

## Intensive Language Study: Beginning & Intermediate Wolof (Onsite in Dakar, Senegal)

WOLO-1003-2503 (3 credits)

### Senegal: Wolof Language

*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**

The role of the Wolof language training is to provide students with basic tools needed for entry into Senegalese cultures and language communities. The language training is organized by a language coordinator and carried out by a teacher experienced in teaching Wolof to non-native speakers. Language study consists of 45 hours of formal instruction including experiential sessions on shopping, eating out, Senegalese cooking and music as well as local trips and visits outside of Dakar. Language study is reinforced through the homestay experience and through interactive assignments. It will also focus on introducing students to issues of global security, religious pluralism, ecology, and women's issues in the context of Senegal. The Wolof courses given in this training will be in the form of skills to be acquired. Those skills will be covered using a Skills-Based Education approach. Each skill will be taught considering the different learning styles of the students. To fit each individual learner's style, each skill is divided into four steps:

**Motivation:** warming-up, revision, introduction for those who feel things and those who observe.

**Exploitation / information:** for those who think and those who observe.

**Practice:** for those who think and those who act.

**Application:** for those who feel things and those who act.

After assimilating the content of these skills, the learners will have acquired the basic structures in Wolof for their survival, both at the Training Center, as well as in the city or village. Each of the proposed lessons pursues goals that will be achieved through the following tools: **vocabulary** words, **grammar** and **functional structures**.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

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

- Develop an intermediate understanding of Wolof for day-to-day usage in typical contexts (culturally appropriate greetings, introductions, market interactions, relating everyday experiences, asking directions, etc.)
- Demonstrate a greater understanding of Wolof in the Senegalese culture using the local language; and
- Execute intermediate language skills in order to function effectively and independently in Senegal.

### **Methodology**

Competency-Based Teaching focuses on the needs of the learners. However, it does not dictate any teaching method because there is no better way to learn a language and because learners have different learning styles. No exclusive teaching method will be preferred, but rather a variety of methods based on the latest professional standards. The course will take an eclectic approach that will use methods and techniques based on the natural approach, the communicative approach and elements of audio-oral methodology. Lessons will include a variety of activities to address different learning styles. This variety will be proposed in a four-step sequence that reflects the current conception of adult learning and language acquisition. The course will begin with non-stressing review and warm-up activities that will focus learners on materials already studied, in a personal and fun way. Second, new material will be introduced by linking it to the things already learned and the needs of students. In the third and most important stage, students will be brought to a more advanced practice of the new material. Finally, students will be encouraged to create in the new language by doing simulations during and out of class.

As tools and activities, we will have, for different styles:

**Visual:** flash cards, pictures, realia, handouts, worksheets, demonstration, observation, use of flipchart and board.

**Audio/Aural:** drills (exercises), discussions, question-and-answer sessions, listen and run, songs, proverbs, listening to short stories, passwords, guessing games (riddles)...

**Kinesthetic:** interviewing people, community interventions, total physical response, role-playing,

### **Module 1: Review of greetings, daily activities, and grammar**

**Objectives:** Students will be comfortable greeting and introducing themselves in different situations, keeping in mind the cultural significance of acknowledging others. They will be able to talk about their daily activities, name things around them, and get around in a city.

*Session I:*

#### **Greetings at random meetings (Nuyóo ak wonale)**

Greet in appropriate ways at different times of the day, present your identity, introduce yourself and a third party, use appropriate expressions for leave-taking, idioms, cultural notes, etc.

**Cultural notes:** the importance and length of greetings, body language, Murid and Layéen greeting styles - the Ibadous, greetings at prayer times, remote greetings, etc.

#### **Wax Ci Li Weesu (Past Tense)**

Talk about past activities, about one's experiences (studies, work), and tell a story about the past using facts.

**Vocabulary:** Using time markers and linking words.

**Grammar** (Consolidation): Using active verbs in the past, negative form of active verbs in past tense, temporal relative translating *when* or *after*, stative verbs in the past, object emphasis pronouns (past tense), and negative construction.

*Session II:*

**Yenqu-Yenqu bes bi (daily activities)**

In this session you will practice talking about your daily activities, asking about someone's daily activities, and asking for time and to tell time.

**Vocabulary:** Using verbs relating to daily activities, adverbs to express habit, and vocabulary of time.

**Grammar** (Consolidation): Emphasizing action verbs and objects. Using habitual present, interrogative form, and temporal relative BU/SU.

*Session III:*

**Li ñu wër (Things around us)**

This session will practice naming objects around us, giving comments (uses of imperative form), and asking for and giving directions.

**Vocabulary:** Using vocabulary of things around us, interrogative words, verbs indicating directions, words about distance.

**Grammar:** Using interpretive form, affirmative and negative, and prepositions.

**Cultural activity:** City drop-off and cultural items discovery

**Homework 1: Waa kër gi: Detailed presentation of your host family**

Physical description of host family members: age, occupation, marital status, studies, characters, roles of women, roles of men and children.

**Cultural notes:** extended family, taboos on the number of children. Polygamy, ethnic groups and castes. Joking cousinage.

**Module 2: Tukki and Jënd aq jaay (learning how to travel and go to the market)**

**Objectives:** Students will learn vocabulary to take different means of transportation throughout the country and gain confidence in interacting with vendors at the market.

*Session I:*

**Presentation in class of homework assignment 1**

Check and review students use of possessive adjectives, enunciative pronouns, and negative form of enunciative pronouns.

**Tukki (Travel)**

Students will be able to name and use different means of transportation, learn about timetables, fares, duration and the condition of the roads, and ask for and give directions.

**Cultural notes: Yekkale** - opportunities to change cars en route, baggage payment, car condition, accidents, mobility problems during religious holidays... Choice of medium (Kaar ràppid, clandóo, Dakar Dam Dikk, yellow, green taxis, Njaga Njaay, shuttle service in rural areas, taxi-bagages, horse-drawn coach...) – stops. Visit to the bus station and various clando (irregular) garages, etc.

*Session II:*

**Jënd ag jaay (Purchases)**

Students will learn and memorize the names of different food items, drinks, snacks, clothes. They will learn about prices, how to bargain, pay and ask for change. They will learn how to buy items at the shop, at the market and weekly markets, on the street.

**Cultural notes:** Market schedules, time, duration of bargaining, jokes, humor, etc.

**Outings** to different markets: HLM, KERMEL, FASS and weekly markets.

***Around the bowl:*** Useful Expressions

**Grammar:** Using the explicative Dafa (consolidation), the demonstratives (near/distant), and comparatives.

**Written assignment 1:** (assessment of knowledge acquisition)

**Talk about one's favorite meals** - Making comparisons with the modals.

**Homework 2:** Prepare two culinary recipes: a Senegalese and an American dish (to be presented in class)

**Cultural activity:** visit to Goree island

*Session III:*

**Grammar:** Students will use the relative subject and relative objects. Using verbs (operators) Mës (ever), Gëj (long time), Mën (to be able to)

**Cultural notes/proverbs:** Discuss the important role of proverbs in the Wolof language and the art of insinuation in a conversation.

**Homework 3:** Outings to *Tiléne* and *Gueule Tapée* markets

Visit the *Soumbédioun* artisan village and interview one of the managers on the trades in the village about where the materials to be processed come from and how are the products sold.

**Module 3: Visit to Popenguine**

**Objectives:** Students learn about religious pluralism, environment, and women's issues in Senegal through their week-long visit to Popenguine. Paired with local peers, they create a mini-project based on experiential engagement with the local community. They develop vocabulary pertinent to these areas of religious pluralism, environment, and women's issues.

**Cultural activity:** excursion to *Popenguine*

*Session I:*

**Religious pluralism in Senegal**

This session familiarizes students with the different religions, Islam, Christianity, and Indigenous traditions, as well as Sufi brotherhoods of Senegal, their values, and the intricate bonds uniting them.

**Cultural notes:** Cultural particularity of Popenguine as a crossroads of Senegal's three main religions. Important feasts and celebrations in Senegal. Popenguine as the center of Christian pilgrimage.

**Vocabulary:** Using terminology related to religion and religious practices.

**Grammar (consolidation):** Using time markers (**oon, doon, daan**), temporal and hypothetical - expressions of time, negation in the past (active verbs / passive verbs), active verbs vs passive verbs, suffixes **i- ji** (exitif), **si** (additive), and the benefactive case **al**.

**Homework 4:**

Visit local community to discuss religious pluralism and discuss their individual beliefs, Islam, Christianity, and Indigenous practices. Present your conversation in class.

*Session II:*

**Cër u yaram: (Body parts and health)**

This session helps students to name all of their body parts, describe their health (physical and psychological), name the most common diseases during the different seasons, what precautions to take health-wise to avoid them.

**Vocabulary:** Terminology connected to the body and health.

**Cultural notes:** The most common diseases in Senegal, traditional medicine, local understanding of health. Women's issues.

**Outing:** Discuss with local women about traditional healing and major issues faced by women in the community with optional readings that reveal your state of health and future.

**Written Assignment 2:**

- **Describe a person** (sex, size, colors, physically diminished, rich, poor, strong, weak), behavior, moral.
- **Talk about your health**
- **Talk about a meal** (too spicy, salty, sweet, spicy)

*Session III:*

**Nature: geography, flora, and fauna**

This session will discuss different elements of nature and local understanding of ecology, which includes a visit to the nature reserve.

**Vocabulary:** Naming different parts of nature.

**Cultural notes:** The desertification of the Sahel. Deforestation of the Senegalese region locally and by foreign entities. Eco-village movements in Senegal.

**Outing:** Visit the nature reserve in Popenguine and their environmental project spearheaded by local women.

**Wax ci lu jëm ci kanam; mēbēt (the Future ASPECT)**

This session will engage talking about the future, particularly students' plans and how we can make a better world given what was learned in Popenguine.

**Vocabulary:** Using time markers.

**Grammar (consolidation):** Using future pronouns and the negative form of the future.

**Homework 5:** Creative group project on what you learned in Popenguine. It should include some of the vocabulary and grammar you learned.

**Assessment of students' acquisition of knowledge -**

**Transformation exercises.** Translation

**Reading and reviewing students' notes /questions (consolidation)**

**FINAL EXAM: Written**

**FINAL EXAM: Interview**

**Sample Course Readings:**

The language instructors will provide students with reading materials and assignments handouts throughout the Wolof course. In addition, students should plan to obtain a Wolof/English and/or for their personal use in Senegal. 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 the instructor, to generate questions for class discussions and to deepen your knowledge of aspects discussed in class. They are not necessarily tailor-made for each class.

**Field Exercises and Language Role Play**

Through field assignments and interactive scenarios, 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 may be done both individually and in groups. Field exercises may include visits to the following places:

- Markets: to practice bargaining skills and maximize interactions with Wolof speakers
- Cafés and restaurants: to rehearse ordering food and drink in situ
- Museums, cultural sites and monuments: to learn about historical sites and local areas of importance

**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**

Grades are assigned by the Academic Director, in consultation with the language instructors, and are based on evaluation of performance on written and oral presentations during the semester and efforts to communicate in Wolof outside the classroom during the break time. The language grade also reflects the instructor's evaluation of student written homework, quiz given during the class, participation and attendance (including tardiness, absences, and active engagement in class).

### **EVALUATION :**

Attendance and participation:	<b>10%</b>
Oral tests:	<b>20%</b>
Homework and assignments:	<b>20%</b>
<b><u>Final Exam:</u></b>	<b>50%</b>
Reading and questions:	<b>10%</b>
Written: tests on the different grammar points covered:	<b>20%</b>
INTERVIEW THE STUDENT: out of all the skills covered:	<b>20%</b>

### **Attendance & Participation:**

Class attendance is mandatory, and absences are penalized by reducing the language grade, except in cases of documented illness, whereby the student is expected to provide a medical certificate. Two unjustified late arrivals will be counted as one absence. Participation requires active engagement – you are expected to express yourself, ask questions, discuss readings, role play, interact, and use Wolof in and outside class (i.e., on excursions, interacting with Global Security and Religious pluralism faculty, in homestays). Assigned readings must be read in advance of the lesson to: 1. familiarize you with the specific vocabulary and content of the class, so you are able to follow it more easily and 2. provide the necessary background to participate in class discussions and expand vocabulary

### **Oral presentations:**

Two oral presentations are scheduled during the program. The choice of subject is decided by each student. Each presentation is limited to 20 minutes maximum. Students may choose to present individually or in small groups of no more than three participants. Oral presentations enable students to perform and engage in creative activities.

### **Written homework:**

Language teachers will provide specific information as to the written homework assignments. An assignment on the family tree will be included in this written homework.

### **Final exam:**

The written exam will review previously covered issues related to grammar, vocabulary, expressions, conversations, reading and writing.  
The oral exam will be around all the skills covered.

### **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**

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 students` participation will be monitored and considered.

### **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 Student 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.

**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>.