CIEE Cape Town, South Africa

Course title: Survival isiXhosa
Course code: NONCR XHSA CTSA
Programs offering course: Summer Community Development and Social Justice: Theory and Practice, Cape Town Open Campus Block
Language of instruction: Xhosa
U.S. semester credits: 0.00
Contact hours: 15.00
Term: Spring Block I 2021

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to explore South Africa through isiXhosa language. The course equips students with basic language skills that are usually needed for elementary conversations. This includes greeting practices, how to introduce one’s self and background, how to ask questions and how to give directions. While learning the most important grammatical features of the language and gaining a basic lexicon of approximately 300 isiXhosa words, the course introduces students to a major socio-cultural theme each week. Students thus walk away from the course not only with language skills, but also awareness and appreciation for Xhosa practices around food, hospitality, music, and popular culture.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Master most of the pronunciation rules in isiXhosa, including at least three different click-sounds.
- Comprehend and express themselves in the context of elementary conversation.
- Learn the basic features of isiXhosa grammar and gain a vocabulary of approximately 300 words.
- Become familiar with some aspects about Xhosa culture and history.

Course Prerequisites

This course is open to those students who have no prior knowledge of isiXhosa as well as those who have limited knowledge of the language.

Methods of Instruction

Each week, this course explores a particular theme through which we can practice language input and output. A mini-lecture will contextualize the theme, but the bulk of each session will revolve around oral language activities and plenty of practicing. There will be an emphasis on pronunciation, speaking and listening, but each session will also expose students to short and simple isiXhosa texts, and eventually students will be challenged to write a short passage.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Oral Pronunciation Exam 10%
2. Vocabulary Quiz 20%
3. Review of Music Video or Advertisement 25%
4. Final Presentation 25%
5. Participation 20%
TOTAL 100%

Course Requirements

Oral Pronunciation Exam

Each student will be pulled out of class for a five minute 'interview' in which the instructor assesses students' ability to produce the major sounds of the isiXhosa alphabet as well as the student's ability to correctly hear the phonics that are unique to isiXhosa.
Vocabulary Quiz

This quiz takes place during the last 20 minutes of class time. Each student will be required to access Canvas via a laptop.

Review of Music Video or Advertisement

For this assignment, each student chooses one of the provided videos. In an 800-word paper, students are expected to

1. Write about the song/poem overall, especially segments that they were able to understand with their limited isiXhosa knowledge
2. Reflect on the content of the song/poem and analyze one major idea that emerges
3. Elaborate on how this video could/should be interpreted by non-Xhosa speaking people (intercultural communication)

Final Presentation

For this presentation each student is required to solicit the help of a partner. Each student chooses one of the themes that were covered in the course and creates a role-play script for two people. With a partner, prepare to perform this dialog (off script!) during our last session.

Participation

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Attendance

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent.

Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to any required field placement. Students may not miss placement/work hours at an internship or service learning site unless approved in advance by the Academic Director and placement supervisor. All students must complete all of the requisite 100 minimum work hours on site at the internship or service learning placement to be eligible for academic credit.

Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Absences for classes will lead to the following penalties:
N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, and local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

Class: 1.1 Ububele – Hospitality

During our introductory session we will get to know each other, where we are from and what it feels like to be welcome in a place other than one's home. Students will be encouraged to talk about cultures of hospitality in the United States, and a mini-lecture will expose students to what hospitality (ubulele) looks like, sounds like, feels like in a Xhosa home.

As we cover these initial aspects about Cape Town's diverse socio-linguistic groups, students will gain basic vocabulary for engaging with a host and for introducing themselves. They will learn basic phrases in isiXhosa for social interaction (greeting, introduction, welcome, etc.). This session also trains students to pronounce clicks and other sounds not familiar to most English.

Required Viewing:

Language learning: Bridge to a better world: Craig Charnock at TEDxCapeTownED, https://youtu.be/xn_Z6UkwNiM

Telkom “Molo Mhlobo Wam” TV advert

Week 2

Class: 2.1 Ubuntu – “Umuntu ngumntu ngabantu”

After a review and consolidation of previously introduced vocabulary, students will learn some basic phrases for social interaction (how to enquire after someone's health, residing place and address, etc.). Students will gain some understanding of the cultural practice and elements of ubuntu through a mini-lecture on how to ask about someone’s clan name. The concept of ubuntu informs philosophy, theoretical frameworks and indeed entire political approaches to communal living and/or social organization. It is a concept that encapsulates the tremendous importance of interdependence, relationships within a community, and the value of holding each other accountable for upholding norms of humanity.

Required Reading

What Archbishop Tutu’s Ubuntu credo teaches the world about justice and harmony


Barbara Nussbaum (2003), Ubuntu: Reflections of a South African on Our Common Humanity:
Week 3
Class: 3.1 Ukutya – Food

This session focuses on Xhosa food, customs that go along with serving food, how to order food in a restaurant, and the various ways that food symbolizes more than just nutrition within Xhosa communities. Students will be introduced to new vocabulary to describe household items and various food ingredients. There will be an opportunity to taste some traditional foods in class.

Required Reading

Xhosa food recipes:
http://capefusiontours.com/recipes-from-mamma-lindys-african-kitchen/
http://www.moyo.co.za/celebrating-african-food/

Required Viewing:
Understanding the value of shared meals among Africans – Power FM 987 Podcast
Dombolo – Steam Bread https://youtu.be/8KJlwPu5kIg
How to make samp & beans (Umngqusho) https://youtu.be/PucIPJypRZg
How to make Amagwinya (Vetkoek) https://youtu.be/uiOgDoBGZvc

Due: Vocabulary Quiz

Week 4
Class: 4.1 Umculo – Music

This session will give students a perspective on the wide variety of musical traditions in Xhosa history and contemporary popular culture. A mini-lecture will provide historical background to Kwaito music and imibongo. We will study Miriam Makeba's famous "click song" as a case study of a Xhosa song that gained international acclaim. Students will learn new vocabulary related to body parts and how these are used in dance and music.

Required Viewing:

The click song – Miriam Makeba
Click song - Qongqothwane by Beyond Zulu https://youtu.be/GzIyEMzEhdA
FNB PRAISE SINGER: https://youtu.be/KnzvwH-mPNA
Quite a White Ou - Ndingumlungu - Original Version https://youtu.be/vOOeQikJZ8w
Nzesileni Group (Mkonjona, Xhosa)
Amasiko Nezithethe – Tradition and Custom

In our final session, we will conclude by discussing the semantic difference between Amasiko (traditions) and izithethe (customs). A mini-lecture will expose students to some examples of each. The focus of this session will center around Lobola and the dynamics of building relations in a Xhosa cultural context. The quiz will be scheduled during this class.

Required Viewing:

King Price “Lobola Kettle vs Cattle” TV advert
KFC – “Mtshanam Cattle” TV Advert
Fathering out of Wedlock_Damages and other things – Podcast Power FM 987
Lobola calculator App by Techno boffin Robert Matsaneng
https://youtu.be/yE4nsVcyz84
Lobola Calculator: http://lobola.net/

Course Materials

Readings

Online Resources
http://capefusiontours.com/recipes-from-mamma-lindys-african-kitchen/
http://www.moyo.co.za/celebrating-african-food/
http://lobola.net/