

Ghana

Social Transformation and Cultural Expression

Explore Ghana's rich cultural heritage and contemporary society through engagement with Ghanaian scholars, writers, and artists.

Coursework

Social Transformation and Cultural Expression Seminar

AFRS 3000 / 6 credits / 90 class hours

An interdisciplinary course conducted in English with required readings and relevant educational excursions. Students examine Ghanaian social and cultural transformations through the lens of Ghana's artistic and literary outputs. Lecturers are drawn from institutions such as the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana, Legon; the University of Winneba; the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi; the University of Cape Coast; and the University of Development Studies, Tamale.

Seminar topics typically include:

Social Transformation and Cultural Expression in Ghanaian Contexts

Queen mothers and gender roles in traditional government; the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and its impact on contemporary Ghana; geography, history, and post-colonial politics; Ghana's religious spectrum—"traditional religion," Islam, and Christianity; mutual aid societies; education in contemporary Ghana; traditional and contemporary midwifery; non-governmental organizations; rural and urban dynamics; gender issues; regional diversity in the national context.

The Visual and Performing Arts of Ghana

Ghana has rich visual and performing arts traditions. Students will engage with local artisans, performers (actors, dancers, and musicians), and craftspeople through classroom lectures, demonstrations, and workshops and will attend a variety of arts performances. Areas of study include: contemporary and traditional Ghanaian music (incorporating drumming and other instrument workshops and demonstrations); the study of post-colonial literature and oral literary traditions; kente cloth weaving and West African fashion; the history of bead-making and glass beadmaking workshops; dance demonstrations and workshops;

current Ghanaian and West African film and television production.

Educational Excursions

The program includes visits to Kumasi, Cape Coast, Tamale, Klikor, or other communities in the Volta region, Krobo-Odumase in the eastern region, as well as other parts of Ghana. These excursions are designed to challenge students to come to terms with Ghana's cultural and artistic diversity, giving a wider perspective on the country. Students spend one and one-half weeks in the rural Asante region working on language acquisition and engaged in smaller research projects designed to fine-tune research skills and methodologies.

Intensive Language Study: Twi

TWII 1000 / 4 credits / 60 class hours

Emphasis on beginning speaking and comprehension skills through classroom and field instruction. Formal instruction is augmented by language practice with host families during the homestays and village participation time. Students gain skills for independent language acquisition outside the classroom setting.

Field Study Seminar

ANTH 3500 / 2 credits / 30 class hours

A course in the concepts of learning across cultures and from field experience. Introduction to the Independent Study Project. Material includes cross-cultural adaptation and skills building; project selection and refinement; appropriate methodologies; field study ethics and the World Learning/SIT Human Subjects Review Policy; developing contacts and finding resources; developing skills in observation and interviewing; gathering, organizing, and reporting research data; maintaining a field journal.

Independent Study Project

ISPR 3000 / 4 credits / 120 class hours

Conducted in Accra, Kumasi, or in another approved location appropriate to the project.

AFRICA, SOUTH OF THE SAHARA



Credits 16

Duration Fall/Spring 15 weeks

Program Base Accra

Language Study Twi

Homestays Accra, 2 weeks; Kumasi, 2 weeks

Rural Visit/Homestay Asante region, 12 days

Other Accommodations Hostels, private homes, or small hotels

Independent Study Project 4 weeks

Prerequisites None

Sample topic areas: contemporary batik, kente, and adinkra cloth; African drumming; Afa divination; storytelling; contemporary use of traditional medicine; regional dance styles; contemporary African theater and Theatre for Development; the Ghanaian film industry; religious expression in traditional art; craft production for the tourist trade; Christianity, Islam, and traditional religion; urbanization and artistic expression, nationalism, and the arts.

Please note: This program will have credit distribution and/or other curriculum changes beginning in the fall 2012 semester.

Please visit www.sit.edu/GHR for details.