

DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOUTH AFRICA
May 14-June 5, 2009
PRELIMINARY SYLLABUS

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Course Description

The purpose of this study abroad program is to give students an opportunity to live and work in one of most beautiful cities in the world while studying the multiple concerns facing South Africa, as it strives to become one of the world's most progressive democracies. The heart of the program will be a service learning opportunity that will immerse students in the living history of South Africa by directly involving them with institutions that are wrestling with South Africa's troubled past and helping create a modern, democratic civil society. We will spend three weeks in Capetown, South Africa, and during that time students will work for 10 days with a non-governmental agency whose mission is to address issues of social injustice and their continuing impact on formerly disenfranchised South Africans, especially women, children, and workers, and also the environment. The other days will be spent visiting museums and historical sites, and hearing lectures on contemporary political and economic issues in South Africa.

Prerequisites

There are no course prerequisites or language requirements, since English is one of the major languages in South Africa. All majors are welcome, and service learning placements will be matched as closely as possible with majors and student interests.

Credit Hours

This course counts for six hours of 400-level elective credit in sociology/anthropology. Like all study abroad courses, the hours will also fulfill the Intercultural Perspective of the Liberal Studies Program. Please see Prof. McDuff to discuss course substitutions in other majors or minors.

Course Requirements

- Submit an application for the service learning experience, including a Curriculum Vitae and a 2-3 page statement of interests and objectives.
- Attend preparatory workshops (two Saturdays, prior to departure).
- Complete the medical form and provide copies of passport.
- Read all assigned material on South African history, politics, and economics.
- Research a topic related to history and/or current issues in South Africa and relevant to the service learning placement, and write a 5-7 page paper plus

- bibliography. Draft due before departure, and final version due 2 weeks after return. Students will also present findings to the group during the trip.
- Keep a daily journal during the trip.
 - Write a final 6-8 page reflection paper that integrates experiences with readings, lectures, and research – due 3 weeks after return.

Required Reading

Herbst, J. 2005. "Mbeki's South Africa." **Foreign Affairs** Vol.84: 93-105.
Ross, R. 1999. *A Concise History of South Africa*. Cambridge University Press.
Zeleza, P. (ed). 2007. Selections from *The Study of Africa: Volume 1 and 2*. African Books Collective.
Travel guide for South Africa and Capetown.

Course Schedule

Part One: Preparation

Following their application and acceptance into the program, participants will prepare for the trip by doing the assigned readings, researching a topic chosen in consultation with the instructor, and attending two Saturday orientation sessions. A draft of the research paper will be due two weeks prior to departure.

Part Two: Experience

We will meet at O'Hare airport in Chicago on Tuesday afternoon, May 12, to begin our travel to South Africa. We will arrive in Cape Town on May 14, and travel to Hillcrest Manor Guest House. Our first day will involve a walking tour of Cape Town, our second day will include a wine route tour, and on our third day we will experience Township worship and a Township tour. Monday will begin with an orientation to service learning placements, and on Tuesday students will begin fulltime work at their service learning sites. Our second weekend will include travel to Table Mountain, the Slave Lodge, Robben Island, District 6, and lectures on slavery and apartheid. Another week of work at the internship sites will be followed by exploration of the Bo-Kaap neighborhood, and the peninsula and the Cape of Good Hope. Our final week of work at service learning sites will conclude with a farewell dinner for students and service learning supervisors. We will depart for Chicago on Friday, June 5 and arrive in the US on June 6. Optional tours and activities will be available during free times scheduled each weekend.

The following are some of the main service learning sites where students will be placed:

CHRISTEL HOUSE worldwide was started by Christel DeHaan in 1996. It operates 5 learning centers in Mexico, India, SA, Venezuela and the US, and serves 2600 students, their families and communities. In SA, Christel House has offered free, high quality education from k-12 for about 600 students from extremely poor families and difficult

circumstances since 2002. The goal is to break the cycle of poverty and build dignity and self-sufficiency.

The INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION was established in the 1993 constitution. Its initial mandate was to conduct SA's first fully democratic election. The 1996 constitution made the IEC a permanent part of SA's constitutional democracy with the goal of providing impartially managed free and fair elections, and to provide comprehensive voter and democracy education. Currently the emphasis is on young people.

THANDOKHULU HIGH SCHOOL is an alternative public HS that has been established in its current location for less than 10 years – again this is a school that offers a high quality education to African students from some of Cape Town's poorest townships – currently about 1100 students. Students at Thandokhulu are highly motivated and value their opportunity to receive an education. Most travel two hours each way to school by public transport.

TREATMENT ACTION CAMPAIGN is an activist organization whose members, many of whom are themselves HIV positive, work to improve government policies related to HIV/AIDS. Their emphasis is not only on health care and medication, but violence against women and children, and the economic inequalities that limit availability of antiretroviral drugs to the poor.

MOLO SONGOLOLO is a children's rights organization that began under apartheid in the 1970s. Molo has a deep commitment to seeing real development for children in the sociopolitical arena, and to providing opportunities for children's voices to be heard. For years they published MOLO, a children's issues magazine, and now organize children's self-help groups in schools. They also campaign for children around issues like human trafficking.

Other service learning possibilities include working with the Western Cape Council of Churches' Food for all Program, and Cape Nature, a conservation justice program.

Part Three: Reflection

A revised draft of your research paper which incorporates information from the trip will be due two weeks after our return from Cape Town (June 20). Journal entries and a final reflection paper on the service learning experience will be due on June 27.

Grading

- 20% Service learning journal
- 30% Service learning reflection paper
- 40% Research paper and presentation

10% Discussion participation

Course Objectives and Outcomes

As a result of readings, lectures, museum visits, and the service learning opportunity, students will:

- develop a broader understanding of the history and cultures of South Africa.
- gain insight into the effects of colonialism and globalization in southern Africa.
- become aware of some of the challenges faced by a developing democratic society.
- learn about the importance of economic and social as well as political and civic human rights.
- learn travel skills and how to negotiate cross-cultural differences.

As an Intercultural Perspectives course, the program will provide students with:

- greater knowledge and appreciation of cultural diversity through the study of other cultures as well as their own.
- an ability to be critical and self-reflective, as they develop an understanding of how cultural influences behavior, and in turn, how cultural differences impact intercultural interactions.
- an awareness of the political and social aspects of culture and cultural diversity, and an awareness that intercultural considerations allow one to transcend (but not erase) cultural and ethnic differences.