**Course Syllabus**

**Development, Transformation and Nation Building**

SDIS-3000 (3 Credits / 45 class hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:
South Africa: Social and Political Transformation

**Course Description**

Development, Transformation and Nation Building is a 3-credit course (45 class hours), with the course material delivered through the examination of three modules: 1) Development in South Africa; 2) Nation-building explored through education and the media in South Africa; and 3) Gender and social change. A central premise of this course is the interconnected nature of issues of development and nation building in South Africa; it is difficult to analyze one without considering its relationship to the other. As such, when focusing in the first instance upon issues of development, we will also consider how the issue impacts and is shaped by specific patterns of nation building. At the same time, when we examine a nation building issue, we must also reflect on how that issue may have important development components as well. It is the holistic interplay of challenges and opportunities relating to both development and nation building that characterizes the exploration of the program theme in the course.

Core themes addressed in this course include the evolution from the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) to a developmental state, and the role of civil society, education, journalism, and media in the goal of nation building. Through formal lectures, assigned readings, relevant field visits and group discussions, students engage with issues of development, the challenges of nation building, and multiple and intertwining identities in post-apartheid South Africa that form part of the narrative around development and justice.

**Course Objectives**

The Development, Transformation and Nation Building course has an interdisciplinary and critical focus encompassing 45 academic hours (3 credits). Its main objectives:

- To examine the political economy of development and assess the multiple perspectives and opinions in the debate on South African development policy;
- To provide students with opportunities for focused study on a chosen topic appropriate to the course theme;
- To delegate academic and social skill-building activities in such a way that students take initiative in and responsibility for their own learning;

*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 provide further context and understanding for the course on Memory and Reconciliation in addition to the other program components.

Learning Outcomes
By the end of the course, students should have attained the ability to:
• Critically examine current issues of development and nation building in South Africa;
• Distinguish the challenges to nation building in post-apartheid South Africa and evaluate the role of education, journalism and media in that effort; and
• Apply understanding of the evolving nature of discourse around development and nation building in post-Apartheid South Africa.

Course Requirements
Readings
In addition to readings, which will be assigned for each module, it is also the student’s responsibility to keep up to date with current events. At a minimum, students are required to read the weekly Mail & Guardian; it is also recommended that you read a daily newspaper (perhaps alternating papers to get various perspectives) as well as a Sunday paper. 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. It is advised that you watch a session of the news on “SABC” or “E” at least once a week, though this is in no way a substitute for keeping up with the print media. Familiarity with current events and a working knowledge of today’s political and economic issues will be assumed in the seminar.


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.

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Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Development and Nation Building Assignments
Students will be expected to prepare for, attend, and participate in the lectures, discussions, and field visits. They will be expected to complete all assignments in a professional, timely manner. The following breakdown of grades will be used to arrive at the final letter grade, which is determined by the Academic Director (AD) and the Academic Coordinator.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book Review</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focused-Study: Op-Ed Paper</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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**Book Review:** The book review offers you the time and space to select and explore one piece of professional academic literature from South Africa, in a variety of topics: General Politics, Political Economy, Development, Gender Issues, Education, and Nation Building. You may wish to use this opportunity to read something that may be relevant for your ISP. A list of books from which you can choose is available from the Academic Director, and all books are available in the program library. In the event that you want to read a piece of fiction that’s related to South Africa’s socio-political transformation, do consult with the academic director or academic coordinator in order to make an appropriate choice.

**Requirements**
Your review should be approximately 1500-2000 words. A detailed handout on how to write a book review will be distributed in class.

**Objectives**
The purpose of the book review is to:

- Provide students with an opportunity to read in-depth a scholarly book, edited collection or an appropriate fictional work concerned with current South African issues;
- Provide students with an opportunity to explore a potential ISP topic;
- Expose students to the art of critical reading and analysis of a piece of academic literature;
- Encourage students to practice literature selection, synthesis, and writing skills.

**Assessment**
The book review assessment will be based on the following criteria:

- It must be structurally sound and include: a brief description of the general orientation of the book; a summary of the book’s main argument/s; your views on the merits or otherwise of these arguments; in the case of an edited collection, reference should be made to the stronger and weaker chapters; your views on the volume and whether you would recommend it to other SIT group members.
- Based on the format given above, describe well, but succinctly, the content of the book (where, who, what), provide a compelling analysis of the author’s success or failure at achieving their goal, and offer a fresh insight for how the book provides insight for an SIT student.
- Content: give a very clear articulation of the author’s goal; demonstrate that you grasp the important ideas of the book, understand objections to the ideas, understand the author’s defense of the ideas; can explain the importance of the work in its field.
- Quality of the writing: grammar, syntax, spelling, and a clear, concise, and engaging writing style.

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Some advice: As you have no other assignments due in September, it might be a good idea to select your book early and to try to complete this book review by the end of this month.

Focused-Study: Op-Ed Paper: You will be required to write an op-ed (opposite editorial) article for a newspaper. You will need to express and support your opinion for a wider audience. Directed to an audience, your writing has the potential to be an agent of social change.

Requirements
The topic of your “op-ed” should be based on your a particular issue discussed in this course e.g. gender, development, education, land and urban development, rural development, social welfare and development, etc. It should be no more than 800 words, and thus you will need to be brief and direct! The article will be marked as if by a professional newspaper editor, for style and substance, and participants are encouraged to submit it to a periodical for possible publication.

Objectives
The purpose of the op-ed paper is to:
- Grant students the time and space to reflect critically on an issue related to issues of Development, Transformation or Nation Building in South Africa, and to “take a stand.”
- Sharpen students’ ability to incorporate different types of evidence (quotes, statistics, personal anecdotes, or volunteer experience) within their writing, and to back up those claims with authority.
- Encourage students to practice creative writing skills.

Assessment
The paper will be assessed in relation to:
- Structure: open with a strong attention-grabbing statement, then defend it with facts, statistics and quotations, and write a forceful conclusion with your proposal for solving the issue.
- Content: focus and persuasive representation of the facts.
- Quality of the writing: grammar, syntax, spelling, and a clear, concise, and engaging writing style.

Participation: Criteria for assessing of participation, which counts for 20 percent of your grade, are as follows:
- 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.
- Group accountability: participates as part of a group during field excursions and classes.
- Respect: culturally appropriate interaction with hosts, SIT program staff, SIT lecturers, and communities.

Attendance at all seminars and field activities is mandatory unless indicated as optional on the schedule. Failure to attend, or repeated late arrival, will lower your grade substantially, if not jeopardize your standing in the program. Please note that while strong participation on all the above matters will get you close to the full ten points for this component of your grade, a failure to fully participate in any program activity, as determined by the academic director, is grounds not only for failure of the course, but also for academic and/or behavioral probation and other disciplinary action, up to and possibly including dismissal from the program.

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Grading Scale: The grading scale for all classes 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
- < 64% F

Grading Criteria
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 Academic Seminar lectures, discussions, field trips and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior. The level, frequency, and quality of the student’s participation will be monitored and taken into account.

Program Calendar
Course materials will be delivered through the examination of three modules, as found below. The approach will be integrative and experiential, and will aim to develop a multi-sided and historical understanding of the South African experience, with particular reference to reconstruction and development. Please note that module-specific syllabi, with readings and other detailed information, will be made available to students as the course progresses.

Module 1: Development in South Africa
This module focuses on key development issues facing South Africa in the context of the developmental state. These include economic development; social welfare and development; land, housing and human settlements; rural development; and community participation. Students will be exposed not only to the major debates within South African development policy, but will also gain firsthand experience in the challenges of rural life and the methods of community facilitation and development. The module takes place in both a rural and an urban setting. We will begin the module with some conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of development in Durban, and then we will move on to Amacambini, a rural community just north of the Tugela River in KwaZulu Natal. Here we will live in homestays and visit a number of development projects within the community. In Amacambini, we will work in partnership with a local school and select local NGOs.

Module 2: Nation building, education and the media
This module introduces students to the challenges of nation building through the lens of two key sectors which underpin the building of a new South Africa – education and the media. Students will be given an overview of the current state of education in the country, social and regional discrepancies in education, and efforts to transform the educational system. This will include visits to schools in rural and urban areas and interacting with relevant NGOs. To understand the role of the media in national building, students will meet academics and journalists in lectures, seminar discussions, and site visits and will have an opportunity to critically analyze...
media ‘texts’ in order to understand how they influence and shape national and/or individual and collective identity.

**Module 3: Gender and social change**
In this module students will explore gender and related issues, the extent to which transformation has occurred, different constructions of gender in South Africa, and how government and civil society are dealing with major challenges related to women and children, abuse, and issues related to sexual identity. This will include lectures, seminar discussions and excursions to NGOs in the greater Durban area.

**Student Expectations**

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

*PLEASE NOTE:* All classes leave ¼ of the scheduled time for the purpose of class discussion of the lecture 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.