

Beginning Kiswahili

SWAH1004-1504 (4 credits)

Tanzania: Zanzibar Coastal Ecology and Natural Resource Management

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 develops student proficiency and communication in Swahili language (*Kiswahili*). The course emphasizes oral comprehension and conversation skills (i.e. listening and speaking). Instructors also teach reading and writing as crucial to the reinforcement of other language skills. Through lectures and field exercises, the course helps students to grasp aspects of the culture and environment in Tanzania and eastern Africa. Students learn basic vocabulary, language structure, and language use through presentations, situational dialogues, readings, songs, and other interactive methods. Field assignments enrich the classroom experience, increase student functionality in real life language situations, and enable student adjustment to everyday life in Tanzania.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will:

- Demonstrate an intermediate understanding of Kiswahili: the ability to understand, speak, read, and write basic Kiswahili;
- Complete everyday tasks using Kiswahili: self-introductions, appropriate greetings, direction queries, market interactions, and summaries of experience;
- Show specific knowledge of life and culture in Tanzania through the lens of Kiswahili, including appropriate behavior and the use of language at partner venues, during fieldtrips, in public, and at the SIT offices;
- Master key terms in Kiswahili linked to ecology, wildlife, and natural resource management;
- Learn tools to increase their language proficiency independently; and
- Achieve increased capacity to function independently during the ISP period.

Course Participation, Assignments, and Evaluation

Attendance is mandatory, as is the timely completion of all assignments. In part, instructors evaluate students based on preparedness and participation. Students are regularly assigned reinforcement exercises, both oral and written. Students receive oral feedback from the instructors throughout the course. They are evaluated on the extent and quality of their participation as well as their performance on written and oral exercises and exams. The Academic Director assigns final grades in collaboration with the language instructors for the program.

Language Instructors

Beatrice Lyimo and Shuwena Omar coordinate and lead Kiswahili instruction. They are trained teachers with a combined 30 years of experience as skilled and effective language instructors. Language assistants - teachers in their own right - facilitate smaller group activities and discussions to ensure intensive language learning and use.

Language Session Topics

The topics of Kiswahili instruction include, but are not limited to, the following: pronunciation, greetings, honorifics, self-introductions, core vocabulary (esp., nouns and verbs), past-present-future tenses, sentence structure, affirmatives, negatives, the verb “to be”, colors, numbers, time and dates, market transactions, food, directions, family, religion (including affiliated Arabic terms in Zanzibar), imperatives, verb “to have”, commands, questions, descriptions, infixes, locatives, noun classes, conditionals, narrative tense, story-telling, games, jokes, songs, and elaborated vocabulary (including terms and concepts associated with research, ecology, wildlife, and natural resources, and daily life in Tanzania). A cultural understanding of kinship, gender, religion, arts, values, and dress is taught alongside language.

Course Readings

Students are responsible for all required readings and should be prepared to integrate their knowledge of readings and experiences into class discussions. The language teacher provides students with reading materials and assignments throughout the Kiswahili course. All students must bring an English/Kiswahili and/or Kiswahili/English dictionary to help with language learning.

Course Grading Distribution

Attendance and Participation - 20%

Mid-term Written Exam - 20%

Mid-term Oral exam - 15%

Assignments in Arusha and Zanzibar - 20%

Final Oral Exam - 25%

Course 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

Course Grading Criteria

All assigned grades take into account the students' special circumstances and challenges as foreigner. An “A” grade entails superior (not just “very good”) performance in terms of accuracy, structure, and organization for assignments. An “A” grade refers to full attendance, punctuality, attentive listening, and active engagement in all language classes,

field exercises, and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior. The frequency and quality of the students' participation is monitored and taken into account.

Student Expectations

Participation in class refers to attendance, punctuality, attentive listening, and active engagement in all Kiswahili language lectures, discussions, field trips, and other activities. Furthermore, it means polite and respectful behavior. An absent student is responsible for contacting the instructor, the tutor, and/or fellow students in preparation for the assignments s/he missed and the ones scheduled for the following classes.

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.