

Advanced French in Cameroonian Contexts

FREN 3003-3503 (3 credits)

Cameroon: Development and Social Change

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 course focuses on the acquisition of French lexicon used in the area of development and social change. The objective is to equip students with the language tools needed to work with NGOs and development associations. The course also focuses on enhancing students' oral skills, so as to facilitate their immersion into the *joie de vivre* of everyday Cameroonian life, where French remains largely dominant. In achieving these objectives, students are immersed in course materials designed to build comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing skills. The course focuses on engaging students with discourses, vocabularies, discussions and readings centered on a decolonial approach to development and intersectional realities in Cameroon. This intensive course is taught by a team of Cameroonian language teachers. Further language learning is facilitated through practice in homestays, lectures, and during excursions. Student language levels are determined through an oral exam at the beginning of the semester, after which they are placed into the level of instruction appropriate to their abilities.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Increase proficiency in French by two sublevels – i.e., if entry level is determined at “advanced low,” students successfully completing the course should achieve “advanced high”;
- Engage effectively with organizations and individuals on issues of social and economic development in the French language;
- Understand colonial and post-colonial experiences in the context of Cameroon;
- Identify local nuances of French verbal and written expressions in Cameroon.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in French.

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.

Required Texts

In addition to a reading packet of Cameroon-specific selections prepared by the program’s French instructors, readings for this course include:

- Coffman Crocker, Mary E. (2009). *French Grammar*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Djaili, Amadou Amal. (2010). *Walaande : l’art de partager un mari*. Editions Ifrikiya, Yaoundé
- Lobe, M. (2017). *Confidences*. Proximité
- Marzouka, O. (2024). *Mon père ou mon destin*. Proximité

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

Timely completion of all French for Development Studies 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. Bi-weekly monitoring and evaluation is not graded, but provides continual feedback on individual student progress.

1) Grammar and Vocabulary Exam (40%)

Students at the advanced level will take a grammar and vocabulary exam based on what they have learnt in class and a comprehension test based on the novel assigned to their class.

2) Comprehension and Analysis (40%)

Students at the advanced level will each write a two-page analysis of the novel assigned to their group in class.

3) Use of French Outside of Class (10%)

During field trips in and around Yaounde students will be expected to communicate only in French. These trips are usually referred to as “French day”.

4) Participation (10%)

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.
- Displaying Respect – culturally appropriate interaction with hosts, SIT program staff, SIT lecturers and communities.

Assessment

Grammar and Vocabulary Exam – 40%

Comprehension and Analysis – 40%

Use of French Outside Class – 10%

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, 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 the 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.
- 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 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](#), [Accessibility Services](#), [Counseling Services](#), [Title IX information](#), and [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) resources.

Course Schedule

The different language components have been adapted to fit the needs of students based on their level of communication and understanding ranging from intermediate to advanced. The first week of the program will provide the tools to facilitate students' adaptation in homestays and the community. After this, the program will focus on improving students' written and oral proficiency in development related themes.

<p>LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY INTERVIEWS</p>	<p>OUVERTURE SOLENNELLE DU COURS DE FRANÇAIS. *Présentation du programme de français et du système d'enseignement *Répartition des classes et début des cours</p> <p>PRESENTATION <u>Point à étudier :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La famille • L'Etat • L'université • La ligne de vie • <i>Les adjectifs qualificatifs</i> <p>Exercices : <i>Les adjectifs qualificatifs</i> -pages 39- 46. Faire l'exercice N° 19 Page 41</p> <p>EXPLOITATION DE L'ŒUVRE LITTÉRAIRE <u>«Walaande l'art de partager un mari » de Djaïli Amadou Amal</u> Etudes des paratextes Devoir : -Lire les Pages 9- 29 de l'œuvre -Lire la fiche sur les connecteurs logiques et faites l'exercice proposé</p>
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<p>LE COMMERCE</p> <p><u>Point à étudier :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Le commerce international • L'inflation • La subvention des agriculteurs • L'activité commerciale au Cameroun • <i>Les connecteurs de discours</i> <p>Visite d'un marché de la place</p> <p>Devoir : - <i>Le contraste passé composé/ imparfait</i> Lire les pages 161- 165. Faire l'exercice 219.</p>	<p>EXPLOITATION DE L'ŒUVRE LITTÉRAIRE <u>«Walaande l'art de partager un mari » Djaïli Amadou Amal</u></p> <p><u>Point à étudier :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Le contraste passé composé/ imparfait</i> <p>Devoir : -Lire les Pages 31- 50 de l'œuvre</p>	<p>LA MONDIALISATION</p> <p><u>Point à étudier :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La néo colonisation • La culture • La technologie de l'information • <i>Comparatif et superlatif irrégulier</i> <p>Devoir : -<i>Le passé simple :</i></p>
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	- <i>Comparatif et superlatif</i> : Lire les pages 49 -54. Faire les exercices N° 34 page 52 et 36 page 54	Lire les pages 168-172. Faire l'exercice N° 232 page 173
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<p>EXPLOITATION DE L'ŒUVRE <u>«Walaande l'art de partager un mari »</u> Djaïli Amadou Amal</p> <p><u>Point à étudier</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Le passé simple</i> <p><u>Devoir :</u> -Lire les Pages 51- 63 de l'œuvre - <i>Les prépositions</i> : lire les pages 79- 85. Faire l'exercice N° 13 Pages 86- 87</p>	<p>EDUCATION ET EMPLOI VISITE A L'UNIVERSITE</p> <p><u>Point à étudier :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rencontre avec les étudiants du Cercle Philo- Psycho-Socio-Anthropo • Echanges avec les étudiants de l'UYI • Visite de l'Université <p><u>Devoir :</u> - Compte rendu écrit de la visite à l'université</p>	<p>EXPLOITATION DE L'ŒUVRE LITTÉRAIRE <u>«Walaande l'art de partager un mari »</u> Djaïli Amadou Amal</p> <p><u>Point à étudier :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Les prépositions</i> <p><u>Devoir :</u> Œuvre littéraire : Lire les Pages 65-76 - <i>Le subjonctif</i> : Lire les pages 195 - 213. Faire l'exercice N° 313 Page 213</p>	<p>EXAMEN 1</p> <p>vocabulaire, grammaire, conjugaison et contrôle de lecture</p> <p>EVALUATION INDIVIDUELLE</p>
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Etude des œuvres littéraires

Students will be assigned a novel to be studied during French classes. Six or more classes will focus on using the assigned novels to improve students' vocabulary, grammar, and understanding of Cameroon's development realities and challenges as well as to increase their written and oral proficiency. At the end of the French course, each student is required to submit an analysis of their assigned novel in order to demonstrate mastery of French and deeper understanding of the novel theme.

Field trips

- Market: students will learn to identify local markets products, to bargain and to use the local currency.
- University of Yaoundé I: students go to the University of Yaoundé I, meet and discuss with a group of Cameroonian University students.
- Artisanat: students visit an art market in Foumban and Yaoundé.
- Women's day: In the spring semester, students join women from a local organization in the women's day celebrations.

Additional Readings

All students are encouraged to read the assigned novels and texts beforehand to facilitate discussions in class. The readings are tailored to each level and will help you deepen your vocabulary and listening skills. At the same time, they provide a base for classroom discussions and exercises with your teachers and classmates.

- Kelman, Gaston *Je suis noir et je n'aime pas le manioc*. 10/18 Max Milo, Paris 2004
- Kelman, Gaston *Au-Delà du noir et du blanc*. 10/18 Max Milo, Paris 2005
- Djaili, Amadou Amal *Walaande : l'art de partager un mari*. Editions Ifrikiya, Yaoundé 2010
- Oyono, Ferdinand *Une vie de boy*. Rene Julliard, 1956.
- Mouelle E. Njoh, *De la Médiocrité a l'excellence : Essai sur la signification humaine du développement*. Editions CLE. 1972.
- Beti, Mongo. (2003). *Main basse sur le Cameroun: Autopsie d'une décolonisation*. Paris: La Découverte.