

Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Peacebuilding PEAC-3000 (3 credits)

Rwanda: Post-Genocide Restoration and Peacebuilding

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

Rwanda presents excellent settings in which to examine the various measures, strategies, programs, and projects that have been put in place by the government of Rwanda, Western organizations, NGOs, and communities to mitigate the impact of conflict and to rebuild, reconstruct, and revive fractured relations and displaced communities. What choices for reconciliation, reconstruction, and development have been made in Rwanda? What theoretical underpinnings shape these choices and what are the implications of these choices for sustainable peace and development?

Drawing on the contemporary theories of peacebuilding and related processes, the course provides a platform for critical analysis of not only the challenges but also the opportunities related to post-genocide reconstruction, and the pursuit of positive peace in Rwanda. Carefully scheduled visits to NGOs, government agencies, and to urban as well as rural communities in Rwanda are complemented by lectures by Rwandan experts and selected reading assignments. An excursion to the south-western part of Rwanda enables students to critically focus on the prospects for sustainable development and peace in Rwanda.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Assess the effectiveness of different models of peace and reconciliation promotion;
- Appreciate the potential and limitations of non-governmental organizations in peace promotion, recovery, and community development efforts;
- Suggest measures for promoting sustainable peace and development in Rwanda; and
- Articulate the post-conflict economic development opportunities and challenges in Rwanda.

Language of Instruction

The course is taught in English by peacebuilding and sustainable development experts, managers of NGOs, and heads of government departments in Rwanda. Discussion sessions are held in English and are facilitated by the academic director. Assigned readings drawn from selected journals and book chapters are also in English.

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

Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

In addition to weekly processing sessions, class attendance and participation, and discussion leadership, students will have to complete written assignments covering different aspects of the themes the course has addressed. Timely completion of all assignments is expected. Late hand-ins will be penalized. All assignments are evaluated according to organization, analytical quality, depth of understanding, argumentation, and presentation of evidence.

1) Newspaper analysis, Rwanda: (30%)

Follow Rwandan news via The New Times and/or Rwandan television for at least one week and compose a typed 2-page double spaced content analysis of the issues in the news. How would you describe the issues in the news? What, broadly, does or doesn't the news cover? Where is the emphasis? What issue(s) have struck you about the issues in the news? In addition, follow-up with at least two homestay family members or any adult acquaintances and elicit their views about any of the issues that you observe. Include their views in your synthesis.

2) Reflection sessions and readings discussion leadership (20%)

Summarize the assigned reading(s); Identify key arguments or issues that are raised and, possibly, the most critical assumptions that the author(s) makes, as well as their broad

implications for our understanding of causes, prevention, and mitigation of conflict. Compare and contrast those arguments with what was discussed during lecture sessions and/or field visits. Identify key questions that you note, in ways that will provoke discussion.

3) Group Project (40%)

in small groups of 2-3 people, students are assigned a topic by the academic director in the second week of the program. They research that topic, write a 5-page position paper and prepare a presentation to the big group. Each group handles a different topic, but all topics are related to peacebuilding and sustainable development process in Rwanda. Groups will be formed early during the program to allow enough time for preparation. Students will have to draw on course materials, excursions, site visits, readings, and views of local people. The assignment helps students learn the skills of working in groups and prepares them for professional life after school. The assignment is due in the last week of the program.

4) Participation (10%)

This includes contributions to class discussion, active listening, attentiveness, conduct within the classroom, conduct within the homestay, respect for staff and program resources, time keeping, timely completion of assigned readings, and adherence to program rules.

Assessment

Newspaper Analysis	30%
Reflection Sessions & Reading discussion leadership:	20%
Group project	40%
Participation	10%

Grading, Attendance, and Participation

Papers and discussions will be graded on style and form, content, depth of analysis, creativity and understanding of readings and lectures as demonstrated by their appropriate incorporation into written and oral assignments. Participation will be graded by observing attendance, attitude, preparation, active involvement in class discussions, and culturally appropriate behavior on excursions.

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, 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.

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 I: Contemporary peacebuilding discourse

This module sets the stage of the course by exploring the dominant discourse in peacebuilding and situating Rwanda in the global context to understand the choices made by the government of Rwanda and other stakeholders in responding to the social, economic, and psychological consequences of genocide in Rwanda. The module scans the impact of genocide, war, and displacement on individuals and communities and on social relationships. Students explore how the impact of genocide and civil war is shaped by age, gender, social class, and rural/urban residence. Assigned reading and selected videos are complemented by discussions with program staff.

Readings:

Hatzfeld, J. (2009). *The antelope's strategy: Living in Rwanda after the genocide*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Richmond, O. P. & Berenskoetter, F. (2016). *Peace (Concepts in World Politics)*. London: Sage Publications.

Heathershaw, J. (2008). 'Unpacking the Liberal peace: the merging and dividing of peacebuilding discourse,' *Millennium: journal of international studies*, Autumn 2008, 36(3), pp.597-622

Gourevitch, Philip. 2004. "Never Againism: we should stop lying to ourselves and others". Granta-London-Granta Publications Limited. (87): 109-120.

Newbury C & Newbury D (2003) "The Genocide in Rwanda and the Holocaust in Germany: Parallels and Pitfalls in *Journal of Genocide Research* V (1): 135-145.

Module 2: Models in transitional justice

This module reviews different models of transitional justice and a special focus is put on

Gacaca courts in comparison to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). Reviewing these different models provides students with a broad understanding of reconciliation and peacebuilding in post-conflict societies. Students complete selected readings, have class discussions, and interact with community members especially the perpetrators of genocide, the survivors and the rescuers to understand their perspectives on collective healing and reconciliation.

Documentary: *The Uncondemned*

Readings:

Johnstone Gary and Daniel W Ven Ness (2007). The meaning of restorative justice. *Handbook of Restorative Justice*, Portland William, Pp 5-23.

King, Regine U. (August 2011). "Healing Psychosocial Trauma in the Midst of Truth Commissions: The Case of Gacaca in Post-Genocide Rwanda." *Genocide Studies & Prevention*, 6 (2), 134-151.

Eifert, Benn, Edward Miguel, and Daniel Posner (2007) "Political Sources of Ethnic Identification in Africa." Conference at Michigan State University, May 2007

Hoeffler, A. (2011). 'Greed' versus 'Grievance': a useful conceptual distinction in the study of civil war? *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 11(2), 274-284.

Hollie Nyseth Brehm, Amanda Lea Robinson & Mini Saraswati (2021). Triggers of Escalations in Violence against Civilians by Non-State Actors in Africa, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, DOI: [10.1080/09546553.2021.1967935](https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2021.1967935)

Module 3: Economic development in post-conflict settings

Rwanda has become well known for its fast-paced economic development, and the World Bank has assessed Rwanda as being one of the most business friendly countries on the continent. What explains this success and upon what theoretical underpinnings does it draw? This module is based on site visits to the Rwanda Development Board (and the Kigali Special Economic zone) and to the Millennium Village Project in Bugesera Mayange. The module discusses the role and impact of international aid in comparison to international economic investment This module is complemented by empirical insights from the newspaper analysis assignment in Rwanda.

Readings:

Booth, D., & Golooba-Mutebi, F. (July 01, 2012). Developmental patrimonialism? The case of Rwanda. *African Affairs*, 111, 444, 379-403.

Carr Edward The millennium village project and African development: problems and potentials *Progress in Development Studies* 8, 4 (2008) pp. 333–44

Chu, Jeff (2009). Rwanda: "A Rising Model of Economic Development". Fast Company Magazine. <http://www.fastcompany.com/1208900/rwanda-rising-new-model-economic-development>

Easterly, W. (2006). *The white man's burden: Why the West's efforts to aid the rest have done so much ill and so little good*. New York: Penguin Press Ch 2

Sachs, J. (2005). *The end of poverty: Economic possibilities for our time*. New York: Penguin Press. Forward, Introduction and Chapter 16.

Rich, S. (2007). Africa's Village of Dreams. *The Wilson Quarterly*. Spring 2007.

Tomlin, S. (2006). "Development: Harvest of Hope". *Nature* 442, 22-25 (6 July 2006)

Module 4: Prospects and constraints to building sustainable peace and development

Under this module students will spend time in the southwestern part of Rwanda, exploring the theme of 'eco-tourism for sustainable development and peace'. They will interact with communities surrounding Nyungwe Rain Forest Park about their role in the preservation of the park. Drawing on excursions, site visits, and lectures so far on the program, students will debate, using these assigned readings, some of the hypothetical ways through which sustainable development and peace may be achieved in Rwanda and the prospects and limitations of these strategies. This module concludes the course.

Excursions: Nyungwe Rain Forest Park

Readings:

McIntosh, Ian (2000). "When Will We Know We Are Reconciled?" *Anthropology Today*, 16, 5, 3-11.

United Nations Environment Programme. (2011). *From Post-Conflict to Environmentally Sustainable Development*, Nairobi-Kenya.

Porte, J. (2021). Rwanda: an effective development model, rising to the challenges of its sustainability. *Macroeconomics and Development*. Edition AFD.

Mamdani, M. (2009). Introduction and Chapter 2 in *Saviors and Survivors: Darfur, Politics, and the War on Terror*. New York: Pantheon.

Ferguson, J. (1990). *The anti-politics machine: "development," depoliticization, and bureaucratic power in Lesotho*. Cambridge University Press. Introduction and Ch 2, pp 3-73.

Rwanda Environment and Climate Change Analysis (2019)