Rwandan Approaches to Sustainable Development
DEV 3700 (4 credits, 60 class hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:
Rwanda Presidential Scholars Consortium Program

Course Description
This course highlights sustainable development approaches and their impact on the socio-economic development of Rwanda. In this context, sustainable development includes a particular focus on ecology, with emphases on conservation, resource management and environmental best practices, together with microfinance and poverty alleviation, integrating the cultural, economic, ecological, and political imperatives of sustainability. While sustainable environmental management is primarily focused on biodiversity, forest protection and efficient use of energy, the course will also address related issues such as pollution and waste management and the challenges they represent for health and the environment. Local academics, environmental researchers, and civil society leaders discuss community practices, local policies, international treaties, and sustainable technologies. The course is also designed to provide students with an introduction to the genesis of microfinance in Rwanda and its development as a stopgap measure to the economic challenges that the country has experienced in the past decades. The proposed lectures provide a background to Rwanda’s socio-economic history, especially in relation to the impact that the 1994 genocide has had on the economy and the various strategies undertaken to address these economic aftermath. The course likewise addresses the country’s growing dependence on microfinance for poverty alleviation and local development. Students visit small businesses and different entrepreneurial sites to learn first-hand from the experiences of entrepreneurs and social development agents and to consolidate their classroom-based learning. Lecturers are drawn from the National University of Rwanda, government institutions, and entrepreneurial and microfinance experts.

Methodology
Rwandan Approaches to Sustainable Development integrates lectures, field visits to local associations and group discussions with Rwandan youth and community leaders on issues of environmental protection and sustainable development. Educational excursions will also be used to discuss the importance of sustainability for local community development. Field visits to

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entrepreneurial firms, business sites, operational complexes and organizations will be conducted. Excursions to other parts of Rwanda provide students with an opportunity to examine Rwanda's rural economy and to understand the impact microfinance and social enterprises have on economic and social development.

Learning Outcomes
By the end of the course, students will:

- Summarize a critical and succinct overview of the environmental challenges facing Rwanda
- Demonstrate knowledge of environmental policy and regulations and their impact on local development
- Analyze the impact of policy and regulations on environmental protection and sustainable development
- Explain the role of microfinance and entrepreneurship in the Rwandan context from both theoretical and contextual positions
- Demonstrate understanding the impact microfinance has on the development of small business enterprises and social development
- Assess the work done by select local NGOs and associations to promote sustainable development
- Produce an analytical paper that engages a case study of sustainable development in the Rwandan context or assesses the impact of microfinance on poverty alleviation and social development in Rwanda.

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.

General Required Readings


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**Sample Lectures**

- Ecology and Sustainable Development: An Introduction
- Land Use, Land Tenure and Sustainable Development
- Post-Genocide Development and Reconstruction Policy: Government Initiatives and Perspectives
- Food Production and Sustainable Development
- Biodiversity and Development
- Tourism and Community Development
- New Technologies and Sustainable Development
- Women and Socio-Economic Development in Rwanda
- Role and Impact of International Actors in Development
- Development and Regional Economic initiatives: The Case of Commonwealth and East African Community
- History and Macroeconomic Context in Rwanda
- Demographics and the Rwandan Economy
- Role of the Microfinance Sector in the Economic Development of Rwanda
- Impact of Trade Liberalization on Microfinance in Rwanda
- Theories of Microfinance and Social Development
- Gender and Entrepreneurship in Rwanda

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The Cultural Context of Microfinance and Entrepreneurship
Micro, Small and Medium Business Enterprises in Rwanda
Business Start-Up and Growth: Planning and Management
Financial Sector and Microfinance: Stakeholders and Mutual Impact
Categories of Social Entrepreneurship in Rwanda
Microfinance and Poverty Alleviation
Economic Development Strategies, Dependency, Self-Sufficiency and Social Transformation
Social Capital and Microfinance in Rwanda
Women and Microfinance in Rwanda

Sample Field Visits
- Millennium Village, Mayange, Bugesera
- Visit to an orphanage or school, Kigali
- Rwandan Microfinance Forum (sample microfinance associations)
- Association Rwandaise des Institutions de Microfinance
- Centre de Recherche et d’Information en Socio-Economie Rurale, University of Butare
- International NGOs and government agencies, including USAID, Department for International Development (DFID), Deutscher Entwicklungsdiensst (DED), Care, World Vision
- Catholic Relief Services
- Visit to the National Demobilization and Reintegration Commission, Kigali
- Food for the Hungry
- Bridge2Rwanda

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.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Ecology and Sustainable Development Course Assignments
Timely completion of all assignments is expected. Late hand-ins will be penalized. All assignments are evaluated according to organization, analytical quality, depth of understanding, argumentation and presentation of evidence.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literature review on assigned readings</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly synthesis sessions</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational Excursion Essays</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Essay Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Attendance and Participation</td>
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- The Literature review will consist of three essay questions. Students will be expected to respond to two of these questions and will have three days to complete the assignment.
- During the semester students will be required to write one critical analysis based on lectures and readings assigned. Papers should be 3-5 pages long.

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• Students will also be required to lead one of the weekly synthesis sessions. Leading the synthesis session requires that the student prepare a summary of one of the week’s lectures and assigned readings, make comments and prepare questions for class discussion.
• Following each educational excursion, students will be expected to prepare a 3-4 page analytical paper focusing on the lectures and/or visits included in the excursion.
• The comprehensive essay exam will consist of four essay questions. Each response should be approximately 3 pages long.

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

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<th>Grade</th>
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<td>A</td>
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<td>A-</td>
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</tbody>
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**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, attentive listening and active engagement in all Academic Course 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.

**Student Expectations**

**Class Participation**

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

**Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Student Handbook** for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and the academic appeals process. Also, refer to the specific information available in the Student Handbook and the Program Dossier given to you at Orientation.

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