Course Description
The Social Transformation and Cultural Expression course explores a broad spectrum of artistic and cultural forms in Ghana, from diverse cultural and geographic spaces, with the intention of critically understanding the impact of local and global influences on Ghanaian artistic and cultural phenomena at the national, regional and local level. Interdisciplinary in scope, and conducted both at the program base and in the field, we will explore how forces such as colonialism, Christianity, the post-colonial nation-state, economic liberalization, migration, urbanization and tourism have impacted Ghana’s cultural expressions, including the communities practicing them, and the adaptive mechanisms, or their absence, in response to such influences. Lecturers are drawn from various departments from the University of Ghana at Legon, the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), the University of Winneba, or the University of Development Studies in addition to governmental or nongovernmental organizations and cultural institutions. Background readings come from a range of Ghanaian and external sources including scholarly works, newspapers, and contemporary literature. Educational excursions and class discussions complement students’ class work and readings.

Course Objectives
The Social Transformation and Cultural Expression course has an interdisciplinary and critical focus encompassing 45 academic hours (3 credits). Its main objectives:

- To expose students to Ghana’s present-day artistic, cultural, political, economic, and social products in the context of their historical background;
- To examine the interface between artistic and cultural forms and social transformation processes in response to the impact of global, national, regional or local change in both contemporary and historical terms;
- To interrogate and critically examine the concepts of culture, tradition and ethnicity in Ghana through engaging with Ghana’s social and political history and contemporary circumstances;

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• To provide students with the intellectual understanding required to choose, refine and carry out an independent study project on a topic related to the theme of social transformation in the context of Ghana.

Expected Outcomes
By the end of the course, students should have attained the following:
• The capacity to draw connections between the impact of global, national, regional and local influences and artistic and cultural forms in Ghana;
• Demonstrable ability to articulate the relationship between the social transformation paradigm and Ghana’s contemporary artistic and cultural forms;
• Deeper and more critical understanding of the notions of tradition, cultural and ethnic identity rooted in Ghana’s historical, social and political milieu;
• The ability to demonstrate knowledge of Ghana’s social, political and cultural makeup, making comparisons cross-regionally within multiple temporalities.

Course Requirements

Readings
You are responsible for all the 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 necessary tailor-made for each and every class. Supplementary reading materials, not mentioned on the list, will sometimes be assigned and made available. In addition to the required readings for the Thematic Paper, listed below, required readings will be drawn from the following texts:

Selected Readings


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Richards, Sandra L. “What is to be Remembered?: Tourism to Ghana’s Slave Castle-Dungeons.” Theatre Journal 57.4 (December 2005): 617-663.


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.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Social Transformation and Cultural Expression Assignments
Students are expected to prepare for, attend, and participate in the lectures, discussions, and field visits. Also, in addition to completing the required readings, students are encouraged to read local newspapers and other popular media for more local context. The Academic Director assigns all final grades. Timely completion of all assignments is expected. Late hand-ins will be penalized. All assignments are evaluated according to organization, analytical quality, depth of understanding, argumentation and presentation of evidence.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thematic paper</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<td>Analytic paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Thematic Paper – “Social Transformation in Ghana’s Post-Colonial Literature”*: Through critical reading of some of Ghana’s seminal post-colonial writers, students must write a short paper (5-6 pages) highlighting a common theme running through three of the texts. You are expected to provide proper citations when necessary and a bibliography of all texts you refer to. In addition to clarity, proper spelling and grammar, points will be awarded for quality of insights and depth of analysis. Although you can draw on other literary or scholarly sources in your paper, you must focus your analysis based on three of the following works which are located in the SIT library:

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**Analytic Paper:** This paper is designed to provide you with a lens through which to process your experiences, observations and information gathered during the semester for the purposes of engaging with the topic of social transformation in the context of Ghana. This assignment will result in a paper (8-10 pages) to be submitted before the commencement of ISP. With the support of the Academic Director, topics will be chosen and developed within the first 2 weeks of the program so as to allow enough time for you to collect data over the course of the semester and give you the opportunity to compare your observations over multiple cultural spaces and geographies. In addition to drawing on scholarly sources, students must also include information derived from three interviews, the lecture series, program support people, acquaintances in Ghana, field site observations, homestay experiences or Ghanaian newspapers or other print media. Suggested topics areas include economy, national development, colonialism or post-colonialism, visual or performing arts, identity or migrations.

To summarize, points will be awarded for the following:

- Data from textual materials (books, newspapers, journals, required readings, ISPs, etc);
- Data attained through either formal or informal interviews;
- Proper citation (including bibliography and “informants” listing);
- Number and quality of insights/analysis;
- Connections made between classroom lectures, readings, excursions, performances, etc;
- Legibility, good grammar, proper spelling.

Consider the following as a timeline in order to keep your paper on track and to avoid last-minute stresses associated with procrastinating!

- **Phase 1 (Weeks 1 & 2)**
  Choosing and refining your topic - a one page proposal outlining your topic area, objectives and thesis to be submitted and approved by the 2nd week of program.

- **Phase 2 (Weeks 3 & 4)**
  Development of research tools (observation/D.I.E., interviewing, ethnography) and identification of relevant textual and secondary sources (e.g., books, periodicals, journals, newspapers, local publications, etc).

- **Phase 3 (Final phase weeks 5 – 9)**
  Comparative analysis across regions or in urban vs. rural locales. This phase should be characterized by gathering and analyzing material and, by week 8 or so, final write up.

**Grading Scale:** The grading scale for all classes is as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-93%</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>87-89%</td>
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<td>84-86</td>
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<td>74-76%</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-73%</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<td>67-69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>64-66%</td>
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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, attentive listening and active engagement in all seminars, lectures, discussions, field trips 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.

*All written assignments should be typed unless permission is given otherwise. Texts sent by e-mail will not be accepted. Make sure you have a flash drive, laptop or computer available and keep back up files so nothing gets accidentally lost or erased.

Program Calendar
This course consists of three interrelated modules:

Module 1 – Foundations and Contexts
Occurring in Accra and drawing on lecturers from the University of Ghana and experts in the field, this module engages students with the social transformation paradigm as well as the fundamental historical, cultural, political, geographic and economic features of Ghana, providing students with a common frame of reference from which to begin to engage with the core curriculum and other program components.

The Social Transformation Paradigm
History of Ghana
Economy of Ghana
Gender in Ghana
National Politics
Religious Expression
Mutual Aid Societies and Urban Adaptation

Module 2 – Cultural Expression and Transformation
The Cultural Expression and Transformation module exposes students to a number of cultural and aesthetic-symbolic forms for the purposes of understanding their evolution and adaptation in response to social, economic or political phenomena. Particular areas explored include the relationship between cultural and artistic expressions and urbanization, nationalism, Christianity, tourism, development, technology, economics or colonization.

Ghanaian Popular Performance and the Urbanization Process
Performing Nationalism – Ghana Dance Ensemble and Post-Colonial Ghana
Theatre for Development in Ghana
History of the Asante Empire – Manhyia Palace
KNUST's College of Art – Training Ghana’s Future Creators
Film and Television in Ghana – site visit to NAFTI
Asante Traditional Religion in Contemporary Contexts
Ghana’s Textile Industry, Past and Present
Politics of the North
Traditional and Contemporary Midwifery
NGOs in Northern Ghana
Chieftaincy Systems: The Colonial and Post-Colonial Experience

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Women’s Shea Butter Cooperatives in Tamale

Module 3 – Field-Excursions in Southern Ghana
A combination of site visits, workshops and lecture/discussions, this module covers a broad range of pertinent topics and is executed during the last two weeks before the Independent Study Project, focusing its scope on the Anlo-Ewe in the Volta Region, the Krobo traditional area in the Eastern Region, and Cape Coast in the Central Region.

Mutual Aid – Ewe Habobo
Traditional Religion in Eweland – Sofati Shrine Visit
Visit to Fiaga – Chieftaincy and the Klikor Traditional Area
Krobo History and Contemporary Perspectives – Visit with Konor
Contested Meanings in the Contemporary Dipo Rite of Passage
Queen Mothers in Krobo Society
Cape Coast and Elmina Castle Dungeons
Preservation or Renovation? Ghana’s Castle-Dungeons in Elmina and Cape Coast

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. You are also expected to practice culturally sensitive behavior at all times and put forward a solid effort to use your Twi language skills.

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.

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