

## French Literature in Cameroonian Contexts

### FREN 4003-4503 (3 credits)

#### Cameroon: Development 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 intensive course aims to extend and strengthen previously acquired competencies necessary for French speech, comprehension, reading and writing, through integrating traditional classroom instruction, field-based activities, and homestay practice with a focus on the study of Cameroonian literary projects that shed light on the lived experience of development and intersectionality from a decolonial perspective. Additionally, students are introduced to Cameroonian proverbs and expressions to facilitate their integration and communication in the society.

The course features three Cameroonian authors and their novels. Students learn about issues that resonate within Cameroonian society through the works of these authors. The texts offer insights into their lives; their thoughts on cultural pluralism in Cameroonian society; childhood, womanhood, and gendered roles and responsibilities; in addition to development issues including poverty, urbanization, polygamy, education and religion. This course complements the content of the decolonizing development and intersectionality courses. Students perfect their spoken, written grammar, and listening skills using discussions, conversations, debates and written activities.

This intensive course is taught by the French coordinator who has taught in universities, Peace Corps and other international institutions. Further language learning is facilitated through practice in homestays, lectures and site visits. The objective is to help students develop fluency and comfort when speaking and listening and writing in formal and educational settings. It is also to enrich students' knowledge of the vast array of Cameroonian authors and their engagement with local discourses on development.

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:

- Engage effectively with organizations and individuals on issues of intersectionality and decolonial development in the French language;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the colonial and post-colonial experiences in the context of Cameroon;
- Identify local nuances of French verbal and written expressions in Cameroon;
- Discuss, debate, and make presentations on various academic and social issues in French, with an emphasis on development and intersectionality narratives as expressed by Cameroonians.

## **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.

## **Assignments and Evaluation**

### Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria:

Timely completion of all assignments is expected. Late hand-ins will be penalized. All assignments are evaluated according to organization, analytical quality, and 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) Essay Exam (40%)

Students at the superior level will each write a three-page essay of the novel assigned to their group in class.

#### 2) Essay Exam (40%)

Students at the superior level will each write a four-page essay 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”.

#### 5) 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

Essay Exam – 40%

Essay exam – 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 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

<p><b>LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY INTERVIEWS</b></p>	<p><b>OUVERTURE SOLENNELLE DU COURS DE FRANÇAIS.</b>          *Présentation du programme de français et du système d'enseignement          *Répartition des classes et début des cours</p> <p><b>PRESENTATION</b>  <u>Points à étudier :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• La famille</li> <li>• L'Etat</li> <li>• L'université</li> <li>• La ligne de vie</li> <li>• <i>Les adjectifs qualificatifs</i></li> </ul> <p><b>EXPLOITATION DE L'ŒUVRE LITTÉRAIRE</b>  <u>« La Croix du Cœur » Charly-Gabriel Mbock</u>          Etude du paratexte</p> <p><b>Devoir :</b>          - Les pronoms relatifs, lire les pages 272-278.          Faire les exercices N° 52 et 53 Pages 278 et 279          - Œuvre littéraire : Lire les Pages 7-31</p>
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LE COMMERCE	EXPLOITATION DE L'ŒUVRE LITTÉRAIRE	EXPLOITATION DE L'ŒUVRE LITTÉRAIRE
<p><u>Points à étudier :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Le commerce international</li> <li>• L'inflation</li> <li>• La subvention des agriculteurs</li> <li>• L'activité commerciale au Cameroun</li> <li>• <i>Les connecteurs de discours</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Visite d'un marché de la place</b></p>	<p><u>« La Croix du Cœur »</u> <u>Charly-Gabriel Mbock</u></p> <p><b><u>Devoir :</u></b> -Œuvre littéraire : Lire les Pages 32- 57 -Les connecteurs de discours</p>	<p><u>« La Croix du Cœur »</u> <u>Charly-Gabriel Mbock</u></p> <p><b><u>Devoir :</u></b> Œuvre littéraire : Lire les Pages 58- 89</p>

<p><b>EXPLOITATION DE L'ŒUVRE LITTÉRAIRE</b></p> <p><u>« La Croix du Cœur»</u> Charly-Gabriel Mbock</p> <p><b><u>Devoir :</u></b> Œuvre littéraire : Lire les Pages 90 -125</p>	<p><b>VISITE A L'UNIVERSITE</b></p> <p><u>Point à étudier :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rencontre avec les étudiants du Cercle philo-psycho-Socio-Anthropo</li> <li>• Echanges avec les étudiants de l'UYI</li> <li>• Visite de l'Université</li> </ul> <p><b>Compte rendu écrit de la visite</b></p>	<p><b>EXPLOITATION DE L'ŒUVRE LITTÉRAIRE</b></p> <p><u>« La Croix du Cœur»</u> Charly-Gabriel Mbock</p> <p><b><u>Devoir :</u></b> Œuvre littéraire : Lire les Pages 126-174</p>	<p><b>EXAMEN 1</b> <b><u>Rédaction sur l'œuvre</u></b></p> <p><b>EVALUATION INDIVIDUELLE</b></p>
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### **Week 1 and 2: Novel 1**

Required Reading: Amadou Amal Djaili. (2010). *Walaande: L'Art De Partager Un Mari*. Editions Ifrikiya.

### **Week 3 - 4: Novel 2**

Required Reading: Charly- Gabrielle Mbock. (1978) *La Croix du Cœur*. Editions Clés.

### **Week 5 - 6: Novel 3**

- Required Reading:
- Lobe (2017) *Confidences*. Proximité

### **Other possible readings**

- Marzouka (2024) *Mon père ou mon destin*. Proximité
- Boto (1971) *Ville Cruelle*. Présence Africaine

### **End of Term Exam**

