Beginning Kiswahili
SWAH-1003 -1503 (3 credits)

Kenya: Virtual Swahili Language (all levels)

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

This 9-week virtual 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.

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.

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 Schedule
In this three-credit online course, which will involve approximately 15 hours of work a week for the nine weeks of the course's duration. These will include synchronous and asynchronous tasks, namely, small group projects and assignments, direct instruction, and presentations, etc.. This format will allow students to learn to speak and understand Kiswahili while virtually experiencing Kenyan culture.

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 will need an English/Swahili-Swahili/English dictionary.

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.

Student Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Student Assessment
Students receive feedback from the instructor throughout the course. The language instructor and the Academic Director assign final grades jointly. Apart from Midterm and Final exams, students' vocabulary will be quizzed every week. Evaluation is a reflection of the student's proficiency, participation, engagement, and progress through the weeks of language instruction and during the remaining weeks of the course.

Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

1) Oral Proficiency Exam (50%)
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.

2) Instructor Evaluation (40%)
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).

3) Language Usage (10%)
The final 10% of the grade is a reflection of student use of language. This includes active involvement in lectures, readings, discussions, and excursions using the following criteria:
- Attendance - promptness to class and positive presence in class.
- Active Listening - paying attention in class and during field excursions, asking appropriate questions, showing interest and enthusiasm (this includes body language), entertaining contradictory perspectives, taking notes.
- Involvement in Class Discussions - either in small or large groups, sharing knowledge. This means challenging yourself to speak up if you usually do not, and also means allowing others to speak if you are a person who tends to dominate class discussions.
- Group Accountability – positive participation in the group during field excursions and classes; not keeping others waiting.
- Displaying Respect – culturally appropriate interaction with hosts, SIT program staff, SIT lecturers and communities.

Assessment
   Oral Proficiency Exam – 50%
   Instructor Evaluation – 40%
   Participation – 10%

Attendance and Participation
Due to the nature of SIT Study Abroad programs, and the importance of student and instructor contributions in every class session, attendance at all classes and for all program excursions is required. Criteria for evaluation of student performance include attendance and participation in program activities. Students must fully participate in all program components and courses. Students may not voluntarily opt out of required program activities. Valid reasons for absence – such as illness – must be discussed with the academic director or other designated staff person. Absences impact academic performance, may impact grades, and could result in dismissal from the program.

Late Assignments
The curriculum is designed to build on itself and progress to the culmination. It is critical that students complete assignments in a timely manner to continue to benefit from the sequences in assignments, reflections, and experiences throughout the program.
Example: Students may request a justified extension for one paper/assignment during the semester. Requests must be made in writing and at least 12 hours before the posted due date and time. If reason for request is accepted, an extension of up to one week may be granted at that time. Any further requests for extensions will not be granted. Students who fail to submit the assignment within the extension period will receive an 'F' for the assignment.

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

Program Expectations
- Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.

- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (classmates', lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.
- Storing Your Work: Keep several copies of your work as back up and keep one copy accessible to you through an online forum, such as an attachment in your email, the course learning management system, or cloud-based storage. This way your work will always be available to despite technical issues. Lost files, deleted drives, or computer crashes are not excuses for late, missing work.
- Course Communication: Course documents and assignments will be posted on the learning management system, Canvas. Although the course calendar provides a broad overview and the general sequence of work and assignments for the course, what we accomplish in class will vary, and revisions to the calendar will be posted at the course site. You will need to check the course site regularly. You are responsible for letting me know about any network-related problems that prevent you from accessing or submitting assignments.
- Content Considerations: Some texts and activities you will encounter in this course delve into sensitive topics that may be emotionally and intellectually challenging. Our classroom is a space where we can engage with challenging ideas, question assumptions, and navigate difficult topics with respect and maturity. As possible, I will flag content and activities that are especially graphic or intense, so we are prepared to address them soberly and sensitively. If you are struggling to keep up with the work or participate in the course because of the nature of the content and activities, you should speak with me and/or seek help from counseling services.
- Classroom recording policy: To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

SIT Policies and Resources

Please refer to the [SIT Study Abroad Handbook](#) and the [Policies](#) section of the SIT website for all academic and student affairs policies. Students are accountable for complying with all published policies. Of relevance to this course are the policies regarding: academic integrity, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), research and ethics in field study and internships, late assignments, academic status, academic appeals, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and misconduct, and the student code of conduct.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook and SIT website for information on important resources and services provided through our central administration in Vermont, such as [Library resources and research support](#), [Disability Services](#), [Counseling Services,](#) [Title IX information](#), and [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) resources.