Course Syllabus

Research Methods and Ethics in the Arts

ANTH-3500 (3 Credits / 45 class hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:
Senegal: National Identity and the Arts

Course Description
Research Methods and Ethics in the Arts is designed with two core objectives in mind. The first is to equip students with the necessary tools and foundational understanding to carry out ethically and methodologically sound independent research related to arts, identities and urban cultures, or a topic that directly immerses students in some dimension of the visual or performing arts in Senegal. Secondly, this course will provide students with opportunities to engage in workshops and apprenticeships with leading artists and artisans in Senegal to both build knowledge in various Senegalese artistic forms, and to provide structured experiences rooted in teacher-apprentice relationships. Through the Village des Arts (professional artists' cooperative) and other leading institutions or individuals in the arts, students undergo a series of formal instructional and participatory sessions in both compulsory and selected artistic forms such as djembe performance, Senegalese dance, the kora or tama, batik making, glass painting, bronze sculpture, or ceramics. Provisions are also made for students with previous background and experience to engage in sessions at the more advanced level and, if desired, the program can support students in making their own arrangements for further individual study outside the formal context of the program. Assigned readings support the experiential learning environment, thereby adding further context and understanding to artistic, aesthetic or symbolic meaning in the local or national context. Students are assessed through a final performance or display of the works produced through these evolving series of sessions in addition to the quality of their participation throughout the course.

Course Objectives
The Research Methods and Ethics in the Arts course encompasses 45 academic hours (3 credits) and its main objectives are as follows:

- To prepare students for engaging in a thematically appropriate independent research topic by equipping them with the requisite methodological tools and ethical sensitivities;
- To provide foundational understanding of a cross section of important Senegalese visual and performing arts forms;
- To provide opportunities for students to choose an area of focus to increase and fine-tune their artistic abilities;
- To further provide students with the contextual understanding of selected art forms in the Senegalese context;

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To foster artistic self-discovery and cross-cultural artistic understanding through the process of learning and creating.

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

- Demonstrate knowledge of the core methodologies and ethical issues in carrying out independent research in Senegal;
- Express basic understanding of the creative process involved in two of Senegal’s visual art forms;
- Illustrate heightened skill and understanding of a chosen artistic expression from Senegal learned in the course;
- Deliver a basic performance practice on two instruments from Senegal in addition to the capacity to demonstrate basic understanding of select Senegalese dance forms; and
- Articulate broader meaning, symbolism or aesthetics in a chosen visual or performing arts medium.

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. Additional readings will be assigned during the semester when appropriate.


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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

Research Methods and Ethics in the Arts Assignments

Evaluation
ISc Proposal 30%
Performance exhibition and paper 50%
Effort and participation 20%

ISP Proposal
Title/Abstract - Concisely states topic, study objectives and main methodologies (5%)
Background to the study - Evidence of thorough literature review, terms defined and clarified, topic contextualized (25%)
Study objectives - Clear, logical, and realistic (20%)
Methodology, ethical considerations, and research design - Methods adequately explained, reasons for site choice, cultural and ethical considerations, including any issues that require further explanation for the Local Review Board process (25%)
Resources, required, calendar, budget - Demonstrated thought, realistic proposal (10%)
Literature cited - Proper format, works actually cited in proposal (5%)
Overall presentation and professionalism - Proofread, proper editing, pages numbers and headings, proper format for foreign languages and quotes, writing style and clarity (10%)

Performance Exhibition and Paper: Although students are encouraged to participate in all sessions and workshops, chose one artistic area of focus at the beginning of the semester (i.e., dance, drumming, batik, etc.). Before the commencement of the Independent Study Project (ISP), students will exhibit/perform a creative work for the class and invited guests. Additionally, students will support their display/performance with a 5 minute presentation describing the creative process, challenges they faced, insights gained, purpose of their piece, etc. In addition, students are required to present an 8-10 page paper on a topic evolving from your area of focus. Your paper should be guided by the following components and considerations:

Introduction – Why did you choose this topic? What are the aims and objectives of your paper? What is your central thesis?
Methodology and Ethics – What research methods did you use? Which methods were particularly effective, and which were less so? How did you carry out these methods? What ethical issues did you confront and how did you address them? How did your status or identity shape your research experiences? What might you do differently if given the opportunity?
Findings – What did you find? What do your findings reveal about the arts and identity in Senegal? Do your findings confirm or reveal something new in light of established literature?
Conclusion – Summary of your paper. How do your findings relate to your stated goals and thesis? What other areas of research would be useful to build on your own study?
Bibliography and Informants – Must be formatted correctly.

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

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<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-93%</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>87-89%</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>84-86%</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>80-83%</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>77-79%</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>74-76%</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-73%</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>67-69%</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>64-66%</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>below 64</td>
<td>F</td>
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Grading Criteria
An “A” grade for an assessment entails superior (not just “very good”) performance in terms of intonation, increased fluency, command of the course materials covered, attention to cultural norms regarding non-verbal communication, etc. Regarding participation, an “A” grade refers to full attendance, punctuality, attentive listening and active engagement in all 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.

General: Student’s name, date, name of the assignment, and the title of the paper (if applicable), are required. All assignments should be typed hardcopies (double spaced, 12 point font) when possible. Hand written papers in dark blue or black ink will be accepted for certain assignments under special circumstances when done in consultation of the Academic Director. Remember to proofread all assignments for clarity, organization, spelling, grammar, etc. as these are taken into account for the final grade. Assignments can be written in French or English, unless specified. Grammatical errors in French will not affect student’s grades as long as ideas can be clearly understood.

Grading Criteria and Procedures: Although objectives for each assignment are clearly articulated in the syllabus, students may further personalize these objectives if they wish, but should state their goals very clearly at the outset of their write-up. Grades are based on the extent to which students realize these objectives and are able to communicate their learning in a clear and concise manner. Individual assignments are generally evaluated according to student choice and definition of topic, methodologies practiced and their evaluation thereof, quantity and accuracy of information gathered, analysis of information gathered, and overall presentation style (written and oral). Students will receive written comments from the Academic Director (AD) on each assignment, and are always encouraged to revise assignments or add comments of their own based on this written feedback. Rewrites must be submitted no later than one week after work is returned with comments. If students re-submit work for evaluation after receiving feedback, their grade will also be re-evaluated. Grades can be improved by a maximum of 10 points or one full letter grade.

All grades assigned will take into account the students’ special circumstances and challenges they face as foreign students. 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 workshops, 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.

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**Readings:** Throughout the semester, various readings will be assigned to complement the material covered in class and on field visits. Students are expected to refer to these readings to add substance to their own research. They must include proper citations for any specific information from readings that students include in the write-up of their assignments.

**Participation:** Students are expected to participate fully in all program components. This includes participating in classroom discussions, all outside of class activities, excursions, and all group assignments. Students are also expected to observe culturally sensitive behavior at all times and put forward a reasonable effort to use their French and Wolof language skills outside of class time.

**Late Assignment Policy:** All assignments and papers must be turned in on the due date by 5:00 PM. Assignments should be given directly to the instructor. Students each have three passes (called *sorry it's late!*), which allow students to submit an assignment one day late without penalty, excluding the Independent Study Project (ISP). If students submit an assignment after its due date, they must attach one *sorry it's late!* pass for each day past the due date (5 PM to 5 PM; there are no partial late days). For group papers, each group member must submit a *sorry it's late!* pass. The *sorry it's late!* pass is a provision for unforeseen circumstances, such as severe illness or extensive power cuts. No person will receive more than 3 *sorry it's late!* passes; therefore students should carefully consider when or if to use them. In the absence of the appropriate number of *sorry it's late!* passes, assignments will be docked 10 points for each day late. No assignment will be accepted after 5 late days, i.e. a grade will turn into a score of ‘0’ if it is more than one week late. The ISP deadline is strict: *sorry it's late!* passes or other excuses for late submission will not be accepted.

**Program Calendar**
The course is designed as two modules. The first examines the methodological and ethical issues inherent in arts-based research in Senegal, with the second designed as series of compulsory and optional workshop sessions with focus on Senegalese visual and performing arts:

**Module 1 – Methods and Ethics in Arts-Based Research**
Methods and Ethics in Arts-Based Research prepares students for independent study on a thematically appropriate topic in Senegal. To this end students review core methodological procedures, strategies for successful fieldwork in Senegal, project development and topic refinement, data analysis, and critical ethical issues in order to ensure ethically sound research experiences.

- Formal and informal interview
- Observation techniques and DIE
- Ethical issues in field research
- Independent Study Project proposal and topic refinement
- Final write up and presentation
- The arts-based research paradigm

**Module 2 – Workshops in the Senegalese Arts**
This module engages students in the visual and performing arts and provides structured experience in teacher-student apprenticeship, the formal relationship typical for students wishing to actively study the arts in Senegal.

**Performing Arts**
Djembe performance

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Senegalese dance  
Kora performance  
Tama performance  
Advanced djembe performance  
Advanced dance

Visual Arts  
Batik  
Glass painting  
Bronze sculpture  
Ceramics

Educational Excursions
- **Dakar**: Musée de l’IFAN, Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Village des Arts, visits to research institutes (West African Research Center, CODESIRIA, Gorée Institute, Baobab Center).
- **Gorée**: Musée de la Femme, Musée de l’IFAN, Maison des Esclaves and an artists’ community.
- **Thies**: Artisan Village, Manufactures des Arts (National Tapestry Studios), water color artists’ studio, Village homestay.

Student Expectations

Class Participation
Participation in class refers to attendance, punctuality, attentive listening and active engagement in all workshops, lectures, discussions, field trips and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior. Since participation is a key component of the Workshops in Senegalese Arts course, it carries added weight in the overall course assessment.

**PLEASE NOTE:** All classes leave at least ¼ of the scheduled time for the purpose of class discussion of the lecture, activity and/or readings.

**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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