UN 3404-05 Cultural Immersion/Language Immersion
Pavlis Institute for Global Technological Leadership
Tuesday/Thursday 8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. May 10 – June 18, 2011
Room: 131 Fisher

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Office: 102 Walker
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Office Hours: T/Th 1:00-2:00, M 10:00-11:00 and by appointment
Pavlis Contact: phackney@mtu.edu

Course Description: Gain familiarity with the nuances and complexity of cultural diversity. Attain heightened understanding of cultural diversity through in-context language acquisition.

Course Goals:
* Gain an understanding of how culture and language work
* Gain familiarity with the culture of Ghana
* Develop language phrases in Twi
* Develop communication strategies to work productively and comfortably as a group in a new cultural environment

Required Resources:
* Other readings will be provided. See Bibliography.

Course Expectations
To get a satisfactory grade in these courses, you will be expected to:
* attend every class session
* do all required reading
* turn in all required assignments by the required dates
* participate in class discussion

The final grade is determined as follows:
In class reading response papers 15 points each
Culture discussion leader 20 points
Three reflection essays 40 points each
Final Project/presentation 40 points
Final Essay 40 points
Attendance/Participation 15 points/class
Culture Discussion Leader
Each student is responsible for leading a discussion on an assignment from Culture Smart. Students will choose a chapter from the Culture Smart! Series, Ghana: The essential guide to customs & culture and bring in questions/issues to discuss. Be prepared to summarize the group’s discussion for the class.

On-line Newspaper Presentations
For each class, students will be report on a current event from www.ghanaweb.com or www.myjoyonline.com.

No Sweetness Here and other readings as provided
We will read short stories written by Ghanaian author Ama Ata Aidoo, excerpts from Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication, Travel as a Political Act, and The World Awaits and others (see bibliography). We will also read letters and articles from students who have traveled, studied and worked in other cultures. To ensure an in-depth discussion, bring printouts of the readings to class or a laptop. For each reading that is assigned, locate a passage to share with the class that you find useful, interesting or surprising, or that sheds light on your preparations for Ghana or for your role as a leader.

Reading Responses
Responses should be typed, double-spaced and two full pages (or more) in length. Consider the following questions:
+ What did you learn about culture from the readings, class discussion and language lessons?
+ What did you learn about yourself?
+ How does what you read help you think about/prepare for your trip to Ghana?
+ How does the reading inform your thinking on your role as a leader?
You might also write about what you liked about the reading, what confused you or what you’d like to know more about.

Final Project
As a group, prepare a resource for IGTAAP (a program for international graduate students at Michigan Tech to work on communication and cultural understanding). The resource should allow students and coaches to share cultures and learn from each other.

Final Essay
Write a final reflection to pull together what you have learned about culture and language from the readings and class discussions. Please make reference to specific readings or ideas that most strongly impressed you and how you have progressed in your thinking about your trip or what you must want to keep in mind. Also, connect what you have learned to what you have learned in your other summer courses. You could conclude with how this knowledge will inform your stay and work in Ghana.

Culture/Language Journal
Prepare a notebook to keep track of what you want to remember from class discussions and what you are learning in Ghana. Use your journal as a place to take notes that facilitate communication among group members when challenges arise.

ADA Notice: MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Dean of Students, 487-2212. For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact our advisor, department chair, or the Affirmative Action Office at 487-3310.
UN 3404-3405 Syllabus

Week Date Discussion

1 Tues. 5/10 Introduction/Course Description and Syllabus
“Culture is Ordinary” by Raymond Williams
General Advice to Students from Sarah Wheeler
Language: greetings, days of the week, names, alphabet

Assignment:
Read “Intercultural Communication: A Current Perspective”
Read Culture Smart: Ghana: Land and People pages 1-21
Read “Everything Counts” in No Sweetness Here pages 1-7

Thurs. 5/12 “Intercultural Communication: A Current Perspective”
25 Tips for Peace Corps Volunteers
Guest: Durga Pokharel -- Nepal
Language: numbers, dates, time, age

Assignment:
Read How to Travel as a Political Act, Introduction and pages 2-23
Read: Chapter 1: Ghana: Land and People pages 21-39
Write a reading response

2 Tues. 5/17 History of Ghana/How to Travel as a Political Act
Guest: Tery Wattanaprayoon -- Thailand
Language: introducing yourself, asking questions

Assignment: Read “Tripping Through Thailand”
Read Culture Smart: Ghana: Values and Attitudes pages 40-57
Read “For Whom Things Did Not Change” in No Sweetness Here

Thurs. 5/19 Ghana: Values and Attitudes
Guest: Hwi Yong Lee -- Korea
Language: expressing actions/verbs/pronouns
Negatives

Assignment: Read “Culture: A Perceptual Approach”
Read Chapter 3: Ghana: Customs and Traditions pages 58-71
Read “Two Sisters” in No Sweetness Here
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<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Tues. 5/24</td>
<td>Ghana: Customs and Traditions</td>
<td>Language: buying, the market, bartering.descriptions</td>
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<td>Assignment: Read “My First Week in Ghana” by Sarah Wheeler</td>
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<td>Read: <em>Culture Smart!</em> Chapter 4: Ghana: Making Friends pages 72-89</td>
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<td>Read “In the Cutting of a Drink” in <em>No Sweetness Here</em></td>
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<td>Thurs. 5/26</td>
<td>Ghana: Making Friends</td>
<td>Language: possessions/prepositions (location)</td>
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<td>Assignment: Read “Time Talks with an Accent” in <em>A Geography of Time</em></td>
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<td>Read <em>Culture Smart!</em> Chapter 5: Ghana: Private and Family Life pages 90-99</td>
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<td>Write a reading response</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Tues. 5/31</td>
<td>Ghana: Private and Family Life</td>
<td>Language: family relationships/homes</td>
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<td>Guest:</td>
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<td>Assignment: Read “Update from Ghana” by Sarah Wheeler</td>
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<td>Read <em>Culture Smart!</em> Chapter 6: Ghana: Time Out pages 100-119</td>
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<td>Read “Other Versions” in <em>No Sweetness Here</em></td>
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<td>Thurs. 6/2</td>
<td>Ghana: Time Out</td>
<td>Language: Food/Dinner Invitations/Restaurants</td>
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<td>Assignment: Read “Improvisations in a Persian Garden” in <em>Peripheral Visions</em></td>
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<td>Read “Something to Talk About on the Way to the Funeral” in <em>No Sweetness Here</em></td>
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<td>Read <em>Culture Smart!</em> Chapter 7: Ghana: Travel pages 120-133</td>
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<td>Tues. 6/7</td>
<td>Ghana: Travel</td>
<td>Language Lesson: transportation, geography, weather</td>
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<td>Assignment: Read “All the Way to Timbuktu ... and back!!” by Sarah Wheeler</td>
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<td>Read Chapter 7: Ghana: Health and Safety pages 133-143</td>
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<td>Read “Sikkimese Lessons”</td>
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| 5    | Thurs. 6/9 | Ghana: Health and Safety  
Language: Expressing health issues and safety concerns |
|      | Assignment:  
Read “Transition Shock: Putting Culture in Perspective”  
Read “No Sweetness Here” in *No Sweetness Here*  
Read *Culture Smart!* Chapter 9: Ghana: Communicating pages 156-163  
Write a reading response |
| 6    | Tues. 6/14 | “Transition Shock: Putting Culture in Perspective  
Language: talking about projects |
|      | Assignment:  
Finish Final Project  
Write Final Essay  
Read “Homecoming” from *Travel as a Political Act* pages 196-205  
Read “Why Travel” from *The World Awaits* pages 1-3 and 7-9  
Read *Culture Smart!* Ghana: Conclusion pages 163-164 |
|      | Thurs. 6/16 | Presenting Final Projects, Share Final Essay  
Language: Getting ready to leave/saying good-bye  
Course Evaluation and Wrap up |
“Until you are at home somewhere, you cannot be at home everywhere.” (Bateson)

“Culture hides much more than it reveals and strangely enough, what it hides, it hides most effectively from its own participants.” (Hall 59)

“Awareness of our own culture needs to be complemented by a nonjudgmental stance in which we can easily separate what we see from our interpretation and evaluation of that event.” (Bennet 220)

Resources on Ghana:
Aidoo, Anna Ata. No Sweetness Here and Other Stories. 1995
Ghana: The Bradt Travel Guide. 2004
Kuado John and Yao Chachah. Ghana, Understanding the People and Their Culture. 1999
Gocking, Roger S. The History of Ghana. 2005
Lonely Planet Healthy Travel. 2000
Lonely Planet West Africa. 2006
The Rouge Guide to West Africa. 2003
Kropp-Dakuby. Languages of Ghana. 1988
Wheeler, Sarah. Emails from Ghana and Advice to the Class. Summer, 2008

Bibliography