



The UNIVERSITY of VERMONT

Global Village
RESIDENTIAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

Africa House

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OVERVIEW

The Africa House and Seminar has three purposes: (1) to offer students a sense of the richness and variety of African culture, (2) to provide an introduction to different topics in African studies, and (3) to provide advice for students who would like to spend some weeks or a semester in an African University. Through its residential component, the program offers students shared experience and an opportunity for participation in the exploration of Africa's incredibly rich and diverse culture. Both the Introductory course offered in the Fall Semester, and the Seminar offered in the Spring Semester, provide a grasp in interdisciplinary fashion of the situations and problems in Africa. Regular brown-bag and discussion series, organized jointly with the African Studies Program, on topics of African relevance take place throughout the year. The program promotes interactions between participating students and Africans and Africanists in the community. Africa House and Seminar combines the traditional humanities and social science concerns of African Studies with environmental, agricultural, health and technological issues and highlights women's roles in development, politics and culture.

DESCRIPTION OF STUDENTS' NEEDS

An important aim of education is to refine the empathetic responses of students. This can be achieved through immersion in and appreciation of cultures different from their own. Such a comparative dimension as contact with another culture provides means for the students' critical re-evaluation of the assumptions and prejudices by which they live; contact with other cultures can serve to provide a window into their own souls. Students from monocultural backgrounds, as in most Western technological societies, need to acquire some degree of cultural diversity as well as an education for global awareness. The Living and Learning Center provides an environment and opportunity for such intellectual growth and the experience of a communal way of life. When properly planned and implemented in the future, the study abroad program will further enrich such an experience.

The fullest exploration and exposure of the African experience in an educational environment occurs when the academic and cultural dimensions of that experience are systematically linked. Africa House and Seminar Program brings together professors and

students of African origin and Americans under the tutelage of leading Africanists, who themselves spring from a variety of cultural and academic backgrounds. The interdisciplinary nature of the program offers a panoramic view of Africa rather than a fragmented approach to the subject.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To offer students a sense of the richness and variety of African culture.

ACTION STEPS

Africa has an elegant performance tradition of poetry, story-telling, music, dance, and theatre. A few workshops on each of these and other areas are planned. Students are also encouraged to attend African performance.

Africa has a growing indigenous film industry to which students are exposed. Students are also encouraged to expose themselves to non-African film productions that deal with African issues.

For centuries, African cuisine and culinary practices have influenced the food culture in America. Students explore the food cultures of Africa and prepare African dishes

2. To provide an introduction to different topics in African Studies.

ACTION STEPS

The Africa House Seminar I: Introduction to Africa (IS95, cross-listed with ENGS 61) and Africa House Seminar II: Modern Africa (IS197, cross-listed with ENGS 179) are offered under the auspices of International Studies and Continuing Education. These courses also count towards a Minor in African Studies. In the Fall semester, the course covers a wide range of the most important topics in African Studies. Topics include: Geography of Africa; Themes in African History; African Literature and Society; Cultures of Africa; African Art; Food and Agriculture; Environmental concerns; Women in Africa, Health; Education; African Economic Communities; Neo-colonialism. The Seminar (IS197) offered in the spring is designed for students who have taken the introductory course, or some other approved course with an African component, and wish to explore current issues in Africa. Africa House students must take the Introduction to Africa and the Modern Africa courses. Although enrollment in all the two seminar courses is also open to Continuing Education students and other students, priority will be given to students who live in the Africa House suites. The Fall course enrolls 20-25 students. Enrollment for the spring course is limited to 20. A number of visiting African scholars, who are already in the States, will be invited to participate in some spring/fall lectures and seminar discussions to expose students to up to-date developments in Africa. Regular brown-bag presentations are held by leading experts in respective fields.

3. To encourage students' initiatives in the exploration of Africa's diverse environments and cultures.

ACTION STEPS

Students play a major role in planning and making necessary arrangements for the year-long extracurricular activities of the Africa House program. Students in the Africa House program will, early in the fall semester, discuss what they would themselves wish to organize and experience as part of their living as members of both Africa House and of the L/L Global Village. Their suggestions will then be implemented as compliments to what the program directors have outlined in this proposal. Africa House Program relies on team effort, with the participation of experts on Africa, and provides valuable living and learning experience for faculty and students alike, through an overview of important topics in the study of Africa. For African and African-American students enrolled at the University of Vermont, Africa House aims to provide peer support and the opportunity to share their rich heritage with others. For other students, this program offers a chance to learn and experience the heritage of their fellow Americans and world citizens.

INTEGRATING AFRICA HOUSE PROGRAM INTO THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

The fall Africa House Seminar will be open to Global Village students who wish to attend lectures whenever they are able. This would expose more of our residents to some of the intellectual questions that African literary history and culture have brought to the fore about the past five hundred years of our shared global experiences. There are also many opportunities for staging collaborative events with other houses in the Global Village. Panel discussions on Africa, for example, could be organized with the French House, as many African countries have a Francophone identity; so with China House. Because of China's growing influence in Africa, it would be interesting to present a panel on what scholars perceive to be the direction of this influence; and how they think it will affect the balance of Western powers that have long been dominant in the control, and distribution, of African natural resources such as those connected to the mining sector. Collaborative activities are also quite possible with other L/L programs such as ALANA House; and with other Residential Learning Communities such as the Arts Initiative and the Green House. Furthermore, the Africa House program director commits to attending all Global Village program directors' meetings throughout the year.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Africa House will encourage participation in some community service projects related to Africa. In the past, Africa House has participated in various community-based activities which included (1) guest teaching on Africa in middle and high schools around the state; (2) teach-in for Vermont teachers on Somalia; (3) guest-lecturing for a Summer Institute on Africa sponsored by the Vermont Council for the Humanities. This year we will look into ways of reaching out to the African immigrants in the larger Vermont community.

TIMELINE OF PLANNED EVENTS

This year there will be a focus on presenting a sustained cultural exposure of Africa to our community. There will be monthly brown-bag lectures and discussions; monthly film series; monthly dance lessons; and monthly dinners offering a taste of food cultures from countries of students' choices. The hope is to have these events take place in September, October and November in the fall semester; and in February, March and April in the spring semester. Scheduling would be as follows: noon brown-bag lectures and discussions, every second Thursday of the month (free and open to the public); evening monthly West African dance lessons, every first Thursday of the month (open to the Global Village community (students contribute toward the \$12:00 per lesson fee); evening monthly film series, every first Tuesday of the month (some films under consideration are Xala, Hotel Rwanda, Amandla, Sarafina, Mobutu, The Gods Must Be Crazy, Neria, and Kilimanjaro); monthly dinners (students research the culinary history of selected countries, collect recipes for various dishes and prepare meals; the food culture events would be open to any Global Village programs that would enjoy collaborating with us on a our country of the month).

COURSE INFORMATION

In addition to the self-paced, one-credit course **AIS 095B, The Global Village**, the following courses are required for participation in this program:

FALL SEMESTER

Africa House Seminar I: Introduction to African Literature

(ENGS 061 / AIS 095 A) 3 hours

Mondays & Wednesdays 5:30 – 6:45 p.m.

Instructor: Isabella (Matsikidze) Jeso

SPRING SEMESTER

Africa House Seminar II: Modern Africa

(AIS 197 / ENGS 179) 3 hours

Wednesdays: 5 – 8 p.m.

Instructor: Lokangaka Losambe and Isabella (Matsikidze) Jeso



About the Global Village

This program is part of the Global Village Residential Learning Community (RLC). For UVM students interested in exploring other cultures, studying abroad, or pursuing lives and careers in an increasingly interconnected world, the Global Village may be

just the place for you! Drawing on the resources of the Living/Learning Center and its dynamic network of student- and faculty-led programs, the community of learners that make up the Global Village will be engaged in coursework, lectures, concerts, exhibits, study sessions, faculty and peer mentoring, social connections with international students, group meals, and trips that:

- Explore the many connections among language, art and culture at regional, national, and international scales.
- Share disciplinary expertise within an environment that values a holistic approach to “living and learning.”
- Encourage formal and informal contacts among students, faculty, and staff within the Global Village, the Living/Learning Center, the other Residential Learning Communities, and the university as a whole.
- Aim to be a complement to existing international and cross-cultural programs at UVM.
- “Think globally and act locally” by outreach to the international community at UVM and within the greater Burlington area.

More information about the Global Village RLC can be found at:

<http://www.uvm.edu/rlc>

AIS 095 B: The Global Village

AIS 095: The Global Village is a self-paced, one-credit course designed to help you get the most out of your experience as a citizen of the Global Village residential learning community. In addition to taking part in any courses that are required or recommended for your individual House, all new Global Village residents must enroll in AIS 095 for one credit during the fall semester (as must any returning Global Village student who has not yet satisfactorily completed the class). This course will be graded on a “Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory” basis. As this a self-paced course, there will be no weekly class meeting time. Instead, you are expected to participate in an average of one House activity or one non-House cultural/educational event per week throughout the semester. Each House will have the opportunity to craft a “community learning plan” that will involve a combination of House and non-House activities that will fulfill the requirements of one-credit course. We’ll provide you with a list of suggested events and activities, or you can identify other events/activities with a cultural theme; you choose which ones you wish to attend. Finally, you should plan to attend the Global Village community meetings, which are periodically throughout the year.

We’ll provide you with a Global Village Passport; use it to keep track of your activities and explorations. In addition to documenting participation in your

weekly events/activities, you will need to do reflective writing in the form of five short journal entries on the cultural/educational events that you participated in, along with a lengthier essay looking back on your most meaningful experience of the semester within the Global Village.

Returning Global Village students are also invited (but not required) to enroll in AIS 095 during the fall semester. Enrollment in AIS 096 for one credit during the spring semester is optional and encouraged for all students.

If you anticipate a problem with fulfilling this course expectation (such as if you will already be enrolled in 18 credits), please contact your Program/House director.

For more details about this course, visit: <http://www.uvm.edu/rlc/ais095096.pdf>

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