

Development Studies

SDIS-3000 (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

Development both as an idea and as a field of practice has its roots in the post-second World War order, marked by Harry Truman's inaugural speech in which he proclaimed "...Greater production is the key to prosperity and peace. And the key to greater production is a wider and more rigorous application of modern scientific and technical knowledge..." (Truman 1949). Since that moment a development apparatus that spans government and non-government organizations, various UN agencies, philanthropies, foundations, and for-profit companies have made development their central aim, especially for communities in the global south. What sort of institutional apparatuses have emerged to champion ideals and goals of development? What development strategies have they employed in Cameroon over the years and how and why have these strategies shifted historically? What theoretical foundations inform the practices of development organizations currently operating in Cameroon? What are the prospects and limits of the current approaches to deliver a better quality of life in Cameroonian?

This integrative, interdisciplinary course traces the evolution of development practice in Cameroon and engages students in concepts and current debates in development studies, with emphasis on their relevance to development approaches in Cameroon and, more broadly, Central Africa. The seminar provides students with a deep understanding of the broad patterns of development flows, aid interventions, environment and economy. While doing so, it exposes students to conceptual frameworks for rethinking development and to the application of development "alternatives" currently implemented by development actors in Cameroon to address emerging and forthcoming development crises. Integrating hands-on, experiential learning in-country with academic understandings of the meanings and operations of development and aid, students are exposed to NGOs and other organizations engaged in shaping sustainable development through carefully designed case studies, educational excursions and workshops. The seminar enables students to analyze the dominant development paradigms as deployed in Cameroon. Lectures and field visits are held at the SIT center in Yaoundé and at selected site visits and excursions.

Educational excursions, site visits and field activities form a significant part of the course, and assignments draw on readings, lectures, field trips, community experiences and in-class discussions.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of the various theories and approaches to development and conceptualize them within the current practice of development in Cameroon;
- Analyze the factors - both internal and external - which continue to define and affect Cameroon's development;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the spectrum of organizations engaged in development and social change initiatives in Cameroon; and
- Assess the realities, challenges and successes facing development organizations in Cameroon.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in English, and where French is used, translation to English will be provided. Students will be exposed to local vocabulary related to course content as well as the nuances of development through in-country expert lectures and field visits in a wide range of venues and regional locales. A substantial part of the course is taught through carefully designed case studies. Students are required to participate in all scheduled workshops, discussions, lectures and case studies.

Required Texts:

Moyo D. (2009). *Dead Aid*. New York: Penguin Books.

Sachs J. (2005). *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*. New York: Penguin Books.

Easterly, W. (2014). *The Tyranny of Experts: Economists, Dictators and the Forgotten Rights of the Poor*, New York: Basic Books.

Collier, P. (2008). *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*, New York: Oxford University Press

Course Schedule

***Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.**

Module I: Introduction to Cameroon

This module introduces students to the history, politics and ethnic diversity of Cameroon as a way to map the context for the case studies that students explore in this course. The module is complemented by visits to the national museum, historical and cultural sites in Yaoundé, scheduled discussions, readings and de-briefing sessions.

Session 1: A brief history of Cameroon

Session 2: Overview of the economy and history of development practice in Cameroon

Session 3: Barriers and successes to development in Cameroon – conflict, social and economic inequality

Session 4: Looking ahead: assets and prospects

Assigned Reading:

Fonchingong, C. C. (2004). The travail of democratization in Cameroon in the context of political liberalisation since 1900. *African and Asian Studies* 3 (1), 33-59.

Jean-Germain, G. (2003). Cameroon in Synopsis. In G. Jean-Germain (Ed.), *Cameroon: Politics and Society in Critical Perspectives* (pp. 1-29). University Press of America.

Nyamnjoh, F. B. (1999). Cameroon: A country united by ethnic ambition and difference. *African Affairs*, 98 (390), 1-21. <http://www.nyamnjoh.com>.

UNICEF. (2013). Country Statistics—Cameroon. Available at: <http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/cameroon.html>

Module 2 – Development: Theory, Foundations and Paradigms

This module provides students with the historical, theoretical and foundational features and paradigms in the field of development studies, with particular emphasis on Cameroon. At the completion of this module, students will have grasped the salient features of these perspectives required to critically engage with case studies and topics related to the Cameroonian context.

Assigned Reading

Escobar, A. (2012). *Encountering Development: the Making and Unmaking of the Third World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Preface, Ch 1 & Ch 2.

Rist, G. (1997). *The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith*. London: Zed Books. Ch 1.

So, A. Y. (1990). *Social Change and Development: Modernization, Dependency, and World-system Theories*. Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications. Pp, 17-37, 91-109.

McMichael, P. (2017). *Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective*. Sixth Edition. Los Angeles: SAGE. Part 1, pp 25-79.

Module 3: Socioeconomic development and environmental protection organizations in Cameroon

This module aims to familiarize students with the spectrum of organizations or institutions engaged at various levels in development programs in Cameroon. Covering local, national and international organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, these institutional visits inform students of the current developmental issues being addressed while also providing them with an introduction to potential organizations to work with during their research projects. Sessions happen at organizations sites and are followed by field visits to some of their projects. These case studies are intended to provide students with empirical material with which to critically analyze development practice.

Case Study I: International Development Organizations in Cameroon

Students visit various international organizations to learn about their contributions to the development of Cameroon. The case study include visits to the World Bank, some UN agencies, UNICEF and UNESCO. These organizations will present their approach to development and their assessment of development aid efficiency in the country.

Case Study II: The Government of Cameroon's Development Agencies

The government is the major contributor to development. Students will have the opportunity to visit various ministries and public institutions and receive presentations from key personalities on their actions and contribution to the financial, economic, health and social wellbeing of the country.

Case Study III: Economic and Social Organizations in Cameroon

Microfinance, income generating projects, refugees and indigenous population protection are presented to students by various economic and social organizations. These sessions are followed by hands on activities and field visits of some projects.

Case Study IV: Environmental Protection Organizations in Cameroon

Critical environmental issues facing Cameroon are presented as case studies by organization leaders. Students examine climate change, land grabbing, food sovereignty and logging issues as they pertain to Cameroon.

Required Reading

Veltmeyer, H. (2005). Democratic Governance and Participatory Development: The Role of Development NGOs. *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations*, 6 (2, Summer/Fall 2005), 89-109.

Bello, W. (2013). Post-2015 development assessment: Proposed goals and indicators. *Development*, 56(1), 93-102.

Ferguson, J. (1990). *The anti-politics machine: "development," depoliticization, and bureaucratic power in Lesotho*. Cambridge University Press. Introduction and Ch 2, pp 3-73.

Nkwi Paul Nchoji (1997) Rethinking the role of elites in rural development: A case study from Cameroon, *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 15:1, 67-86,

Asaah, E. K., Tchoundjeu, Z., Leakey, R. R. B., Takouing, B., Njong, J., & Edang, I. (2011). Trees, agroforestry and multifunctional agriculture in Cameroon. *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability*, 9(1), 110-119.

Moore, E.A., J.F. Munsell, A.L. Hammett, and K.M. Moore. 2014. Agroforestry preferences in refugee hosting communities in Cameroon. *Agroforestry Systems*. 88(4):735-752.

Greenpeace International. (2014). License to launder: How Herakles Farms' illegal timber trade threatens Cameroon's forests and VPA. JN 467, Amsterdam: The Netherlands.

<http://www.greenpeace.org/international/Global/international/publications/forests/2014/Licence-to-Launder>.

Mwanamilongo, S. (2013). Logging permits are being abused in Africa. *Associated Press*. April 30, 2013. <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/logging-permits-are-being-abused-in-africa/article/feed/2094375>

Fonjong L (2006) Managing deforestation in Anglophone Cameroon: are NGOs pacesetters? *International Journal of Environmental Studies*, Vol. 63, No. 5, October 2006, 663–679

Module 4: Scale, time and scope: Development practice in comparative perspective

This module draws on lectures, site visits and debates so far encountered to ask: What comparatively do national, international and grassroots organizations contribute to the development of Cameroon? How

do they complement each other in this process? How does development theory aid our understanding of the strategies employed by these development organizations?

Session I: Students write a four-page critical reflection paper on these questions.

Session II: Students have a group facilitated discussion around these questions and their response papers.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Readings Discussion	10%
Development in Cameroon Analysis paper	30%
Integrated Development Issue Paper	50%
Participation	10%

Readings Presentation and Leadership of Discussion

Two or three students are assigned to each set of readings. They present and facilitate a discussion on the readings and lead the discussion: Students will summarize the article, identify key arguments or issues that the article raises and, possibly, the assumptions that the article author makes, as well as their broad implications for our understanding of development. Identify key questions about the readings to provoke discussion.

Development in Cameroon Analysis

This assignment aims to help students synthesize lectures, readings and experiences gained in the community related to the theme of development in Cameroon and to provide an avenue for students to discuss and analyze their learning and reflections on this theme. Each student will have an opportunity to further explore and elaborate on a specific aspect of development through an analytical essay which will incorporate lectures, readings, movies, interviews and experiences from the community. The essay should be between 7-10 pages. Essays will be graded on how well you *analyze* (as opposed to describe) the issues, thoroughness, and appropriate use of examples to illustrate your thoughts. In writing the paper, you should synthesize material from the readings, lectures, class discussions and movies.

Integrated Development Issue (IDI) Paper

Working in pairs, students choose a topic related to development studies and social change to research throughout the coursework period leading up to the Independent Study Project (ISP). Before the commencement of the ISP in week 11, students submit a 7-10 page analytic paper based on their topic area and provide a 30 minute oral presentation to the class, program staff and invited lecturers and resource persons. This assignment is designed to prepare students for the four-week research period. Selection of topics after orientation will be supported by the academic director and updates on student progress will occur periodically to provide avenues for student support.

Grading Scale

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

Expectations and Policies

- Show up prepared.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done according to the specified requirements.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer.
- Comply with academic integrity policies
- Respect differences of opinion. While you are not expected to agree with everything you hear, 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.