Wildlife Conservation and Political Ecology Seminar

ENVI-3000 (4 Credits / 60 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:
Tanzania: Wildlife Conservation & Political Ecology

Course Description
The Wildlife Conservation and Political Ecology (WCPE) Seminar seeks to understand the diverse relationships that exist between humans, natural resources (both biotic and abiotic) and the resource management and sustainable use of the biological and cultural diversities. To develop the learning of skill sets that transcend disciplines and the course, the overall components of the WCPE Seminar integrate the natural and social sciences. A fundamental aspect of the seminar and the program is that students are required to take responsibility and self-assessment of their learning.

Learning Outcomes
Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Understand the interrelationships of the ecosystems of Tanzania and the impact of human presence and utilization;
- Interrogate specific political ecology, conservation and preservation issues in Tanzania and East Africa;
- Assess effective management of resources and protected areas for humans and wildlife;
- Articulate the ways that resource use is organized and transmitted through particular social relations and how they impact on the resources in an environment;
- Recognize the plurality of positions, perceptions, interests, and rationalities in relation to the environment and investigate the complex and deep ways in which the dynamics of asymmetrical social and political power affect ecological systems.

*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.
Required Readings
Prior to departure from USA:


During the semester, students are provided with readings which are updated as new material is sourced. The following list of topics and associated readings provides an example of topics covered and readings assigned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
  Tanzania Natural Resource Forum (2008). Wildlife for all Tanzanians: Stopping the loss, nurturing the resource and widening the benefits. Brief 1: The end of the game? The decline and depletion of Tanzania’s wildlife  
  • Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (2010). Tanzania elephant management plan 2010-2015 Chapter 1  
  • WWF (2014). Aerial total count of elephants and buffalos in Serengeti-Mara ecosystem                                                                 |
| Globalization, Development and Aid         | • Citizen newspaper, Why the donor musical chairs game is back on, April 19, 2017  
  • Citizen newspaper, Controversy about donor aid and development, April 2, 2017  
  • Moyo, Dambisa (2009). Aid is not working Dead Aid: Why aid is not working and how there is a better way for Africa. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux  
  - Chapter 3 – Aid is not working                                                                 |
### Environmental conservation and Climate change


### Introduction to conservation, especially in Savannah regions


The following reading is a seminal reading, and is required reading only for presenters of the seminar:


### Wildlife management and parks

- Igoe, Jim (2004) Conservation and Globalization: A study of national parks and indigenous communities from East Africa to South Dakota, Chapters 1, 2 and 3

### Eastern arc mountains, Usambara

The following seminal readings are recommended.

- Conte, CA (2004). Highland sanctuary: Environmental History in Tanzania’s Usambara mountains, Ohio University Press Pages 1 – 40 (Chapters 1, Forming the Highland Sanctuary and Chapter 2, Humanity’s Imprint)

### Tropical forest ecology

The following reading is a seminal reading, and is required reading only for presenters of the seminar:
  - Chapter 3 – The Global Diversity Gradient
  - Chapter 4 – A mosaic of trees
  - Chapter 5 – Sunlight and stratification

### Management of the Ngorongoro crater authority area

Recommended reading for visit to Oldupai gorge:

### Background and history of the Serengeti

The following readings are required readings only for the presenters of the seminar: Sinclair, A. et al (eds.) (2015), *Serengeti IV: Sustaining Biodiversity in a coupled human-natural system*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press

### Human-wildlife interaction

- Snyder, M. (2004). Once intrepid warriors: Gender, ethnicity, and the cultural politics of Maasai, Book review, *Africa Today*; Fall 2004; 51, 1; ProQuest Central pg. 124 |

In addition, students have presentations and discussions with faculty of the College of Wildlife Management in Mweka on mountain ecology, climate change, hunting, wildlife tourism, community-based natural resource management (CBNRM), governance and fire ecology.

**Evaluation and Grading Criteria**
The final grade is based on the following breakdown of assignments:
- PEC Oral Presentation  20%
- Mid-term Portfolio  35%
- Final Synthesis Paper  25%
- Participation  20%

The grading scale 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

**Components of the WCPE Seminar**
*Political Ecology Concept presentations by students*
This activity allows small groups of students to explore a concept in the field of political ecology. As a group, students present a particular concept using the given readings and finding additional sources, either outside, primary research or further readings, to contextualize the presentation. Presentations are followed by class discussion.

**Mid-term portfolio**
The mid-term portfolio encourages students to reflect on a range of issues addressed in various forums during the semester, particularly as they play out in their homestay, and to integrate what has been learned and experienced during the semester. In addition, they use different methods of collecting data, interpreting this, and consolidating it into a coherent and integrated report.

The portfolio is based on the following:

- Two - three weeks of primary data collection with the homestay family, which is collected using Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methodologies, e.g. community mapping, flow diagrams and more traditional techniques such as participant observation, interviews, focal groups etc.
- The orientation readings, and readings on globalization, development, aid, conservation, and climate change, which need to be incorporated as reference material in the portfolio, along with reflections and information from the focal group discussions held during the homestay period, and other personal communications and observations.

The portfolio is an integrated document which includes a section on Globalization and natural resource issues with a particular focus on how this impacts the homestay family’s livelihood, a section on Gender, and a Meta-analysis, reflecting on student’s relative positions of power and privilege.

**Final synthesis paper**
Students select their own topic for the synthesis paper. They explore how this topic is evident and pertinent in northern Tanzania in 2017. Students should bring together ideas, observations, and thoughts about this particular topic, using as much primary data as possible to support the ideas and arguments.

**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.

**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.