



French for Development Studies

FREN 4003-4503 (3 Credits/45 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:

Cameroon: Development and Social Change

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus represents a recent semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Course Description

This intensive course aims to extend and strengthen previously acquired competencies necessary for French speech, comprehension, reading and writing, through integrating traditional classroom instruction, field-based activities, and homestay practice with a focus on the study of Cameroonian literary projects that shed light on the lived experience of development in the lives of local authors. Additionally, students are introduced to Cameroonian proverbs and expressions to facilitate their integration and communication in the society.

The course features 6 Cameroonian authors and their 7 novels. Students learn about issues that resonate within Cameroonian society through the works of these authors. The texts offer insights into their lives; their thoughts on cultural pluralism in Cameroonian society; childhood, womanhood, and gendered roles and responsibilities; in addition to development issues including poverty, urbanization, polygamy, education and religion. This course complements the course content of the Development and Social Change seminar. Students polish and perfect their spoken, written grammar, and listening skills using discussions, conversations, debates and written activities.

This intensive course is taught by a team of Cameroonian language teachers from area schools including the University of Dschang, as well as Peace Corps Cameroon. Further language learning is facilitated through practice in homestays, lectures and site visits.

The objective is to help students develop fluency and comfort when speaking and listening and writing in formal and educational settings. It is also to enrich students' knowledge of the vast array of Cameroonian authors and their engagement with local discourses on development.

Student language levels are determined through an oral exam at the beginning of the semester, after which they are placed into the level of instruction appropriate to their abilities.

Learning Outcomes

French for Development Studies has an interdisciplinary and experiential focus, encompassing 45 class hours (3 credits). By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Engage effectively with organizations and individuals on issues of social and economic development in the French language;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the colonial and post-colonial experiences in the context of Cameroon and its Diaspora;
- Identify local nuances of French verbal and written expressions in Cameroon;
- Discuss, debate, and make presentations on various academic and social issues in French, with an emphasis on development narratives as expressed by Cameroonians.

Language Levels and Placement

Students are placed into the appropriate language course level based on oral proficiency interviews conducted during orientation in Cameroon.

Course Schedule

*Please be aware that course content, readings, and instructors may vary to take advantage of any emerging events and to accommodate changes in instructor availability. Students will be notified if this occurs.

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. In addition to the required readings listed below, the program will draw on other textual sources to support the program objectives including newspaper articles or other complementary readings in French relating to the theme of the class.

Week 1: Novel 1

Required Reading: Kabou Axelle. (1991). *Et Si L'Afrique Refusait le Développement?* L'Harmattan.

Week 2: Novel 2

Required Reading: Amadou Amal Djaili. (2013). *Mistirijo La Mangeuse d'Ames*. Editions Ifrikiya.

Essay in Class

Week 3: Novel 3

Required Reading: Ngolle Mpoundi Evelyne. (1990). *Sous la Cendre le Feu*. Editions L'Harmattan.

Week 4: Novel 4

Required Reading: Etoke Nathalie. (2008). *Je Vois Du Soleil Dans Tes Yeux*. Presses de l'UCAC.

Week 5: Novel 5

Required Reading: Amadou Amal Djaili. (2010). *Walaande: L'Art De Partager Un Mari*. Editions Ifrikiya.

Midterm Exam in Class

Week 6: Novel 6

Required Reading: Charly- Gabrielle Mbock. (1978) *La Croix du Cœur*. Editions Clés.

Week 7: Novel 7

Required Reading: Gaston Kelman. (2004) *Je Suis Noir et Je n'Aime Pas le Manioc*. Editions Max Milo.

End of Term Exam

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Description of Assignments:

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

There are five types of evaluation in this course:

1. **Bi-weekly monitoring and evaluation:** Bi-weekly monitoring and evaluation is not graded, but provides continual feedback on individual student progress.
2. **Participation:** The participation grade is assessed bi-weekly by your language teachers.
3. **In-class essay:** The in-class essay covers the salient themes dealt with in the assigned readings.
4. **Midterm exam:** The midterm covers core written and comprehension skills.
5. **Use of French** in other class sessions, outside of class, and in interacting with staff members and program partners. Speaking, breathing and dreaming in French are the best ways to improve your language skills. We recognize that language learning can be exhausting and frustrating, but we also recognize that the best way to learn is to focus on using the target language as much as possible. The extent to which you will use French inside and outside the classroom setting will be assessed by the Academic Director and, to encourage you to only speak French, full immersion areas will be identified within the program.
6. **Final Essay:** The take-home final will ask you to write 5-7 pages in response to a question that requires comparisons using one or two works from our syllabus. You should use at least 3 published sources in addition to the works themselves; no more than one source can be a website. For the final, we will give out the general topics ahead of time, and students will notify us which two works, with some alternates, they would like to focus on. If you wish, you may form mini-discussion groups to discuss the works together, just as you might study together for an in-class exam. However, each of you is strictly responsible for developing your own ideas and for writing your paper yourself and the expectations of academic integrity must be carefully observed.

Assessment:

In-class Essay	20%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Essay	40%
Participation	10%
Use of language outside of classroom setting	10%

Grading Scale

94-100%	A	Excellent
90-93%	A-	
87-89%	B+	
84-86%	B	Above Average

80-83%	B-	
77-79%	C+	
74-76%	C	Average
70-73%	C-	
67-69%	D+	
64-66%	D	Below Average
below 64	F	Fail

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, evidence of having completed assigned readings, attentive listening and active engagement in all lectures, discussions, field visits 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

Expectations and Policies

Class Participation

Participation in class refers to attendance, punctuality, attentive listening and active engagement in all lectures, discussions, field trips and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior. In addition, the following are expectations of all participants:

- Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (classmates, lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

Disability Services: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services at disabilityservices@sit.edu for information and support in facilitating an accessible educational experience. Additional information regarding SIT Disability Services, including a link to the online request form, can be found on the Disability Services website at <http://studyabroad.sit.edu/disabilityservices>.

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.