Course Syllabus

French in the Senegalese Context
FREN 3000-3500 (3 Credits / 45 class hours)

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

Course Description
This course aims to introduce the student to the rich and diverse Senegalese cultural and artistic production in French. The course is primarily focused on enhancing student’s oral proficiency through emphasis on skills of interaction with local artists and cultural workers, and immersion into everyday life. Through the study of post-colonial texts, students also learn about Senegalese oral culture and traditions, nation-building and the dynamics of contemporary Senegalese society. 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 Senegal’s rich post-colonial francophone artistic expressions. Such expressions include local and national literary production, popular or traditional music and ceremonies, film, oral poetry, proverbs or other dimensions of francophone oral culture. Students further reinforce their acquisition of French in Senegal through their homestay experiences and in daily interactions on the ground, and part of the course’s assessment will include the degree student’s use French throughout the course of the program. Student’s language abilities are assessed through an oral ACTFL exam at the beginning of the semester to determine the course level each student is assigned, and a second assessment at the end of the semester determining the level achieved at the conclusion of the program.

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

- To familiarize and engage students with Senegal’s rich francophone literary, artistic and performance traditions and expressions;
- To build student’s capacity for deep and critical understanding of Senegal’s francophone aesthetic-symbolic forms (literary, visual, musical, dramatic, etc.);
- To provide local understanding of the historical and contemporary use and function of French in the context of Senegal;
- To increase student’s proficiency in spoken and written French;
- To give students the capacity to use French more confidently in social settings;
- To foster French language learning outside the classroom.

*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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Expected Outcomes
By the end of the course, students should have attained the following:
- Increased proficiency in French by two ACTFL sublevels – i.e., if entry level is determined at “advanced low”, students successfully completing the course should achieve “advanced high”;
- The ability to identify local nuances of French verbal and written expressions in Senegal;
- The capacity to identify and demonstrate knowledge of important figures and their works within Senegal's artistic communities;
- Broad and demonstrable understanding of francophone artistic productions and expressions from Senegal;
- The ability to demonstrate understanding of important issues, events and topics embedded in Senegalese francophone artistic productions.

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.

Select Texts

Select Films
Moolade - Ousmane Sembène
Hyenes – Djibril Diop Mambety
Guelwar - Ousmane Sembène
Camp Thiaroye - Ousmane Sembène

Music Genres
Students examine and analyze texts from local musical genres such as:
Mbalax
Yela
Bugarabu
Local rap, hip hop and other popular music styles

Print and additional textual resources
Additional francophone language resources include:
Local and regional newspaper and periodical sources
Comic strips
Local publications
Kirikou
Proverbs

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.

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Evaluation and Grading Criteria

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.

In addition, students will be given an oral ACTFL exam by certified testers to help in assessing progress. The final semester grade is determined by the Academic Director based on a combination of the criteria above.

**Evaluation:**

- 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:

- 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

**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. In addition, students will be given an oral ACTFL exam (for French) by one or more of the trainers. The final semester grade is determined by the Academic Director based on a combination of the above criteria.

**Program Calendar**

**Unit 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, advanced level grammar, advanced vocabulary acquisition, sentence structure and specific local nuances of French as is spoken and written in Senegal. In order to reinforce language acquisition and its use in Senegal, students participate in field exercises and other activities requiring the use French.

**Unit 2 – French in Senegalese Contexts**

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 the rich Francophone expression rooted in Senegal. Through working with such artistic expressions, students build capacity and increased proficiency in spoken and written French to facilitate the ability to perform most linguistic tasks with ease, confidence and competence. This includes competent handling of discussions.

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abstractly, using precise vocabulary with proper intonation and the ability to demonstrate fluency to native speakers. By engaging this coursework, students additionally and importantly build knowledge and increased familiarity with Senegal'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.