



Cameroon

Social Pluralism and Development

Credits 16
Program Base Yaoundé
Language Study French
Homestays Yaoundé, 5 weeks;
 Ngaoundéré, 2 weeks
Rural Visit/Homestay West province, 2 weeks

Educational Excursions Bamenda, Kribi, and Maroua

Independent Study Project 4 weeks

Prerequisites Three recent semesters of college-level French or equivalent and the ability to follow coursework in French, as assessed by SIT.

Social Pluralism and Development Seminar

AFRS 3000 / 6 credits / 90 class hours

An interdisciplinary course conducted primarily in French, with required readings, examining social, economic, and political development patterns in one of West Africa's most ethnically and geographically diverse countries. Resources utilized in the delivery of course content include the University of Dschang, the Center for Development and Research of Ngaoundéré, the University of Yaoundé, and MUFFA, a microfinance institution for women based in Yaoundé. Lectures and discussions for this course generally include the following topics:

History

This unit serves as background knowledge to understanding the political, economic, and social realities of Cameroonian society today. The unit begins by focusing on Cameroon before colonization; German, French, and British colonization; and the fight for independence. The second half of the unit focuses on Cameroon after independence and the impact that colonization has had on Cameroonian society today.

Development Theories and Approaches

This unit examines different theories and approaches to development using Cameroon as a case study. It also explores development organizations' modalities of development practice and the efficiency of international aid.

Gender

This unit scrutinizes the role and place of women and men in Cameroonian society. It examines the characteristics of the traditional woman and her role in the family and society. It also explores contemporary gender roles and the gap that exists between modern and traditional roles.

Minorities

This unit utilizes two case studies to illustrate issues of minority groups in Cameroon. The first case study interrogates the "place" of the Anglophone in Cameroon and the political, social, and cultural prejudice against Anglophones. The second case study explores the culture and traditions of the Pygmies, and where the Pygmies are in the context of development.

Art, Tradition, and Cultural Expression

This unit examines the history of the Bamilékés and traditional structures like the Chefferies and the similarities between the Chefferie system and "African" democracy. It also examines Bamiléké traditional ceremonies such as those for marriage, widowhood, burial, and initiations into manhood and womanhood and how these ceremonies mark rites of passage from one level or status to another.

Islam and Traditional Power in the Grand North

This unit examines Islam as practiced in the Grand North of Cameroon and its impact on the people. It also examines the conflicts that arise in terms of religious Koranic education versus non-religious governmental education. It explores the interaction of traditional authorities, political power, and modernity.

Educational Excursions

The program generally includes two or more visits to northern, northwestern (Anglophone), coastal, and/or southern Cameroon, including western Cameroon. These excursions give students a variety of perspectives on the country by examining its varied regions and peoples.

Rural Visit

To afford direct knowledge of rural life, participants live for two weeks in a rural setting in the West province. Village conditions are basic, frequently with no electricity or running water.

Intensive Language Study: French

FREN 2000-3000 / 4 credits / 60 class hours
 Emphasis on speaking, reading, and writing skills through classroom and field instruction. Based on in-country evaluation, including oral proficiency testing, students are placed in intensive intermediate or advanced classes, with additional language practice in homestays, lectures, and field visits. Students also receive basic oral instruction in Fulfulde while in Ngaoundéré.

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 communicating data; maintaining a field journal.

Independent Study Project

ISPR 3000 / 4 credits / 120 class hours
 Conducted in Yaoundé or in another approved location appropriate to the project in Cameroon. Sample topic areas: education in a Cameroonian village; traditional healing; bilingualism and the media; the *makossa* style of music; oral history of the Bamiléké people; a women's village cooperative; influence of oil on Cameroonian economy and society.

Homestay

Five weeks in Yaoundé, two weeks in Ngaoundéré, two weeks in a rural setting in the West province, and a homestay during the Independent Study Project period (location will vary). Other accommodations during the program include hostels, private homes, and small hotels.