Continental Geopolitics and South-South Relations
INTS-3005 (3 credits)

South Africa: International Relations in the Global South

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 course will look at the impact of various approaches to governance on Africa's development and how African geopolitics is characterized by cooperation and competition over natural resources, as well as African nations' desire to forge stronger links with the world's traditional and emerging superpowers. A large part of the course will look at continental organizations like the African Union, international organizations and non-state actors, and the roles played by African states in regional organizations. Students will also be introduced to the recent resurgence of South–South co-operation in international affairs through a study of the SADC (Southern Africa Development Community), and BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), which has emerged as an alternative power block and moved onto the center stage of world politics.

Learning Outcomes
Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- *Understand the impact of poor governance on Africa's development.*
- Comprehend dominant perspectives on South-South relations and solidarities.
- Articulate the positions, goals, and relationships among key decision makers from selected countries within the context of SADC region, BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa;
- Evaluate the role of the Africa's relationship with China
- Synthesize the learning acquired in this course in a series of critical analysis papers and presentations

Language of Instruction
This course is taught in English, but students will be exposed to vocabulary related to course content as well as the narrated nuances of international relations, politics, and diplomacy through expert lectures and their internship experience.

Instructional Methods
SIT's teaching and learning philosophy is grounded in the experiential learning theory developed by Kolb (1984; 2015) and informed by various scholars, such as Dewey, Piaget, Lewin, among others. Experiential learning theory recognizes that learning is an active process that is not confined to the formal curriculum; "knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 2015, p. 49). Learning involves both content and process. Learning is holistic and happens through various life experiences upon which students draw to generate new ways of knowing and being. Learning involves a community and is a lifelong endeavor. Learning is transformational. The suggested four step-cycle of a *concrete experience*, *reflective observation*, *abstract conceptualization*, and *active experimentation* embedded in the experiential learning model is not linear and might not always happen in that specific order, as any learning is highly context dependent. These stages of taking part in a shared experience; reflecting on that experience by describing and interpreting it; challenging their own assumptions and beliefs to generate new knowledge; and ultimately applying new knowledge, awareness, skills, and attitudes in a variety of situations and contexts are important for students to engage in to become empowered lifelong learners.

Assignments and Evaluation

1) Text Analysis (30%)

Students are required to look at Walter Rodney's 'How Europe under-developed Africa' and engage with the main arguments from the chapter focused on 'Colonialism as a system of under-developing Africa'. The text analysis should demonstrate the student's capacity to synthesize arguments and provide critical insights from this chapter. The paper should be 5-8 pages long.

2) Students Presentation (20%)
Students will be required to present orally and creatively at the end of the thematic seminar highlighting the most relevant and important issues discussed in class and on the different excursions. Students will choose one comparative aspect in relation to the regional differences in Africa and more specifically about perceptions, policies and practices as related to post-conflict transformation processes and elaborate on how course lectures, readings, and field visits have supported their understanding and viable approaches to the issue at hand.

3) Reflective Essay (40%)
The comprehensive reflective essay will consist of a 5 to 8-page essay which should demonstrate the student's capacity to synthesize and engage critically with main impacts and challenges related to Africa's relationship with China. Students are expected to engage critically with content covered through lectures, readings, or field visits throughout the course.

4) Class Attendance and Participation (10%)
Attendance during the thematic seminar is mandatory and your grade will reflect your involvement in class and during other activities and excursions. 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.

Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

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 don't, 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.

Assessment
Text Analysis	30%
Student Presentation	20%
Comparative Reflective Essay	40%
Class Attendance and Participation	10%

Attendance and Participation
Due to the nature of SIT Study Abroad programs, and the importance of student and instructor contributions in each and 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 and may impact grades, and could result in dismissal from the program.

Late Assignments
SIT Study Abroad programs integrate traditional classroom lectures and discussion with field-based experiences, site visits and debriefs. The curriculum is designed to build on itself and progress to the culmination (projects, ISP, case studies, internship, etc.). 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, printed, 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. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- 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.
- Personal Technology Use: Cell phones and other personal electronics can be used for taking notes and other class activities. Off-task usage is not acceptable. You may be marked as absent for habitually using them for something other than classroom activities.
- 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.

- 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 particular 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.

Course Schedule

Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs

Module 1: African Development

This module looks at the politics of development in the African context, examining key development theories and interventions and combining a general theoretical overview with country case studies to show varied experiences of development on the continent. Students will get to examine the legacies of the colonial encounter, the impact of globalization and will get to focus on issues like poverty, inequality and social protection.

Session 1: Introduction to development theory
Session 2: The political economy of Africa
Session 3: African inequality and poverty in an age of globalisation
Session 4: South Africa and the global context

Readings:

Mamdani, M. (2018). *Citizen and subject: contemporary Africa and the legacy of late colonialism*. Princeton University Press.

Mkandawire, T. (2015). Neopatrimonialism and the Political Economy of Economic Performance in Africa: Critical Reflections. *World Politics*, *67*(3), 563–612. https://doi.org/10.1017/s004388711500009x

Rodney, W. (1972). *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Verso.

Module 2: China in Africa - exploring a complex relationship.

This module explores the relationship between China and Africa in the context of the fact that Africa has a population of over a billion mainly young people, a population set to double by 2050. In this context China has embarked on a massive infrastructural development program and there is a significant increase in China/Africa trade. This module will examine the increasingly complex relationship between Africa and China and what this means for the future of Africa.

> Session 1: Introduction to the China/Africa relationship
> Session 2: China and the politics of African liberation movements
> Session 3: Understanding the trade relationship.
> Session 4: Africa caught between east and west.

Readings:
Hillman, J. E. (2020). Project of the Century. In *The emperor's new road: China and the project of the century*. Yale University Press ; Washington, DC.

Maddison, Angus. (1998), *Chinese Economic Performance in the Long Run*, Development Centre Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264163553-en.

Shinn, D. H., & Eisenman, J. (2012). Introduction. A Historical Overview of China-Africa Relations. In *China and Africa: a century of engagement* (pp. 1-16, 17–56). University Of Pennsylvania Press.

Stromseth, J., Bhattacharya, A., & Solís, M. (2019, April 18). *China's Belt and Road: The new geopolitics of global infrastructure development*. Brookings. https://www.brookings.edu/research/chinas-belt-and-road-the-new-geopolitics-of-global-infrastructure-development/

Video: AFRICA: A Voyage of Discovery - Episode 6 - The Magnificent African Cake

Module 3: South-South Cooperation in International Affairs

This module looks at the recent resurgence of South–South co-operation in international affairs. This is located in the context of a contestation for global space within a new configuration of multilateralism. Students will explore how BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) have emerged as an alternative to Bretton Woods Institutions and moved onto the center stage of world politics, leading to a renewed interest in its historic promise to transform our world order. Sessions in this module may include:

- Session 1: Introduction: contesting global space
- Session 2: Africa and the International Order
- Session 3: BRICS Challenges to and Accommodations with Global Power Relations
- Session 4: Africa and Russia -where to from here?

Readings:

Abdenur, A. E. (2014). China and the BRICS Development Bank: Legitimacy and Multilateralism in South-South Cooperation. *IDS Bulletin*, *45*(4), 85–101. https://doi.org/10.1111/1759-5436.12095

Elbassoussy, A. (2021). The growing Russian role in sub-Saharan Africa: interests, opportunities and limitations. *Journal of Humanities and Applied Social Sciences*. https://doi.org/10.1108/jhass-11-2020-0210

Ellis, S. (2005). How to Rebuild Africa. *Foreign Affairs*, *84*(5), 135. https://doi.org/10.2307/20031711

Petrone, F. (2021). The future of global governance after the pandemic crisis: what challenges will the BRICS face? *International Politics*, *59*(2). https://doi.org/10.1057/s41311-021-00301-8

Module 4: Continental Solidarity and the African Union
In this module continental solidarity on the architecture of the African political landscape constructed around the multi-lateral objectives of the African Union (AU) is explored. This is located in the context of the AU's Agenda 2063, where the AU charts Africa's development trajectory over a 50-year time frame. A portion of the class include site visits to relevant institutions and organizations including with the South African parliament and regional institutions such as the Pan African Parliament in Johannesburg. An excursion to the African Union in Addis will also feature on the program

Session 1: Introduction to the Study of African Solidarity
Session 2: Understanding the African Union
Session 3: Africa's youth and Agenda 2063
Session 4: Engagements with AU leaders in Addis Ababa
Session 5: The African Union and Africa's security

Readings:

Abdellaoui, J. (2010). The African Union and Security in Africa. 10.1057/9780230115538_2.

Cilliers, J. (2001). Towards the African Union. *African Security Review, 10*(2), 104-108. https://doi.org/10.1080/10246029.2001.9627940

Joshua, S., & Olanrewaju, F. (2017). The AU's Progress and Achievements in the Realm of Peace and Security. *India Quarterly*, *73*(4), 454-471. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0974928417731639

Moono, J. (2021). Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. *Academia Letters*, 1336, 1-6. https://doi.org/10.20935/AL1336