

The University of Western Ontario  
Department of French Studies

French 3140B  
Winter-Spring 2015

**Rwanda: Culture, Society and Reconstruction**

**Instructor:** Prof. Henri Boyi

**Office:** Arts and Humanities Building #2R02

**Office hours:** *Monday 2 :30 pm- 4:30pm*  
*Friday 11am - 12:0 0pm*

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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 engaging 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 that are common in the African Great Lakes region. Guest lecturers (Dr. Nanda Dimitrov, Professor Joanna Quin, Professor Jeff Tennant, Anne-Marie Fisher, Stephanie Hayne, Lise Laporte, and former participants, among others) 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, possibly, 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 2014) | 15% |
| 3. Participation (in class and Rwanda)         | 30% |
| 4. Final Essay (due at end of June 2014)       | 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.

### **Attendance and Participation:**

The success of your learning experience in this course requires that you regularly attend classes and actively participate in discussions and other course activities. If you must miss classes for a valid reason, you should speak with your instructor and provide adequate (written) justification for your absence. One unjustified absence will make you loose 10% of the course mark. Unjustified lateness or absence from your placement work will not be acceptable. Respect for everyone in class and for partners will be of paramount importance **(See University's Code of conduct)**.

### **Written Assignments:**

The first written paper is due at the end of March 2013. Students are to write a 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 the professor.

The second paper is due upon completion of the experience in Rwanda. Students are to write a 2000 word paper. This work will be based on important theories from Deardorff, Bennet, and Kolb among the major ones, and on your experience including but not limited to lessons learnt the significance of your 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.

**READINGS:**

<b>Week of</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Homework</b>
05-09 Jan.	Introduction to the course Service-Learning Practice and theoretical framework	Shake Hands with the Devil (Documentary)
12-16 Jan.	Research Project on Experiential Learning	
19-23Jan.	Service-learning for Health ➤ Stevens, Cheryl A. <i>Service-Learning for Health, Physical Education and Recreation</i> . • Introduction ➤ Jacoby, Barbara et al. <i>Building Partnerships for Service-Learning</i> Ch. • 14- Civic Renewal	Readings Oral Presentations
26-30 Jan.	Research Project on Study Abroad	
02-06 Feb	Gender legislation in Rwanda	Readings and Oral Presentation
09-13 Feb.	Class meeting : Planning for the Trip	
<b>Feb 16-21</b>	<b><i>Reading Week</i></b>	
23-27 Feb	Social reconstruction /t ransitional justice ➤ Quinn, Joanna. Social Reconstruction in Uganda ➤ Semujanga, Josias. <i>Origins of Rwandan Genocide</i> • Ch. 6: And the Humanitarian Watched .....	Readings and Oral Presentation
02-06 March	Research Project: The Bennet Model of Cultural Integration	Readings

09-13 March	A Thousand Hills ➤ Kinzer, Stephen. <i>A Thousand Hills</i> . • Ch. 15: Breathless with Fear	Readings and Oral Presentation
16-20 March	Research Project : The Deardorff Theoretical Model	
23-27 March	Reconstruction: Post-Genocide ➤ Mamdani, Mahmood. <i>When Victims Become Killers</i> :  • Conclusion: Political Reform After Genocide  ➤ Pre-departure orientation	Readings and Oral Presentation
30 mars- 03 April	Research Project	
06- 10 April	<b>Class Meeting</b>	
<b>BONNE CHANCE !</b>		

### Required Readings :

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

### References

- Dallaire, Romeo. *Shake Hands With the Devil*. Toronto : Vintage Canada, 2003. P. 510-522.
- Stevens, Cheryl A. *Service-Learning for Health, Physical Education and Recreation*. Illinois : Human Kinetics, 2008. P. xi-xx.
- Jacoyb, Barbara et al. *Building Partnerships for Service-Learning*. San Francisco : John Wiley and Sons Inc, 2003. P. 289-313.
- International forum on the role of leadership in gender equality and women's empowerment. *Women's Health and Education*. May 17-18, 2010.

- Deardorff, Darla. “Intercultural Competence: A Definition, Model and Implications for Education Abroad.” In *Developing Intercultural Competence and Transformation: Theory, Research, and Application in International Education*, ed. Victor Savicki. pp. 32-52. Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- 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.
- Hatcher, J. A., Bringle, R.G., & Muthiah, R. (2004) *Designing effective reflection: What matters to service-learning?* *Michigan journal of Community Service Learning*. 38-46.
- Kolb, D.A. (1984). *Experiential learning: experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Semujanga, Josias. *Origins of Rwandan Genocide*. New York : Humanity Books, 2003. P. 211-240.
- Kinzer, Stephen. *A Thousand Hills*. New Jersey : John Wiley & Sons, 2008. P. 253-280.
- Mamdani, Mahmood. *When Victims Become Killers : Colonialism, nativism, and the genocide in Rwanda*. New Jersey : Princeton University Press, 2001. P. 264-282.
- Prunier, Gérard. *The Rwanda Crisis : History of a Genocide*. New York : Columbia University Press, 1997. P. 336-355.
- Carr, Rosamond, and Howard Halsey. *Land of a Thousand Hills*. New York : Plume, 2000. P. 222-235. Print.

### Testimonials and Photos – Class of 2010

***“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***

***“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***

Kwa Gisimba School/Orphanage



***“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***

Hope Village Orphanage – Building a Water Tank

### **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 Class of 2013



*“Through building connections with people from a different culture, I was able to explore my attitudes, grow in knowledge, and develop more intercultural skills. It was an eye-opening experience that was beyond anything I could ever have imagined. As I saw different ways of life in another part of the world, I was challenged to experience my emotions in new ways and discover parts of myself that I did not know before. Though challenging, it was the happiest, most humbling, and most fulfilling time of my life. I would not trade it for anything in this world! I cannot thank Rwanda and its people enough for giving me new life by sharing their lives. This experience has forever changed me, and I will cherish it always! I hope to be an ambassador of these lessons by emulating what I have learned from GMC and Rwanda in my life”*

-Kaitlin





The 2014 UWO Team On their way to Lake Kivu

***This experiential learning trip was the most incredible experience. I was able to witness first-hand the vitality and strength of a people who had so recently been overwhelmed with hurt and violence. Within those five short weeks in Rwanda, I encountered more inspirational men and women than I had in my entire life. Being able to work with the Rwandan people for a brighter future has truly allowed my intercultural competence to grow. This experience has eliminated any preconceived notions I had associated with Rwanda because of its past and has therefore allowed me to become a better global citizen. I have been to twenty countries and five continents in my life and have yet to experience a place so filled with beauty, strength, perseverance and kindness as Rwanda. I am counting down the days until I will return.***

**Rachel Goldstein**

## **IMPORTANT ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

### **Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness:**

<https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Please note that in all courses offered by the Department of French Studies, this same requirement will also apply to assignments worth less than 10% of the final grade. Final examinations must be written at the scheduled time unless formal alternative arrangements for a Special Examination have been approved (by the instructor, the Department and the Home Faculty Dean's Office) based on valid documented grounds.

A downloadable Student Medical Certificate can be found here:

<https://studentservices.uwo.ca> under the Medical Documentation heading.

### **Support services**

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western [http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental\\_health](http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

### **Statement on Plagiarism, Cheating and other Scholastic Offences**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence in the Academic Handbook available on the Academic Calendar website, here: <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2014/pg113.html>

### **Policy on Attendance**

"Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the

course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of Registration.” (Academic Handbook)

**Important Academic Information for Students Taking Courses in the Department of French Studies**

[http://www.uwo.ca/french/undergraduate/counselling/academic\\_information/index.html](http://www.uwo.ca/french/undergraduate/counselling/academic_information/index.html)