



## Development, Transformation, and Nation Building

SDIS-3000 (3 Credits / 45 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:  
South Africa: Social and Political Transformation

Please Note: 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.

### Course Description

Be it *laissez-faire* libertarianism or state-controlled communism, political-economic ideologies and what they represent ultimately determine developmental policy in any country. Augusto Pinochet's "Chicago Boys" inspired free-market economic liberalism and Mao Zedong's Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution exemplify two development paradigms at opposite ends of the ideological spectrum. However, those that espouse these policies often lay claim only to their benefits and rarely acknowledge their cost. Who benefits and what is gained, and who loses and what is lost in these development experiments? Should 'development' unleash the potential of individuals or unlock the potential of the nation as a whole? Are the best drivers of development foreign-based or domestically located? Are foreign and domestic, proletariat and bourgeoisie, male and female, rural and urban interests necessarily mutually exclusive or complementary and, to what degree?

A central premise of this course is the interconnected nature of developmental issues and nation building; it is difficult to analyze one without the other. The course explores the interplay of, and opportunities and challenges presented by development and nation building projects. South Africa, whose population has the highest income inequality in the world, is used as the hermeneutical lens through which to examine wider contemporary global trends. Thus, South Africa provides an optimal laboratory for the study of development and nation-building, for the country emerged in 1994 as a 'blank-slate' upon which was implemented new developmental strategies with emphasis on social spending through its Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP). That strategy was halted in 1996 when a new conservative neo-liberal strategy took its place, the Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR).

Through field visits, group discussions, formal lectures, and assigned readings, students engage with development issues triggered by these disparate development strategies, the challenges of nation building, gender, and patriarchy, and the intertwining identities in post-apartheid South Africa. Core themes addressed in this course include the evolution from the RDP to GEAR, and the role of civil society, education, journalism, and media in the goal of nation building. Lessons learned, both positive and negative,

allow students to cross-pollinate the South African context with other countries' in the past and the present.

## **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course, students will have attained the ability to:

- Critically examine current issues of development and nation building in South Africa;
- Distinguish the challenges to nation building in post-apartheid South Africa and evaluate the role of education, journalism, and media in that effort; and
- Apply understanding of the evolving nature of discourse around development and nation building in post-Apartheid South Africa.

## **Language of Instruction**

This course is taught in English, but students will be exposed to local vocabulary (isiZulu) related to course content as well as the nuances of development, transformation and nation building through in-country expert lectures and field visits in a wide range of venues and regional locales.

## **Program Calendar**

Course materials will be delivered through the examination of four interrelated modules, as found below. The approach will be integrative and experiential, and will aim to develop a multi-sided and historical understanding of the South African experience, with particular reference to development, transformation and nation building. Please note that module-specific syllabi, with readings and other detailed information, will be made available to students as the course progresses.

### **Module 1: History and origins of “development”:**

As a post 2nd world war construct “development” as an attempt to improve living conditions is fairly new on the world stage. This module reviews the origins of ideas of development and how they have been applied in different historical moments and contexts. The module reviews the meanings of policies such as libertarianism, state-controlled communism, modernization and dependency theories and how they shape state and welfare policy. The module aims to equip students with a framework and concepts with which to situate South Africa’s development policy in historical and theoretical contexts. Students read and discuss assigned reading over two sessions.

#### *Required 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 2: Development in South Africa:**

This module focuses on key development issues facing South Africa in the context of the developmental state. These include economic development; social welfare and development; land, housing, and human settlements; rural development; and community participation. Students will be exposed not only to the major debates within South African development policy, but will also gain first-hand experience in the challenges of rural life and the methods of community facilitation and development. Why is urbanization such a difficult problem to tackle, historically and today? The module takes place in both rural and urban settings. We will begin the module with some conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of development

in Durban, and then we will move on to Amacambini, a rural community just north of the Tugela River in KwaZulu Natal. Here we will live in homestays and visit a number of development projects within the community. In Amacambini, we will work in partnership with a local school and select local NGOs. Students are challenged with a 'City Drop-Off' during which Durban is explored in teams on foot and using public transportation; all teams are to reach a final destination for lunch via differing routes. At the conclusion of this exercise a lecture and question and answer session is given by Dr. Michael Sutcliffe, the former Durban City Manager. The demographic and developmental diversity is explored at the nine Warwick Markets wherein traders and ethnic food abound. In this module a book review is assigned so as to encourage students to begin focused reading on a subject that contributes to their seminar paper or Independent Study Project (ISP).

Session 1: Development

Session 2: Rural Conditions

Session 3: Urban Migration

Session 4: Urban Conditions

*Required Reading:*

Gelderblom, D. and P. Kok. (1994). *Urbanisation: South Africa's Challenge, Volume 1: Dynamics*. Pretoria, Human Sciences Resources Council Press.

Huchzermeyer, M. (2011). *Cities with Slums: From Informal Settlement Eradication to a Right to the City in Africa*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

P. Kok, D. Gelderblom, J. Oucho and J. van Zyl (Eds). (2006). *Migration in Southern Africa: Dynamics and Determinants*. Cape Town: Human Sciences Resources Council Press.

Pillay, U., R. Tomlinson and J. du Toit (Eds). (2006). *Democracy and Delivery: Urban Policy in South Africa*. Cape Town: Human Sciences Resources Council Press.

### **Module 3: Nation building, education and the media**

This module introduces students to the challenges of nation building through the lens of two key sectors which underpin the building of a new South Africa – education and the media. Students will be given an overview of the current state of education in the country, social and regional discrepancies in education, and efforts to transform the educational system. This module includes visits to rural, township, and privileged private schools to explore the different educational worlds in South Africa and with various NGOs that work with the schools. To understand the role of the media in nation building, students will meet academics and journalists in lectures and seminar discussions, and will have an opportunity to critically analyze media 'texts' in order to understand how they influence and shape national and/or individual and collective identity. Visits to various media houses (Times Media and Independent) provide an opportunity to learn more about the importance of access to information in any country. An op-ed assignment is given under the guidance of the academic director, Imraan Buccus, whose thoughts and reflections are routinely found in newspaper columns and opinion pieces.

Session 1: Nation Building

Session 2: State of Education in South Africa

Session 3: The Role of Media in South Africa

*Required Reading:*

Butler, A. (2009). *Contemporary South Africa*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kruger, Loren. (2010). Critique by stealth: aspiration, consumption and class in post-apartheid television drama. *Critical Arts: A South-North Journal of Cultural & Media Studies*. 24(1): 75-98.

Orgeret, Kristin Skare. (2004). Unifying and Dividing Processes in National Media: The Janus

Face of South Africa. *Critical Arts: A South-North Journal of Cultural & Media Studies*. 18(1): 147-162.

Maharaj, G, ed. (1999). *Between Unity and Diversity: Essays on Nation-building in Post Apartheid South Africa*. Cape Town and Claremont: Idasa and David Philip.

Sparks, A. (2009). *Beyond the Miracle: Inside the New South Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Tomaselli, Keyan G. (2004). *Transformation of the South African Media*. *Critical Arts: A South North Journal of Cultural & Media Studies*. 18(1): 1-6.

Wolpe, Howard. (1996). The media and South Africa. [Brookings Review](#). 14(2): 47.

### **Module 4: Gender and social change**

In this module, students will explore gender and related issues, the extent to which transformation has occurred in these areas, different constructions of gender in South Africa, and how government and civil society are dealing with major challenges related to women and children, abuse, and issues related to sexual identity. This will include lectures, seminar discussions and excursions to NGOs in the greater Durban and Cape Town areas.

Session 1: Patriarchy in South Africa

Session 2: Gender Equity in the Private and Public Sectors

Session 3: Domestic Violence and Rape

Session 4: Gender and HIV and AIDS

*Required Reading:*

H. Britton, J. Fish, and Sheila Meintjes (Eds). (2009). *Women's Activism in South Africa: Working Across the Divides*. Pietermaritzburg, University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.

G. Fick, S. Meintjes, and M. Simons (Eds). (2002). *One Woman, One Vote: The Gender Politics of South African Elections*. Johannesburg: Electoral Institute of Southern Africa.

Kleintjes, S., B. Prince, A. Cloete, and A. Davids (Eds). (2005). *Gender Mainstreaming in HIV/AIDS: Seminar Proceedings*. Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council Press.

T. Waetjen. (2006). *Workers & Warriors: Masculinity and the Struggle for Nation in South Africa*. Cape Town: Human Sciences Resource Centre Press.

### **Evaluation and Grading Criteria**

#### **Assignments**

Students will be expected to prepare for, attend, and participate in the lectures, discussions, and field visits. They will be expected to complete all assignments in a professional, timely manner. The following breakdown of grades will be used to arrive at the final letter grade, which is determined by the academic director (AD) and the academic coordinator.

Book Review	45%
Focused-Study: Op-Ed Paper	35%
Participation	20%

**Book Review:** The book review offers you the time and space to select and explore one piece of professional academic literature from South Africa, in a variety of topics: general politics, political economy, development, gender issues, education, and nation building. You may wish to use this

opportunity to read something that may be relevant for your ISP. A list of books from which you can choose is available from the academic director, and all books are available in the program library. In the event that you want to read a piece of fiction that's related to South Africa's socio-political transformation, do consult with the academic director or academic coordinator in order to make an appropriate choice.

### Requirements

Your review should be approximately 1500-2000 words. A detailed handout on how to write a book review will be distributed in class.

### Objectives

The purpose of the book review is to:

- Provide students with an opportunity to read in-depth a scholarly book, edited collection or an appropriate fictional work concerned with current South African issues;
- Provide students with an opportunity to explore a potential ISP topic;
- Expose students to the art of critical reading and analysis of a piece of academic literature;
- Encourage students to practice literature selection, synthesis, and writing skills.

### Assessment

The book review assessment will be based on the following criteria:

- It must be structurally sound and include a brief description of the general orientation of the book; a summary of the book's main argument/s; your views on the merits or otherwise of these arguments; in the case of an edited collection, reference should be made to the stronger and weaker chapters; your views on the volume and whether you would recommend it to other SIT group members.
- Based on the format given above, describe well, but succinctly, the content of the book (where, who, what), provide a compelling analysis of the author's success or failure at achieving their goal, and offer a fresh insight for how the book provides insight for an SIT student.
- Content: give a very clear articulation of the author's goal; demonstrate that you grasp the important ideas of the book, understand objections to the ideas, understand the author's defense of the ideas; explain the importance of the work in its field.
- Quality of the writing: grammar, syntax, spelling, and a clear, concise, and engaging writing style.

Some advice: As you have no other assignments due in September, it might be a good idea to select your book early and to try to complete this book review by the end of this month.

**Focused-Study: Op-Ed Paper:** You will be required to write an op-ed (opposite editorial) article for a newspaper. You will need to express and support your opinion for a wider audience. Directed to an audience, your writing has the potential to be an agent of social change.

### Requirements

The topic of your "op-ed" should be based on a particular issue discussed in this course e.g. gender, development, education, land and urban development, rural development, social welfare and development, etc. It should be no more than 800 words, and thus you will need to be brief and direct! The article will be marked as if by a professional newspaper editor, for style and substance, and participants are encouraged to submit it to a periodical for possible publication.

### Objectives

The purpose of the op-ed paper is to:

- Grant students the time and space to reflect critically on an issue related to issues of Development, Transformation or Nation Building in South Africa, and to "take a stand."
- Sharpen students' ability to incorporate different types of evidence (quotes, statistics, personal anecdotes, or volunteer experience) within their writing, and to back up those claims with authority.
- Encourage students to practice creative writing skills.

## Assessment

The paper will be assessed in relation to:

- Structure: open with a strong attention-grabbing statement, then defend it with facts, statistics and quotations, and write a forceful conclusion with your proposal for solving the issue.
- Content: focus and persuasive representation of the facts.
- Quality of the writing: grammar, syntax, spelling, and a clear, concise, and engaging writing style.

**Participation:** Criteria for assessment of participation, which counts for 20 percent of your grade, are as follows:

- *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.
- *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.

Attendance at all seminars and field activities is mandatory unless indicated as optional on the schedule. Failure to attend, or repeated late arrival, will lower your grade substantially, if not jeopardize your standing in the program. Please note that while strong participation on all the above matters will get you close to the full ten points for this component of your grade, a failure to fully participate in any program activity, as determined by the academic director, is grounds not only for failure of the course, but also for academic and/or behavioral probation and other disciplinary action, up to and possibly including dismissal from the program.

**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
< 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 Academic Seminar lectures, discussions, field trips and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior. The level, frequency, and quality of the student's participation will be monitored and taken into account.

## **Expectations and Policies**

### **Readings**

In addition to readings, which will be assigned for each module, it is also the student's responsibility to keep up to date with current events. 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. 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. 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.

**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.

### **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 NOTE:** All classes leave  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the scheduled time for the purpose of class discussion of the lecture and/or readings

**Disability Services:** Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services at [disabilityservices@sit.edu](mailto: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.