



## Intensive Language Study: Beginning Kiswahili

SWAH 1003 -1503 (3 Credits / 45 class hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:  
Kenya: Public Health in the Tropics Internship

**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

This course is designed to develop student proficiency and communication in the Swahili language – Kiswahili. While emphasis is primarily upon oral comprehension and conversation (i.e., listening and speaking), reading and writing are highlighted as crucial to the reinforcement of those skills. In addition, the course is designed not only to help students acquire Kiswahili, but also to learn attendant cultural aspects of Kenya. Language instruction begins during orientation and quickly introduces students to basic vocabulary, sentence structure and easy dialogues that enable students to immediately begin using Swahili. Cultural awareness is built into the course via folk tales and lectures and is also introduced and reinforced through field exercises, educational excursions, and the homestay experience.

### Course Objectives

Intensive Beginning Kiswahili encompasses 45 class hours (3 credits). Its main objectives are to:

- prepare students for daily social interactions – in Kiswahili – with Kenyans and other Kiswahili speakers
- prepare students for the internship
- support students in the development and understanding of, and access to, Kenyan cultures

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students will:

- Demonstrate a functional ability to speak, understand, read, and write Kiswahili, enabling students to handle basic daily tasks and interactions with others (culturally appropriate greetings, introductions, market interactions, relating everyday experiences, asking directions, etc.);
- Develop a deeper knowledge of Kenyan cultural practices through Kiswahili, including a familiarity with culturally appropriate behavior associated with language use in a variety of contexts; and
- Exhibit an improved capacity to function independently in Kenya through the knowledge of a local language.

In addition, students should be able to complete the following linguistic tasks by the end of the program:

- Perform greetings and introduce self and others formally and informally

- Identify objects and items in the classroom and in the natural environment
- Order entities sequentially and count numbers from 1-100
- Respond to requests and instructions appropriately and with courtesy
- Respond to requests and instructions related to teaching/ learning activities
- Name days of the weeks, significant dates and months, telling time
- Identify one's nationality and that of others
- Quantify entities in response to questions "how much/ how many"
- Ask and respond to factual questions, such as giving and receiving directions
- Describe objects, using adjective and colors
- Describe his or her family tree
- Ask and answer questions about weather and seasons, etc.

Students will learn the following grammar construction and grammar rules:

- Present tense - na - positive /negative
- Subject prefixes m/wa class: positive: ni, u, a, tu, m, wa; negative: si, hu, ha, hatu, ham, hawa
- Noun classes: M/WA, U and KI-VI
- Personal pronouns: mimi, wewe, yeye, sisi, nyinyi, wao
- Past simple tense - li-ku - positive and negative
- Me-Ja tense - positive and negative
- Future tense - ta - positive and negative
- Noun classification using food and fruit
- Possessive pronouns: wangu, yangu, changu
- Linking articles: wa, ya, cha
- Conjugate nouns with numbers
- Verb "to be" – kuwa – in three forms: locative: niko, nilikuwa, nitakuwa; possessive: nina, nilikuwa na, nitakuwa na; verbal stative: mimi ni, nilikuwa, nitakuwa
- Hu tense habitual
- Ka narrative
- Subject prefixes in inanimate classes: I, Zi, Ki-Vi
- Wakati, adverb of time
- Consonant stem adjectives/dependent: zuri, zito, baya, kubwa, dogo etc.
- Consonant stem adjectives /independent: ghali, safi, muhimu, tofauti, laini, etc.
- Vowel stem adjectives/dependent: epesi, embamba, erevu, eupe, ekundu, etc.
- Noun classes M/MI, N, JI/MA and PA
- Adverbs: kwa amani, kwa siri, kwa upendo, kwa hasira, kwa kweli, kwa huzuni, etc.
- Conditional affix: KI-SIPO

## Language Levels and Placement

Non-beginner participants are placed into appropriate language course levels based on oral proficiency interviews and written exams (placement tests) conducted during orientation in Kenya.

## Course Requirements

### Readings

Students are responsible for all required readings and should be prepared to bring them to bear on class discussions.

### Required Texts

The program language teachers will provide students with reading materials and assignments throughout the Intensive Kiswahili course. In addition, students should bring, or obtain in Kenya, an English/Swahili-Swahili/English dictionary to assist in classes and homestays.

### Field Exercises

Through field assignments, students enrich their classroom learning experience and their ability to function in real life language situations, assimilate everyday life issues, and immerse themselves in the host culture. Field assignments are done both individually and in groups. Field assignments may include visits to the following places:

- Markets: to practice bargaining skills and have contact with Kenyans
- Cafés and restaurants: to gain experience ordering food and drink
- Museums and monuments: to learn about historical sites and handicrafts

**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 NOTIFIED.

### Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Oral Proficiency Exam:	50%
Instructor Evaluation:	40%
Language Usage:	10%

**Oral Proficiency Exam:** At the end of the intensive language period, students will be given an oral proficiency exam to test their language skills. The exam consists of a brief oral interview that is designed to evaluate student speaking abilities and comprehension of spoken Kiswahili.

**Instructor Evaluation:** The language grade also reflects the Kiswahili instructor's evaluation of student grammar, vocabulary, accent, and class participation (including tardiness, absences, comportment, and active engagement in class).

**Language Usage:** The final 10% of the grade is a reflection of student use of Kiswahili during fieldtrips, in homestay, and during general interactions throughout the internship and 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
below 64	F

### Student Expectations

**Class Participation**

Participation in class refers to attendance, punctuality, attentive listening and active engagement in all Swahili language lectures, discussions, field trips and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior. An absent student is responsible for contacting the instructor, the tutor, and/or fellow students to be prepared for the assignments s/he missed and those scheduled for the next class.

**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 program dossier given to you at orientation.

**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>.