French in the Malagasy Context

FREN 2000-2500 (3 Credits / 45 class hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:
Malagasy: Urbanization and Rural Development

Course Description
This course aims to introduce students to the rich Malagasy cultural and literary production in French. Through the study of post-colonial texts, students learn about the post-colonial politics of Malagachization, bilingualism and the role of French language in the integration of Malagasy society into the international Francophone community. The course also focuses on enhancing student’s oral skills to facilitate their immersion into everyday life where French remains largely dominant. To achieve these broad objectives, this course encompasses two interrelated units aimed at strengthening student’s capacity and skill in reading, composition and spoken French so as to further enhance their ability to engage effectively and critically with Madagascar’s rich post-colonial francophone artistic expressions. Such expressions include local and national literary production, popular or traditional music, film, oral poetry, proverbs or other dimensions of francophone oral culture. Comprehension lessons are oriented to match student language levels which are determined through an oral test at the beginning of each semester. For Intermediate students the aim is to take them to the Advanced Level where they would be able to handle a large number of communicative tasks in formal and informal settings with ease and confidence. Various methods are used to assess student performance including: oral interviews, written tests, quizzes, class participation, and oral presentations. Coursework is reinforced though daily interactions with the homestay and in the field, and part of each student’s assessment will be the level of French use outside the classroom.

Course Objectives
French in the Malagasy Context has an interdisciplinary and critical focus encompassing 45 academic hours (3 credits). Its main objectives:

- To expose students to Madagascar’s francophone artistic and cultural productions;
- To provide comprehensive and critical understanding of francophone cultural expressions from Madagascar, including their broader role in a social and national context;
- To provide understanding to the way in which French functions in the Malagasy context;
- To increase student’s proficiency in spoken and written French;
- To give students the capacity to use French more confidently in social settings; and

*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.

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• To foster French language learning outside the classroom.

**Learning Outcomes**
By the end of the course, students should have attained the ability to:

• Achieve increased proficiency in French by two sublevels – i.e., if entry level is determined at “intermediate low”, students successfully completing the course should achieve “intermediate high”;
• Identify a cross-section of Malagasy francophone artistic expressions, and to explain their particular significance in the local or national context;
• Demonstrate understanding of the historical role and function of French in local and national contexts; and
• Express understanding of important issues, events and topics embedded in Malagasy francophone artistic productions.

**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. Song texts and other literary sources will be selected and assigned during the course of the semester.

**Introductory Readings**


**Select Intermediate Texts**


**Select Intermediate Films**

*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 NOTIFIED.*
**Evaluation and Grading Criteria**

**French in the Malagasy Context**
Student performance is evaluated by teachers at each class meeting. Lessons are planned and students regrouped according to learning pace and individual strengths and weaknesses. At the end of the semester, teachers will compose an evaluation for each student, taking into account both classroom performance, effort and the use of and improvement in language skills over the course of the class. Students will be evaluated on oral presentations, written assignments, and on the extent to which they make an effort to use French both inside and outside the classroom. The final semester grade is determined by the Academic Director based on a combination of the criteria above.

Oral presentation on selected work 25%
Analytical paper 25%
Quizzes and oral exams 30%
Participation 20%

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>64-66%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 64%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Grading Criteria**
Students will receive grades on oral presentations and written work, as well as on the extent to which students make an effort to use the language outside the classroom. The final semester grade is determined by the Academic Director based on a combination of the above criteria.

**Program Calendar**

**Module 1 – Oral Comprehension, Reading and Writing**
This unit is designed to improve student’s French speaking, comprehension, reading, and writing skills by focusing on general pronunciation, intermediate level grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure and specific local nuances of French as is spoken and written in Madagascar. In order to reinforce language acquisition and its use in Madagascar, students participate in field exercises and other activities requiring the use French.

**Module 2 – French in the Malagasy Context**
Drawing on the study of Francophone texts in multiple and diverse artistic and culturally significant mediums – literature, film, music, local or “grassroots” publications and oral art forms, for example – students interact with and examine Francophone expression rooted in Madagascar. Through working with such artistic expressions, students build capacity and increased proficiency in spoken and written French to facilitate the ability to handle routine conversations with ease and confidence. By engaging this coursework, students additionally
and importantly build knowledge and increased familiarity around Madagascar’s Francophone verbal and written arts.

**Student Expectations**

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

*Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad 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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