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.

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<tr>
<th>SEMINAR TOPICS (&amp; facilitator)</th>
<th>READINGS</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Module 1: Setting the context: African history, ecology, and tourism</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Module 2: Introduction to wildlife management in TZ</strong></td>
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| Is Tanzania’s wildlife under threat? Introduction to wildlife management in TZ Oscar Pascal, Orientation | • 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, and Brief 2: The causes of wildlife decline in Tanzania
| **Module 3: Local vs global perspectives of globalization, development, aid, and conservation** |
| How does Globalization, Development and Aid affect local people? | • Citizen newspaper, Foreign revenue dependency fall, November 16, 2017
• 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
• Citizen newspaper, Why Chinese investment in Africa is not a debt trap, September 5, 2018 |
### Module 4: The complexities of conservation and wildlife management: Balancing the needs of people vs animals

#### Are people and conservation mutually exclusive?
- **PEC presentation by students, discussion, and expert input by Dr Moyo**
  - The Guardian, 28 February 2018 Government to compensate villagers for paving way for conservation

#### Are Wildlife Management Areas a solution?
- **PEC presentation by students, discussion and expert input by Dr Moyo**

#### Is there a solution? Management of the Ngorongoro Crater Authority Area and community participation
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<td><strong>PEC presentation by students, discussion &amp; expert input – Serengeti</strong></td>
<td><strong>Module 5: Tropical forest ecology</strong></td>
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| **Tropical forest ecology, Eastern arc mountains, Usambara** | • 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)  
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:

- Political ecology concepts - presentation 15%
- Political ecology concepts – written assignment 30%
- Mid-term Portfolio 40%
- Participation 15%

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 students to explore a concept in the field of political ecology. Small groups of students are responsible for producing a presentation to highlight the key issues in the readings, using additional sources if possible, and relating these to their experiences during the semester. They need to facilitate and manage discussion which will include input from the accompanying experts. The written assignment includes producing short summaries of the key issues from the
readings, giving their opinions on the topic, and developing several key questions for further discussion during the presentation.

**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. Primary data will be collected using qualitative techniques such as participant observation, interviews, focal groups etc. If possible, students may interview their family about issues such as their family history, where they are from originally, how they came to be in Arusha, what their hopes for the future are for themselves and their children. This could throw light on the various issues raised in the portfolio.
- The orientation readings, and readings on globalization, development, aid, conservation, and climate change 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.

**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.