

**The University of Western Ontario
Department of French Studies**

**French 3140B
Winter-Spring 2013**

Rwanda: Culture, Society and Reconstruction

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Course Description:

This is an interdisciplinary Experiential Learning Course on Rwanda, based in the Department of French Studies. It provides students an opportunity to learn about Rwandan society, and about themselves by serving in an international social and cultural setting. The readings for the course will deal with issues related to the history and culture of Rwanda and will offer an in-depth look at a number of contemporary social issues. Guest lecturers will be invited to speak to the class. Four weeks of active and interactive community service in Rwanda will be required for the completion of the course. Our main community partner in Rwanda is Kigali Health Institute, located in the capital city of Kigali. Other partners will be schools and orphanages such as Kwa Gisimba, Centre Marembo, and others.

Course Objectives:

- to learn about the history, culture and people of Rwanda
- to give students an opportunity to immerse themselves in an international community/society
- to offer opportunities for international internships and service learning activities in Rwanda and allow students to develop intercultural competence
- to increase students' clear understanding of the needs of global communities through effective international experiential learning
- to take part in Western's commitment to *Engaging the Future* in the areas of internationalization and the best student experience

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the course you should:

- be familiar with aspects of Rwandan history and culture
- understand the nature of the Rwandan genocide from multiple perspectives and how the country is currently dealing with the aftermath
- be aware of cultural and personal biases towards groups, places and events and have worked to overcome these or understand them in new way
- have added to your personal growth by sharing your thoughts, opinions and feelings about your experiences in insightful and supportive group reflections
- be aware of how experiential learning (and in this case international service-learning) can dramatically enhance the academic learning process

Evaluation:

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| 1. Oral Presentation: | 15% |
| 2. First Written Essay (due end of March 2011) | 15% |
| 3. Participation (in class and Rwanda) | 30% |
| 4. Final Essay (due at end of June 2011) | 40% |

Oral Presentations:

In small groups of two students will present on the weekly readings to the class and facilitate discussion. Presentations will take about 25 minutes for a group of 2. They will be based on our readings for the course. Highlight the main points of the readings providing clarification where necessary, but also adding critical view on some those main points. Prepare some discussion questions that you feel are relevant to the topic.

Written Assignments:

The first written paper is due at the end of March 2013. Students are to write a 1000-1500 word paper on a) a topic related an area of the assigned readings on Service-Learning, b) either of the documentaries or c) a topic related to Rwandan history, society and culture as long as it is approved by Prof. Boyi.

The second paper is due upon completion of the experience in Rwanda. Students are to write a 1500-2000 word paper on their experience including but not limited to: what they learned about Rwanda, its culture, history and society; how the country is dealing with the genocide, the significance of their service-learning placement etc. *Hint: look at the course objectives and expectations. Were these met? How? Has it changed your ideas, perspectives or outlook on life, other cultures or the world in general? What is the significance of these changes?

Group Reflections:

While in Rwanda students, in groups of two, are expected to engage their peers in a group reflection in order to share ideas and opinions about the experience. It is advisable that students think about and start to prepare the reflection activities prior to the trip.

Guest lecturers:

Colleagues and experts on issues relevant to our course will be invited to speak to the class. Those will include Jeff Tennant, Joanna Quinn, Stephanie Hayne, Nanda Dimitrov, and Lise Laporte

READINGS:

Week of	Topic	Assignments
Jan. 07-11	Shake Hands with the Devil (Documentary)	
Jan. 14-18	Research Project on Experiential Learning	
Jan. 21-25	Service-learning and Experiential Learning	Readings

Jan. 28- Feb 1	Research Project on Study Abroad	
Feb 4-8	Gender, Society and Culture in Rwanda	Readings and Oral Presentation
Feb. 11-15	Research Project on Risk Management	
Feb 18-22	Reading Week	
Feb 25- March 1	Origins and History of the Genocide Social Reconstruction in Uganda	Readings and Oral Presentation
March 4-8	Research Project: The Bennet Model of Cultural Integration	
March 11-15	A Thousand Hills	Readings and Oral Presentation
March 18-22	Research Project : The Deardorff theoretical Model	
March 25-29	Reconstruction: Post-Genocide	Readings and Oral Presentation
April 1-5	Pre-departure orientation	
Apr. 8-10	Varia	
BONNE CHANCE !		

Required Readings :

- Compiled copy at Western bookstore.
- Other readings will be indicated through the term.

Week of Jan. 07-11

- Dallaire, Romeo. *Shake Hands With the Devil*. Toronto : Vintage Canada, 2003. P. 510-522.
 - Conclusion in the book

*We will be watching the documentary on Romeo Dallaire : *Shake Hands With the Devil*

Week of Jan. 14-18

- Stevens, Cheryl A. *Service-Learning for Health, Physical Education and Recreation*. Illinois : Human Kinetics, 2008. P. xi-xx.
 - Introduction

- Jacoyb, Barbara et al. *Building Partnerships for Service-Learning*. San Francisco : John Wiley and Sons Inc, 2003. P. 289-313.
 - Ch. 14- Civic Renewal

Week of Jan. 21-25

- Adekunle, Julius. *Culture and Customs of Rwanda*. Connecticut : Greenwood press, 2007. P. 97-114.
 - Ch. 6: Gender Roles, Marriage and Family
- International forum on the role of leadership in gender equality and women's empowerment. *Gender and Environment*. May 17-18, 2010.
- International forum on the role of leadership in gender equality and women's empowerment. *Women's Health and Education*. May 17-18, 2010.

Week of Jan. 28-Feb. 1

- Quinn, Joanna. Social Reconstruction in Uganda: The Role of Customary Mechanisms in Transitional Justice. In *Human Rights Review*: 8: 4 Netherlands: Springer. 2007. 389-407.
- Semujanga, Josias. *Origins of Rwandan Genocide*. New York : Humanity Books, 2003. P. 211-240.
 - Chpt. 6: And the Humanitarian Watched a Genocide

Week of Feb. 4-8

- Kinzer, Stephen. *A Thousand Hills*. New Jersey : John Wiley & Sons, 2008. P. 253-280.
 - Ch. 15: Breathless with Fear

Week of Feb. 11-15

- Mamdani, Mahmood. *When Victims Become Killers : Colonialism, nativism, and the genocide in Rwanda*. New Jersey : Princeton University Press, 2001. P. 264-282.
 - Conclusion: Political Reform After Genocide
- Prunier, Gérard. *The Rwanda Crisis : History of a Genocide*. New York : Columbia University Press, 1997. P. 336-355.
 - Ch. 9: Aftermath or new beginning
 - The attitude of the international community
 - Towards a provisional conclusion

Week of Mar. 25- 29

- Carr, Rosamond, and Howard Halsey. *Land of a Thousand Hills*. New York : Plume, 2000. P. 222-235. Print.
- Ch. 32: Imbabazi

Week of Apr.1-5

- Last meeting

Testimonials and Photos from Western students

“Of everything we saw between the Belgium memorial, the New Kigali and just the beautiful scenery of green hills, the [Genocide] Memorial for me was the most eye-opening. I had a lump in my throat the entire time and I nearly lost it in the final room, where survivors from the genocide were talking about their parents that they lost and how much they missed them...While this experience was very sad, it also made me very curious as I couldn’t understand how Rwandans could extend the kind of forgiveness they had to their fellow neighbours who took away their families.” –Sheila Cassidy



FRE 3100B Class of 2010 Dinner Gala with President Kagame

“Gisimba presented an entirely different learning opportunity, and I believe I learned a lot and grew immensely as a result of spending time helping at the orphanage. The experience of assisting in the classroom allowed me to explore my ability to be patient and flexible, as the ‘baby class’ was a constantly changing and hectic environment. The experience will ultimately help me in any career I choose, as functioning in an environment with the language barriers I faced at Gisimba allowed me to develop my critical thinking skills. On a personal level, at the end of the experience I felt I was able to

make a connection with every student in the class, and I will take away many special memories of all of the children I met during my time at Gisimba. I think I made some progress in teaching some English to both the students in my class as well as my teacher, but I think that help cannot compare to the personal growth I experienced as a result of my time at the school and the orphanage.” – Melyssa Kerr

“I really enjoyed my second placement at Gisimba Orphanage. I found that once we got into a routine at the school, we were actually able to provide a helpful service. The kids were really wonderful to spend the mornings with. The language barrier was easier to manage because they were trying to learn English. I got to know some of the kids and was able to become close with many of them. By the time I left Gisimba, my class had a good understanding of the English words for insects, fruits, vegetables, water animals, directions, sizes, positions, and they could spell their names.” – Jesse Gardner



Kwa Gisimba School/Orphanage

“From the very beginning, with the warm welcomes we received till the very end and the heartfelt urges to return, the relationships I made with the people I met there taught me more than I could learn in a lifetime of school...By experiencing struggles and problems so unlike those that we face in Canada, our eyes can be opened to new ideas and alternative solutions.” – Meagan Rust



Hope Village Orphanage – Building a Water Tank

“As much as this wonderful trip was an experiential learning trip about the culture, society, and reconstruction of Rwanda, it also became a trip about forming lifelong friendships with fellow Western students, beyond the classroom. Every part of this trip was unexpected, and yet produced memories that changed the manner in which I view the world and people around me.” – Diane Tisdall

Testimonials and Photos – Class of 2011



“I approached this experience with an open-mind, ready for the best experience of my life. In that sense, my expectations were met a million times over. What I was no prepared for, however, was the profound impact that occurred when my learning moved from the classroom to the real world... I learned more about myself in those short weeks than I ever have in my life, and I received more from the children in the school and the orphanage in one day that I could ever hope to

give them in one week. Their courage, hope, and joy are an inspiration, and the impact that they made on my life and me is something that I could never repay, and I will never forge that.” — Elizabeth Dupuis



“I have struggled to express in words throughout this trip how much this experience had meant to me, and now that it is almost complete it is even more difficult. The people of Rwanda have taught me and given me more than I could ever possibly return. This country and the people I have been so blessed to spend time with will always hold a special place in my heart. A part of me will stay in Rwanda and it will keep me coming back I’m sure”. — Simran Cahal

Students with Director Nicolette at Centre Marembo

Testimonials and Photos – Class of 2012



“The opportunity to work alongside passionate teachers and remarkable students at the Gisimba Memorial Centre Nursery School has been inspiring. The Gisimba placement has revealed to us all new experiences, new perspectives and new

worlds that have been testaments to the resiliency and virtuousness of the human condition, broadened our horizons to at once penetrate and encompass intercultural differences and have fundamentally given us the extraordinary opportunity to learn

and make new friends.” – Melody Ren



The team at the annual Gorilla Naming Ceremony in North Rwanda

“Watching the students discover Kigali and the Rwandan culture over the course of the five weeks was an absolute gift. Without exception, every student put his or her heart and soul into the work. Seeing them work, grow and develop as they learned was the very definition of ‘reciprocity’ in Service-

Learning. Each student has gone above and beyond what was expected of them, and I am very proud of the entire group. They undoubtedly had an impact on the lives of the people we worked alongside of, however the impact that was made on them is something that will last a lifetime as it will with me too. On a far away land, they each and all made Western and Canada shine with respect, integrity and leadership. ” – Tara Dupuis (Assistant)

Testimonials from Partners in Rwanda

”During their time at Centre Marembo, the Marembo children and youth learnt so much from the group. It was amazing. Each and every one of the Western students gave the love to the children, they gave their time by teaching English lessons to the children and youth, they helped in making fertility necklaces, they organized group discussions participated in the different debates in our youth program. They had wonderful time exchanging views and thoughts with our youth on Canadian culture and Rwandan culture. Also, together, they edited together the Marembo Journal. We wish that their experience in Rwanda will have the same impact on their friends and family in Canada, and on their University.”

– Nicolette Nsabimana, Director, Centre Marembo Association

“For the four weeks they spent here at Les Enfants de Dieu, their main role was to teach English lessons and help with other activities such as craft, sports and recess. Their lessons were always carefully prepared and taught with passion and modesty. We were touched to see how much these young Canadians were eager to learn about the Rwandan people, our culture and history. We all learnt from the UWO students and their professor a genuine spirit of humanity and a strong will to build lasting cultural binding ties. Anytime we had a chance to meet the entire team, we sincerely felt that they were an integral part of our family, with Professor Henri Boyi as a father for all of us.”

– Rafiki Callixte, Director, Les Enfants de Dieu Centre

“On many occasions, I met Henri and his students, I visited them on the sites and saw them at work, I shared meals with them, I travelled with them on excursions, and I even took some of them to the clinic. On all these occasions, I was extremely impressed by Henri’s passion to help his students learn the values of intercultural understanding and community service in order to make a difference in the lives of Rwandan children and youth. Undoubtedly, Henri has a deep sense of care and humility which touched many people who met him here in Rwanda”

– Professor Firmard Sabimana, Academic Registrar, Kigali Health Institute