



Narratives of Identity and Social Change

SOCI 3000 (3 Credits / 45 class hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:
South Africa: Multiculturalism and Human Rights

Course Description

The Narratives of Identity and Social Change course is delivered through three interrelated modules. Through an evolving series of lectures, discussions, relevant readings and site visits, this course investigates social change in education, language use, land, social justice organizations, party politics, rural development, social welfare NGOs, and tourism in three “cultural” contexts – “Xhosa”, “Coloured”/“Khoe”, and “Afrikaner”. Critical identity markers beyond race in post-Apartheid South Africa – which cut across these cultural contexts – such as gender, sexuality, class, generational or political affiliation, for example, are additionally examined and analyzed with respect to their experiences and meaning in contemporary society. It is important to note that a central argument of the course is that these identities are not static and discrete; cultures are fluid and evolve over time, and there are intra-cultural differences among groups and individuals. Narratives of national and other group identities are manifested, and therefore examined, in various forms of media (television, Internet, newspapers, consumer magazines, artistic expression, etc.) in addition to the knowledge gained through experiential program components such as the homestays, site visits and other structured experiences that provide deeper levels of interaction and additional layers of understanding.

Course Objectives

Narratives of Identity and Social Change has an interdisciplinary and critical focus encompassing 45 academic hours (3 credits). Its main objectives:

- To examine the issues, patterns and processes of social change in South Africa;
- To investigate the complexity and evolution of identity formation, and their multiple meanings, in post-Apartheid South Africa;
- To examine the modes, narratives or images that form the array of identity communities in the country with particular emphasis on their constructions of self in relation to “others” in the country and influence on social action;
- To gain awareness of the persisting challenges facing agents of social change in South Africa.

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Expected Outcomes

By the end of the course, students should have attained the following:

- Critical understanding of the forms and foundations of social change processes in post-Apartheid South Africa;
- The capacity to identify and analyze the challenges, experiences, histories and collective narratives of a cross-section of identity communities in contemporary South Africa;
- The ability to demonstrate knowledge of the challenges and debates related to social change, justice, equity and mutual respect in post-Apartheid South Africa.

Course Requirements

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. Additionally, at a minimum, students are required to read the weekly *Mail & Guardian*; it is also recommended that you read a daily newspaper (perhaps alternating papers to get various perspectives) as well as a Sunday paper. It is advised that you watch a session of the news on “SABC” or “E” at least once a week, though this is in no way a substitute for keeping up with the print media. Familiarity with current events and a working knowledge of today’s political and economic issues will be assumed in the seminar.

Adhikari, Mohamed. *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough: Racial Identity in the South African Coloured Community*. Cape Town: Double Story Books, 2005.

Alexander, N. & K. Heugh. “Language Policy in the New South Africa.” Eds. Zegeye, A. & R. Kriger. *Cultural Change and Development in South Africa. Special Issue, 1998-9 Culturelink* (1999): 9-33.

Cowan, Jane K.; Marie Bénédicte Dembour; Richard A. Wilson. *Culture and Rights, Anthropological Perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Frueh, Jamie. *Political Identity and Social Change: The Remaking of the South African Social Order*. Albany NY: SUNY Press, 2002.

Hadland, Adrian; Eric Louw; Simphiwe Sesanti and Herman Wasserman. *Power, Politics and Identity in South African Media*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2008.

McEachern, Charmaine. *Narratives of Nation Media, Memory and Representation in the Making of the New South Africa*. Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science Publishers Inc, 2002.

Pithouse, Richard. “Faster, Harder, Smarter?” www.sacsis.org.za, 13 February 2010. Web. 01 December 2011.

Charles Villa-Vicencio, *On Being South African: Identity, Religion and Culture*. Beyers Naudé Memorial Lecture held 18 June 2008, University of Johannesburg. Web. 01 December 2011. <www.ujdigispace.uj.ac.za>

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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

Politics, Identity and Social Change 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.

Identity and Social Change in South Africa	50%
Identity and Social Change in South Africa - Oral	30%
Participation	20%

Identity and Social Change in South Africa: Choosing one of the module topics, or another identity group in consultation with the Academic Director, develop a thesis, gather information, and prepare an analytic paper (2500-3000 words) related to the course theme of identity and social change in South Africa. You will carry out this assignment over the course of the semester and submit your findings before the commencement of ISP. Your final write up must include data or support from a minimum of 4 scholarly sources (books or journal articles), information derived from at least 5 formal interviews, materials drawn from newspapers or other media, and information derived from personal experience, the lecture series, excursions or other program components.

Identity and Social Change in South Africa – Oral: This is your opportunity to fine-tune your presentation skills before embarking on your independent study project and presenting your findings at the completion of the semester. You will be given 10 minutes to present details on your research process and study's conclusions to your peers, program directors and staff, as well as invited guests. The presentation should include the following components:

1. Self-introduction
2. Paper title and topic
3. Aim, objectives and rationale
4. Methodology
5. Findings
6. Conclusions

Points will be awarded for students whose presentations are clear, concise, dynamic, well prepared, and include a visual component. Your peers in the student group will also provide a brief assessment of your presentation which will be taken into consideration in your overall grade.

Participation: Participation is assessed in the following manner:

- Attendance: promptness to class, and positive presence in class;
- Active listening: paying attention in class/during field excursions, asking appropriate questions, showing interest and enthusiasm, entertaining contradictory perspectives, taking notes;

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- Involvement in class discussions: either in small or large groups sharing knowledge and information;
- Group accountability: participates as part of a group during field excursions and classes;
- Respect: culturally-appropriate interaction with hosts, SIT program staff, SIT lecturers and communities.

Grading Scale: The grading scale for all classes 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
below 64	F

Grading Criteria

All grades assigned will take into account the students' special circumstances and challenges they face as foreign students. 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 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.

Program Calendar

Course material will be delivered through the examination of three modules, as described below. The approach will be integrative and experiential, and will aim to develop a multi-sided and historical understanding of the South African experience.

Module 1 - Xhosa Identities: History and Culture

This module focuses on the historical and current development of Xhosa identity. Students will be exposed to both the urban and rural realities of life in South Africa. A series of lectures will complement experiences gained in the Langa homestay and study of the Xhosa language. To facilitate an introduction to rural life, students will live with Xhosa-speaking families in rural Eastern Cape for five nights. In this rural context, we will focus our studies on rural development, education, and livelihoods. Scheduled seminars include:

Xhosa History and Culture – Dr. Pamula Maseko
 Xhosa Identity – Dr. Pamala Maseko
 Robben Island Excursion.
 Langa Xhosa Homestay (one month)
 Rural Xhosa Homestay (one week)

Module 2 - Afrikaner Identities: History and Culture

During this module, students will live with white Afrikaner families in Stellenbosch. Afrikaner society is undergoing major transformation as it attempts to stake its place in contemporary South Africa. We explore the history of colonization through the Dutch East Indian (VOC)

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Company and the ideology that led to the development of Apartheid. Through lectures, discussions, and site visits we take a contemporary look at this society and how it is currently expressing its identity through politics, art, religion and economics. Scheduled seminars include:

The Afrikaners - Who are they? - Dr. Hermann Giliomee
The Place of Afrikaners in Contemporary South African Politics – Dr. Amanda Gouws
Imag(in)ing Afrikaner Nationalism – Dr. Lize van Robbroeck
The Afrikaner - Contemporary Issues – Dr. Hermann Giliomee
The Afrikaner and the Dutch Reformed Church – Dr. Carel Anthonissen
The Media and Afrikaner Identity post-1994 – Dr. Herman Wasserman
The Deconstruction and Reconstruction of Afrikaner Identity in Post-Apartheid South Africa – Dr. Lize van Robbroeck
Gender and Sexuality – Prof. Amanda Gouws

Module 3 - Coloured Identity: History and Culture

During the course of this module, students will be living in the Bo Kaap district of Cape Town, which is mainly inhabited by the descendants of slaves brought from areas in Asia and Africa. People here mainly practice the Muslim faith and speak Afrikaans as a first language. This module will examine the complexity surrounding the so-called “coloured” identity through lectures, discussions, and site visits. We will place the spotlight on the process of displacement of communities during the Apartheid regime and how this history is currently playing out in Cape Town. Here also we will examine issues of race and racism in contemporary South Africa. Scheduled seminars include:

Workshop on Identity – Mr. Yazir Henri
Forced Removals and the Community – Zenzile Khoisan
KhoeKhoe History and Identity – Dr. Nigel Crawhall
Coloured Identity – Dr. Zimitri Erasmus
Slavery and the Cape – Prof. Robert Shell
Rainbow Nationalism – Dr. Neville Alexander
The State of Race and Racism in South Africa – Mr. Yazir Henri
Religious Identity in South Africa

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.

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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