate the resource management programs and assess their impacts on the environment;
- Recognize the complex and deep ways in which the dynamics of asymmetrical social and political power affect ecological systems.

Pre-requisites and Prior readings

There are no formal pre-requisites; however, students will be expected to read the materials listed below prior to departure from USA.

Igoe, J. (2004). Conservation and Globalization. A study of national parks and Indigenous Communities from East Africa to South Dakota. Wadsworth. ISBN 0-534-61317-9

(Read Chapters 1, 2 and 3).

Sinclair, A. (2012). *Serengeti Story: A scientist in paradise*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
ISBN: 9780199645527

Norberg-Hodge, H. (2016). *Localization: Essential Steps to an Economics of Happiness*,
publication of Local Futures, (free download on
<http://www.localfutures.org/publications/free-downloads/>)

Course Requirements

Lectures, field trips, excursions, and reflexive discussions help students learn about wildlife conservation and political ecology in Tanzania. The Academic Director evaluates student participation and assignments based on timeliness, completeness, seriousness of purpose, and when relevant, the demonstration of cooperative teamwork among group members. The evaluation of assignments further accounts for their clarity of organization, accurate background, supportive data, appropriate analysis, coherence and depth of argument, and the quality of written, visual, and/or oral presentation.

Course Program

This course takes the form of interrelated modules that incorporate lectures, background readings, presentations, discussions, activities, and assignments:

Module 1: Setting the Context: Synopsis of Wildlife Conservation, Ecology and Tourism in Tanzanian History

This introductory module gives the historical background and legal bases of Wildlife Conservation and Tourism in Tanzania in line with their ecological implications. It seeks to cover the genesis and paradigm shift of wildlife conservation and tourism in Tanzania in temporal percepts. The module integrates background readings, facilitated discussions, presentations, directed studies, game drive and excursion to deliver and capture its core aspect. As an assignment, students write a short piece on why they are here, which serves as the basis for later reflection in their midterm-portfolio.

Key text / Reading materials

Norberg-Hodge, H. (2016). *Localization: essential steps to an economics of happiness*, Local Futures (<https://www.localfutures.org/wp-content/uploads/Localization-Booklet-download.pdf>) – assigned pre-departure

Cooper, F. (2000). *Africa's Pasts and Africa's Historians*, *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (2000), pp. 298-336

Walley, C. (2004). *Conservation and Development in the age of the "global"*, *Nature and development in an East African marine park*, Princeton University Press, Chapter 1.

Module 2: Introduction to Wildlife Management and Approaches to Wildlife Management in Tanzania

Module 2 aims at understanding current wildlife management approaches (Natural/ Captive), with a particular focus on the strengths and weaknesses of each. We will explore key questions about Tanzania's wildlife and how it is under threat in current wildlife management approaches. It integrates background readings, directed studies, student-led presentations, expert input and discussion, game drive and guided walks with local wildlife experts to explore mammals, birds, and ethno botany. During this module, lectures will be given by faculty members of the College of African Wildlife Management in Mweka. Topics include mountain ecology, climate change, hunting, wildlife tourism, community-based natural resource management (CBNRM), governance, and fire ecology.

Module 3: Local versus Global Perspectives of Globalization, Development, Aids and Conservation

Module 3 takes place while students are learning intensive Kiswahili in the outskirts of Arusha. We take this opportunity to have focus group discussions with members of the surrounding community, where students gain an understanding of how key global issues affect local people and compare this to the more academic input they receive from the readings. In addition to the focus group discussion, the module includes facilitated discussions and individual conversations with their homestay families. Students compile a mid-term portfolio at the end of this module. This encourages them to reflect on a range of issues addressed in various forums during the semester, particularly as they play out in their homestay. Students will also use different methods of collecting, interpreting, and consolidating data into a coherent and integrated report.

Topics

- *How do Globalization, Development and Aid affect local people?*
- *How does Environmental conservation and Climate change affect local people?*

Key text / Reading materials

Citizen newspaper, Why Chinese investment in Africa is not a debt trap, September 5, 2018

East African newspaper, New \$60b US fund to rival Chinese push into Africa, 7 November 2018

Gwata, M. (2018). A template for understanding the African debt crisis, Daily Maverick

Moyo, Dambisa. (2009). *Aid is not working Dead Aid: Why aid is not working and how there is a better way for Africa*. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux

Chapter 3: Aid is not working

Chapter 4: The silent killer of growth

Buscher, B. et al. (2016). Half-earth or whole earth? Radical ideas for conservation and their implications, *Oryx, Fauna and Flora International*, page 1 of 4

Caro, t. et al. (2009). Assessing the effectiveness of protected areas: paradoxes call for pluralism in evaluating conservation performance, *Diversity and Distributions* (2009) 15, 178-182.

Shemsanga, C. et al. (2010) The Cost of Climate Change in Tanzania: Impacts and Adaptations, *Journal of American Science*, 2010, 6(3), 182-196

Sainsbury, K. et al (2015). Exploring stakeholder perceptions of conservation outcomes from

alternative income generating activities in Tanzanian villages adjacent to Eastern Arc Mountain forests.

Module 4: The Complexities of Conservation and Wildlife Management: Balancing the Need of People versus Animals

This module constitutes the backbone of the program. It integrates readings, student-led presentations, expert input and discussion, presentations by park manager, and intensive field work in protected areas – Tarangire, Serengeti, and Ngorongoro Crater Authority Area. Students form groups, each of which focuses on one particular area for their field work and exploring the park, all accompanied by the local SIT staff and/or wildlife expert. Each day smaller groups present their experiences to the larger student group and engage in discussion with the local experts/SIT staff. The key assignment for this module is the presentation of each of the topics below by a small group of students. Each small group is responsible for producing a presentation to highlight the key issues in the readings, using additional sources if possible, and relating these to their experiences during the semester. They need to facilitate and manage discussion which will include input from the accompanying SIT staff/experts. For each topic, every student, as their written assignment, needs to produce short summary of their reflections related to key issues from the readings, giving their opinions on the topic, and developing several key questions for further discussion during the presentation.

Topics

- *Are people and conservation mutually exclusive?*
- *Are Wildlife Management Areas a solution?*
- *Is there a solution? Management of the Ngorongoro Crater Authority Area and community participation*
- *How did the Serengeti develop? Background and key issues in the Serengeti*
- *How do people and wildlife interact? Key issues around Human-wildlife interaction*
- *What is Serengeti's future in terms of management complexity and sustainability?*

Key text / Reading materials

- Wilfred, P. (2010). Towards sustainable wildlife management areas in TZ, *Tropical Conservation Science*, Vol 3(1), 103-116 (WMA).
- Moyo, F. et al. (2016). Failure by design: revisiting TZ's flagship wildlife management area, *Conservation and Society*, 14(3), 232-242, 2016.
- Moyo, F. et al. (2017) Between policy intent and practice: negotiating access to land and other resources in Tanzania's Wildlife Management Areas, *Tropical Conservation Science*, Vol. 10, 1-17.
- Benjaminsen, A. et al. (2013). Wildlife management in TZ: state control, rent seeking and community resistance, *Development and Change*, 44(5): 1087–1109.
- Bluwstein, J. et al. (2016). Austere conservation: understanding conflicts over resource governance in TZ wildlife management areas, *Conservation and Society*, 14(3) 218-231.

- Lee, D. E. and M. L. Bond (2018). Quantifying the ecological success of a community-based wildlife conservation area in Tanzania, *Journal of Mammology*, 99(2): 459-464.
- Eustace, A., A. W. Kisingo and J. Mbwiliza. (2018). Wildlife damage in villages surrounding the Serengeti ecosystem, *Parks* Vol. 24, 1 May 2018.
- Sinclair, A. et al. (eds.) (2015), *Serengeti IV: Sustaining Biodiversity in a coupled human-natural system*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press
- Knapp, E.J. et al (2015). The plight of the people: understanding the socio-ecological context of people living on the western edge of Serengeti National Park (Chapter 16).
- Hampson, K. et al (2015). Living in the Greater Serengeti Ecosystem: Human-wildlife conflict and coexistence (Ch 21).
- Sinclair, A.R.E et al. (2008) (eds.). *Serengeti III: Human Impacts on Ecosystem Dynamics* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Olf, H. and J.G.C. Hopcraft (2008). The resource basis of human-wildlife interaction (Chapter 4).
- Sinclair, A.R.E et al. (2008) (eds). *Serengeti III: Human Impacts on Ecosystem Dynamics* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Thurgood, S. et al (2008). Who pays for conservation? Current and future financing scenarios for the Serengeti Ecosystem (Chapter 15).
- Sinclair, A. et al (eds.) (2015). *Serengeti IV: Sustaining Biodiversity in a coupled human-natural system*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Randall, D. et al (2015). Multiple functions and institutions: Management complexity in the Serengeti ecosystem (Chapter 24).
- Reid, R.S. et al (2015). Sustainability of the Serengeti-Mara Ecosystem for wildlife and people (Chapter 25).

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

1) Political Ecology Concept Presentation (20%)

This activity allows students to explore a concept in the field of political ecology. Small groups of students are responsible for producing a presentation to highlight the key issues in the readings, using additional sources if possible, and relating these to their experiences during the semester. They need to facilitate and manage discussion which will include input from the accompanying SIT staff/experts.

2) Political Ecology Concept Written Assignment (30%)

The written assignment includes producing short summaries of the key issues from the readings, giving their opinions on the topic, and developing several key questions for further discussion during the presentation.

3) Mid-term Portfolio (40%)

The mid-term portfolio encourages students to reflect on a range of issues addressed in various forums during the semester, particularly as they play out in their homestay, and to integrate what has been learned and experienced during the semester. In addition, they use different methods of collecting data, interpreting this, and consolidating it into a coherent and integrated report.

The portfolio is based on the following:

- Two - three weeks of primary data collection with the host community. Primary data will be collected using qualitative techniques such as participant observation, interviews, focal groups etc. If possible, students may interview their family about issues such as their family history, where they are from originally, how they came to be in Arusha, what their hopes for the future are for themselves and their children. This could throw light on the various issues raised in the portfolio.
- The orientation readings, and readings on globalization, development, aid, conservation, and climate change need to be incorporated as reference material in the portfolio, along with reflections and information from the focal group discussions and other personal communications and observations.

The portfolio is an integrated document which includes a section on globalization and natural resource issues with a particular focus on how this impacts the homestay family's livelihood, a section on gender, and a meta-analysis, reflecting on student's relative positions of power and privilege.

4) 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 also 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

Political ecology concepts (Presentation) - 20%

Political ecology concepts (written assignment) - 30%

Mid-term Portfolio - 40%

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.

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

The grading scale for all courses 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

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.