

PSC282T-F: Community-Based Development Projects - Travel Course to Ghana
4 Credits / Spring 2019 / TR 12:00-1:50pm / Jaeb 100
&
IST200: Special Topics in International Studies
1 Credit / Summer I 2019

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Course Website: <http://ut.blackboard.com>

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday (10am-noon & 2-2:30pm). You can book ONE appointment per semester from Blackboard. Otherwise office hours are first come, first served.

Objective:

When students think of “development” a number of images typically run through their minds. Maybe it is a Peace Corps volunteer in rural Cameroon digging a well, a Médecins Sans Frontières doctor fixing a broken bone in Port-au-Prince, or a USAID staffer working on a loan to build a new road to factories in Bangladesh. Often times absent from these initial images are questions concerning the content and effectiveness of development. Who defines the problem? Who comes up with the solution? How do we decide if our outcome is a successful one? We will not only ask these questions but pour through the various answers examining each for its theoretical and practical value.

For the first half of the classroom portion of this course we explore the development situation in Africa, Ghana, and the Nabdum area in which we will spend a week. We also consider community-based development projects around the world with an eye for their strengths, weaknesses, and potential lessons for students interested in participating in their own self-designed development project. For the second half of the semester we develop, alongside residents of Nabdum constituency in Ghana, our own development projects. These projects should be informed by our discussions over the first several weeks of the course but also take into account the particular conditions and interests of the people who you actually plan on helping.

For most, our trip to Ghana is the highlight of the course. As a class we travel around Ghana for two weeks in May to see with our own eyes what the “third world” looks like and how people handle their modest material situations. For one week we are in a small village near the Ghana/Burkina Faso border conducting student designed development projects. Here you not only see poverty with your own eyes but get an idea of how difficult a situation it can be to alleviate and in the process hopefully establish life-long cross-cultural connections and friendships.

Student Learning Outcomes:

This course is designed such that students who have immersed themselves in the material, attended lectures regularly, done the readings, completed all assignments diligently, studied for quizzes and exams, and participated fully in the project design and implementation should be able to do the following by the end of the course:

- The student will be able to describe major debates in the field of development.
- The student will be able to highlight some of the significant obstacles to development.
- The student will be able to describe in detail his/her development project and justify it in terms of desirability, practicality, and sustainability.
- The student will be able to do a rudimentary evaluation of a development project.

Requirements (PSC282T):

Though it may be altered slightly and/or clarified by professorial edict either in class or via email, consider this syllabus a contract between you and your professor that lists both what you can expect from class and what is expected of you. Check it regularly and bring it to class with your notebook. During the first half of the semester you are expected to read EVERYTHING assigned on the syllabus, which averages around 50 pages a week. You are also expected to attend EVERY lecture. Visiting me regularly during office hours to discuss issues raised in class, your project presentation, and project notebooks will not hurt either.

During the second half of the spring semester and our time in Ghana over the summer you will be working on a community-based development project of your design. These projects require a great deal of effort and motivation on your part, far more than a typical end of the semester project. If you put minimal thought and work into the project not only will your grade suffer but your time in Nabdam will likely lead to superficial and unsustainable improvements in the lives of residents in the area. You WILL be disappointed that you put so little effort into such a worthwhile project. If, on the other hand, you put in not only “sufficient” amounts of time and thought but go above and beyond you will likely be rewarded with a great life experience in Nabdam and, if you are lucky, bring about a positive change in someone’s life on the way to a good grade in the course.

You will be evaluated in this class based on your performance in 6 areas. These areas, along with their relative weights, are as follows:

Exam (35%) – Given out in-class mid-semester. The exam will cover all material from the assigned readings, lectures, and in-class presentations up to that point. If you miss a class over this period, it is your responsibility to get notes from one of your colleagues. The exam will include multiple-choice, matching, and essay questions. There will be NO review sheet. Unexcused late exams will be penalized at a rate of 10 points per day. If you miss an exam it is YOUR responsibility to contact me as soon as possible to schedule a make-up.

Project Presentation (20%) – We read about several community-based development projects. Each of these projects has a unique history, geographical context, and set of strengths and weaknesses. Near the beginning of the course we will have a drawing at the beginning of class to figure out which development project you will present to the class. The date for these presentations is the same day we do the readings on your project. On the dates of your presentations you will be given 25 minutes to educate the class on the development project for which you are responsible. We want to know the history of your

project, its successes and failures, and how it can inform our projects in Nabdam (in terms of desirability, practicality, and sustainability). Though the format of these presentations is largely up to you, expectations for the level of your research are similar to a medium-length seminar paper so plan on doing more than simply reading the text assigned to everyone. Your presentations will be followed by a question and discussion period of approximately 10 minutes that you will lead. See if you can arrange an in-class phone interview with someone who works for the organization you are reviewing or one that does similar work. Though this is not a requirement it might help you answer some of the more difficult questions and give us greater access to the organization's inner workings. An unexcused absence on the date of your presentation will result in ZERO POINTS WITHOUT EXCEPTION. You should bring enough copies of a one page summary of your presentation to class to distribute to your colleagues to use as an exam review.

Lund Quizzes (10%) – You are responsible for reading Lund's *Local Politics and the Dynamics of Property* in Africa in its entirety. We will use this text to explore the Upper East region of Ghana. On the days indicated below, you will receive a short quiz during the first five minutes of class covering chapters 1-4 and 5-9 respectively. The quizzes are a basic reading check and will ask questions anyone who has read the material closely will have a very high likelihood of answering correctly. Unexcused late quizzes must be made up within a week and will only receive half of the available points.

Chabal and Daloz Book Review (10%) – Everyone in class will read Chabal and Daloz's *Africa Works* to reinforce the political context in which your personal development projects will take place. You are to write an academic book review of the text of NO MORE than 3 pages in length (1 inch margins, TNR 12 point font, single-spaced). You should identify the work's research question, thesis, and succinctly outline how the author's argument progresses from research question to thesis. You should also include a discussion of how the book fits into the literature on community-based development. Your thoughtful and appropriate personal evaluation of the text should work its way into your review. Book reviews are due at the beginning of the class when we cover the text. Unexcused late papers will be penalized 10 points per day.

Development Project Notebook Draft (15%) – Over the last half of the spring semester, during your time in Ghana, and upon your return home you will produce a development project notebook documenting your particular community-based development project. This notebook, which is not due in final form until IST200, should have an (I) executive summary, (II) literature review, (III) timeline and (IV) budget with justifications, (V) project diary with narrative and photos, (VI) proposed evaluation rubric, and (VII) conclusion which documents the lessons learned from the project in essay form. There is no page limit but you should keep in mind that this assignment counts for a substantial portion of your final grade and will be evaluated as such. This means I am looking for thoroughness and quality writing and presentation. Drafts of sections II, III, and IV are due about a month before we set off for Ghana. These drafts will be graded on a pass (1 point)/fail (0 point) basis. Put in the effort to give me something that markedly advances your final project and demonstrates competencies obtained in class and you will not only collect all the points available but get quality feedback on your final project for IST200. Do less

than this and you will forfeit both points and feedback. After that date a late penalty of 1% per day will be applied.

Participation (10%) – This is the type of course you need to be actively engaged in to reap the full benefit. What this means in practical terms is showing up and contributing to class discussions on projects and fully engaging with your group’s community-based development project design. These points are not automatic; you will really need to work for them. You have three classes you may miss throughout the semester without penalty. One absence exceeding these three will cost you a third of your participation grade, two absences exceeding these three will cost you two-thirds of your participation grade, and three absences exceeding these three will cost you your entire participation grade.

Requirements (IST200):

This travel course is not a vacation. Though many students find the experience enjoyable, to get the most out of the trip to Ghana you have to be an active learner and process the things we do each day critically. Though in this portion of the course there are not daily readings and formal lectures, it requires a significant amount of serious thought and reflection both on your own and as part of the larger group.

You will be evaluated in this class based on your performance in 2 areas. These areas, along with their relative weights, are as follows:

Development Project Notebook (80%) – Over the last half of the spring semester, during your time in Ghana, and upon your return home you will produce a development project notebook documenting your particular community-based development project. This notebook should have an (I) executive summary, (II) literature review, (III) timeline and (IV) budget with justifications, (V) project diary with narrative and photos, (VI) proposed evaluation rubric, and (VII) conclusion which documents the lessons learned from the project in essay form. A detailed description of the content and expectations of each of these sections is available to you on the course Blackboard site in the form of a rubric. We will also go over each of these sections in some detail in class. There is no page limit but you should keep in mind that this assignment counts for four-fifths of your grade and will be evaluated as such. This means I am looking for thoroughness and quality writing and presentation. Completed Development Project Notebooks are due via Blackboard/Turnitin by midnight on Monday 10 June. After that time unexcused late notebooks will be penalized at a rate of 5 points per day.

Participation (20%) – Since it will be a poor reflection not only on you but the class and its future renditions, failure to participate fully in your development project in Ghana will draw a penalty. You are expected to both show up to the experiences designed for you in Ghana and to be an active learner. If you do so you will collect all the available participation points and if you do not you will collect some or none. In severe cases where students do not participate in the project of their own design and/or become so difficult that their participation is unhelpful and/or unsafe for themselves, their group mates, and/or the community, said student may be penalized not only the 20 percent participation points but fail the course as well.

Important Due Dates:

Lund Quizzes	Thursday 31 January and Tuesday 5 February
Project Presentations	Weeks 4 - 5
Chabal and Daloz Review	Tuesday 26 February
Exam	Thursday 28 February
Drafts (Parts II, III, and IV)	Friday 12 April
Project Notebook	Monday 10 June

Grading:

The course letter grade will be determined according to the following scale:

<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Quality Points</i>	<i>Numeric Scale*</i>
A	4.0	93-100
AB	3.5	88-92
B	3.0	83-87
BC	2.5	78-82
C	2.0	73-77
CD	1.5	68-72
D	1.0	60-67
F	0.0	Below 60

*I will round up at the .5 and NOT before. For example, if you earn an 87.49 you will receive a B for the class. If you earn an 87.5 you will receive an AB. The only exception to this rule concerns the line between a D and an F. If you make below 60 points, even if it is by the smallest fraction of a point, I will NOT round up.

Required Texts:

Chabal, Patrick and Jean-Pascal **Daloz**. 1999. *Africa Works*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana.

Lund, Christian. 2008. *Local Politics and the Dynamics of Property in Africa*. New York, NY: Cambridge.

Moss, Todd J. 2018. *African Development*, 3rd ed. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

(☞) Article or chapter available through UT Blackboard.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The course schedule is subject to change at the professor's sole discretion. Any changes will be announced in class, via email, and/or via Blackboard.

Week 1 (January 22 – 25)

<i>Tuesday</i>	Introduction <u>Readings:</u> Syllabus and ☞ Miles, William F.S. 2009. "Bulls, Goats, and Pedagogy: Engaging Students in Overseas Development Aid." <i>PS, Political Science and Politics</i> 42 (1): 181-187.
<i>Thursday</i>	The African Context <u>Readings:</u> <i>Moss</i> Chs 1-5

Week 2 (January 28 – February 1)

Tuesday Core Development Questions on the Continent
Readings: *Moss* Chs 6-11

Thursday Ghana's Developmental Situation
Readings: *Lund* Chs 1-4
Assignment: Lund Quiz 1

Week 3 (February 4 – 8)

Tuesday An Introduction to Ghana's Upper East Region
Readings: *Lund* Chs 5-9
Assignment: Lund Quiz 2

Thursday Understanding Your Project Notebooks and Community-Based Development Projects I (Past UT Ghana Projects)

Week 4 (February 11 - 15)

Tuesday Community-Based Development Projects I (SHE Project, CGIAR International Potato Center, SAVAMA-DCI)
Readings: ♪ **SHE Project** [Anderson, Kurt. 2010. "Sanitary Pads For the People." Studio360, 15 October.]; ♪ **CGIAR International Potato Center** [Kinver, Mark. 2016. "Sweet potato Vitamin A research wins World Food Prize." *BBC News*, 13 October.]; ♪ **SAVAMA-DCI** [Walt, Vivienne. 2009. "Lost Treasures of Timbuktu." *Time*, 30 July.].

Thursday Class Cancelled – HNMUN

Week 5 (February 18 – 22)

Tuesday Community-Based Development Projects II (Trashy Bags, Theatre of the Oppressed, Twende)
Readings: ♪ **Trashy Bags** [Tutton, Mark. 2010. "Ghana bags a handy new way to tackle plastic waste." *CNN*, 1 June.]; ♪ **Theatre of the Oppressed** [Robinson, Andrew. 2016. "Augusto Boal: Theatre of the Oppressed." *Ceasefire Magazine*, 29 March.]; and ♪ **Twende** [Crellin, Olivia. 2018. "The African invention school inspired by bike parts." *BBC News*, 24 July.].

Thursday Community-Based Development Projects III (Heifer International, Spark MicroGrants, and No Lean Season)
Readings: ♪ **Heifer International** [Kristof, Nicholas. 2008. "The Luckiest Girl." *New York Times*, 3 July.]; ♪ **Spark MicroGrants** [Adams, Susan. 2011. "Saving the World on a Shoestring: Spark MicroGrants." *Forbes*, 11 July.]; and ♪ **No Lean Season** [Aizenman, Nurith. 2017. "Want to Help Someone in a Poor Village? Give Them a Bus Ticket Out." *NPR: Goats and Soda*, 28 December.].

Week 6 (February 25 – March 1)

Tuesday Africa Works, but not how you expect it to work (We'll spend the first half of class discussing the book and the second half speaking with alumni of the program)
Readings: *Chabal* and *Daloz*

Thursday **EXAM**

Week 7 (March 4 – 8)

- Tuesday* Brainstorming Community-Based Development Project Ideas I
Assignment: Come to class with at least a rough written idea of the topic of your project.
- Thursday* Informal Project Discussions

***** SPRING BREAK (March 11 – 15) *****

Week 8 (March 18 – 22)

- Tuesday* Brainstorming Community-Based Development Project Ideas II
Assignment: Come to class with a more polished idea of the topic of your project and the group you want to work with.
- Thursday* Meeting with your Nabdam colleagues via Skype
Assignment: Come to class with a list of questions you would like to ask someone in Nabdam about your project.

Week 9 (March 25 – 29)

- Tuesday* Individual/Group Meetings to Discuss Project
- Thursday* Class Meeting to Compare Notes and Set Timelines

Week 10 (April 1 – 5)

- Monday* **Last Day to Withdraw from 14 Week Courses**
- Tuesday* Project Planning Meeting
- Thursday* Project Planning Meeting

Week 11 (April 8 – 12)

- Tuesday* Project Planning Meeting
- Thursday* Project Planning Meeting
- Friday* **Drafts of Development Project Notebook sections II, III, and IV due.**

Week 12 (April 15 - 19)

- Tuesday* Project Planning Meeting
- Thursday* Project Planning Meeting

Week 13 (April 22 – 26)

- Tuesday* Present Project to the Class
Assignment: Come to class with a draft of your literature review, timeline, and budget.
- Thursday* Final Pre-Departure Meeting

Week 14 (April 29 – May 3)

Finish up any last minute preparations you need for the trip or your project.

***** DEVELOPMENT PROJECT NOTEBOOK due (10 June) *****

Tentative Schedule in Ghana*

(Ghana Contact #: +233264445719)

Tampa

May 12 – Depart Tampa for Accra

Accra

May 13 – Arrive in Ghana

May 14 – Tour of Accra

Kumasi

May 15 – Travel to Kumasi (Visit Market)

Bolgatanga

May 16 – Travel to Bolgatanga

May 17 – Introduction to the villages of Nabdam and Service Project day 1

May 18 – Service Project day 2

May 19 – Service Project day 3

May 20 – Service Project day 4

May 21 – Service Project day 5

May 22 – Service Project day 6 and send-off from residents of Nabdam

Tamale

May 23 – Travel to Mole National Park

May 24 – Mole National Park

Accra

May 25 – Travel to Accra

May 26 – Leave for the US

Tampa

May 27 – Arrive in US



*This itinerary may be altered slightly based on cost and availability. We reserve the right to adjust dates and locations.

General Classroom Information:

These are a few things every student should know.

Emergency Conditions - In case of any adverse condition or situation which could interrupt the schedule of classes, each student is asked to access www.ut.edu for information about the status of the campus and class meetings. In addition, please refer to Blackboard for announcements and other important information. You are responsible for accessing this information.

Special Needs - If there is a student who requires accommodations because of any disability, please go to the Academic Success Center in North Walker Hall for information regarding registering as a student with a disability. You may also call (813) 257-5757 or email disability.services@ut.edu. Please feel free to discuss this issue with me, in private, if you need more information.

Classroom Disruption Policy – Every student has the right to a comfortable learning environment where the open and honest exchange of ideas may freely occur. Each student is expected to do his or her part to ensure that the classroom (and anywhere else the class may meet) remains conducive to learning. This includes respectful and courteous treatment of all in the classroom. According to the terms of the University of Tampa Disruption Policy, the professor will take immediate action when inappropriate behavior occurs.

Audio and Video Recording – There is a boatload of research suggesting students learn more during lectures when they take notes the old fashioned way with paper and a pen or pencil. Even if you do not buy this evidence or consider yourself an outlier, electronic devices prove distracting to your neighbors and may have a stifling impact on conversation if your peers suspect they are being recorded on such a device. Unless you are given permission by the instructor in writing prior, you may NOT record video or audio of lectures or discussions. Violating this policy will result in your removal from class.

Mental Health Counseling – College can be a stressful time in a young person's life. The American Psychiatric Association published a recent study of college students observed over the course of a single academic year. Over 60% of students reported feeling things were hopeless one or more times, almost 40% of the men and 50% of the women reported feeling so depressed that they had difficulty functioning one or more times, and 10% of the students reported seriously considering attempting suicide at least one time. If at some point during your time at UT you begin to feel depressed or out of control for any reason you should realize that you are not alone and there is help available to you. Your professors are happy to counsel you on the problems you are having coping with academic life, but there are dedicated mental health counselors available to you through UT's Health and Counseling Center located at 111 North Brevard Ave. (behind Austin Hall) who you may feel more comfortable disclosing certain types of non-academic problems to. The time to deal with mental health issues is when they arise and not after your grade has deteriorated. Their email is healthcenter@ut.edu and their phone numbers are 813-253-6250 (during business hours) and 813-257-7777 (outside of business hours for emergencies).

Title IX Statement - Sexual violence includes nonconsensual sexual contact and nonconsensual sexual intercourse (which is any type of sexual contact without your explicit consent, including rape), dating violence, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, and stalking. You may reach out for confidential help or report an incident for investigation. If you choose

to write or speak about an incident of sexual violence and disclose that this violence occurred while you were a UT student, the instructor is obligated to report the incident to the Title IX Deputy Coordinator for Students. The purpose of this report is to provide a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for all students. The Deputy Coordinator or his or her designee will contact you to let you know about the resources, accommodations, and support services at UT and possibilities for holding the perpetrator accountable. If you do not want the Title IX Coordinator notified, instead of disclosing this information to your instructor, you can speak confidentially with the following individuals: - The Victim's Advocacy Hotline 813.257.3900; Dickey Health & Wellness Center (wellness@ut.edu) 813.257.1877; Health and Counseling Center (healthcenter@ut.edu) 813.253.6250. They can connect you with support services and discuss options for holding the perpetrator accountable.

Academic Assistance – The Academic Success Center (academicsuccess@ut.edu) in North Walker Hall offers free peer tutoring, credited academic skills courses, national testing services, and services for students with disabilities. The Saunders Writing Center (323 Plant Hall, x6244) aids students with their writing projects. The Public Speaking Center (KBB 200, speakingcenter@ut.edu) offers students help with presentations. You pay for these services through your tuition and there is no shame in using them if you need help with your course work. I am more than happy to discuss any academic issues you might have during office hours but if I think one of these services can help you be more successful I will not hesitate to recommend it.

Academic Integrity – Cheating, plagiarism, copying and any other behavior that is contrary to University standards of behavior will not be tolerated. Students caught violating any aspect of the University of Tampa's Academic Integrity Policy will be penalized in all cases. Penalty ranges from "0" on an assignment to "F" for the course without regard to a student's accumulated points. Students may also face expulsion. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the policies of the university regarding academic integrity and to avoid violating such policies. Policy information is found at: <http://ut.smartcatalogiq.com/en/current/catalog/Academic-Policies-and-Procedures/Academic-Integrity-Policy>

Class Rules, Etiquette, and Advice:

I like my job a lot. There are few things I can imagine doing more satisfying than providing inquisitive minds with an atmosphere conducive to thinking more critically about their own assumptions and the world in which we live. The image of students leaving my classroom just a bit more prepared to make their society better is sustaining. Following is a list of things you can do to help me maintain this image as well as some things you can do to reveal it as a mirage. Doing more of the former and less of the latter will make me happy whereas the converse will make me sad!

DO read the assigned texts – The amount and content of the reading assignments are well within the realm of reasonable for a class at this level. I have looked at syllabi from many different institutions of higher learning to come confidently to this conclusion. Do the assigned readings before each class and you will get the most out of the lectures. Though there are some things covered in the assigned readings that will not be covered in lecture, and vice versa, the lectures and readings build off each other. I will not hesitate to pull exam questions from readings not covered in class and from lectures not covered in the readings.

DO engage in class discussions in an intelligent way – There will be lots of opportunities for you to contribute to conversations in the classroom. Most of my lectures have a built in component for student input because I think it is important that you not only read and hear the information, but have to reconstitute and challenge it. I am also delighted to entertain questions when you have them and follow tangents that you would like to explore. Class periods when students are engaged and contributing seem to go by much faster than class periods when students are checked out. Students who regularly contribute to the classroom conversation do significantly better than students who do not on exams. So pretend the information we are covering is really interesting and jump at the opportunity to challenge the material. After a while you will find that you do not have to pretend any more. If you are shy this is good practice for you. Use the class to build your confidence and public speaking skills. If you are worried about your peers' impressions of you forget about it. Those who value education will find your contributions useful and those who roll their eyes are dull and uninteresting.

DO visit me during office hours – If you have a question about something we covered in class, need feedback on an assignment, want to discuss something you discovered outside of class that you think connects to course content in an interesting way, or just want to chat FEEL FREE to drop by my office during office hours. I keep five hours per week and these hours are for you. You are not pestering me or taking me away from something more important. It is nice to talk with students outside of our regular classroom setting.

DO NOT send me an email unless it's an emergency – With several classes and nearly 100 students a semester emails can become burdensome. While I know email seems convenient from the student point of view because it is more instantly gratifying and relatively labor free, I have found the method of communication a poor way to convey the complex concepts we deal with in class and for general points of inquiry it is inefficient as emails regularly get lost in my Inbox. So how can you decide if an email is an emergency? I would encourage you to ask yourself the following three questions:

- 1) Can I find the answer on the syllabus, in a text, or online?
- 2) Is it something one of my colleagues in class can answer?
- 3) Can it wait until next class or office hours?

If you answer any of these questions in the affirmative, PLEASE fight against the temptation to hit send. Also if you submit an assignment by email I will NOT grade it. Most assignments I have submitted via Blackboard/Turnitin and those few which require hardcopies there is a drop box on the outside of my office door.

DO NOT ask if it is on the exam – I do not give out study guides. This is a university class and when I attended university ages ago study guides, like the iPod and indoor plumbing, were not yet invented. This experience taught me that learning things the readings and lectures cover that are not on the exam can be just as important and enlightening as learning things that will appear on the exam. Anything in the readings or lectures is fair game for an exam. Things covered in both readings and lectures, which I post online in the form of Powerpoint slides, are slightly more likely to show up on the exam.

DO NOT ask for extra credit – Rarely I give out extra credit opportunities. When I do, the opportunity is initiated by me and open to all students in class. I have never given an extra credit assignment to a student who initiated the request. Giving out extra credit opportunities to select students makes grades for my courses unreliable measures of student success and your goal should be to master the material assigned on the syllabus.

DO understand what your grade represents – I assume every student who enters my class wants to take away a greater understanding of the world and that the grade (s)he receives is but a formal, and somewhat abstract and imprecise, reflection of the knowledge (s)he has gained. The average student in my courses typically earns a low B (3.0) or a high C (2.0). This grade represents both effort and skill so students that put in more effort than average and/or are more skilled than average will do better than this, whereas students who put in less effort than average and/or are less skilled will do worse. It is not easy to earn an A in my course and few will. On the other hand it is even more difficult to earn an F in my course but a few students every semester put in nearly no effort and/or do not have the skills necessary for a college-level course in Political Science. I have given failing marks to students who I think are wonderful people and given A grades to students who I would rather never see again. Grades are not personal statements on your character, they are a professional opinion of the work you submit.

DO learn how to question grades respectfully – I do my best to communicate expectations and make sure my comments on graded assignments pinpoint areas where you did well and areas where you needed to put in some more work. There will, however, occasionally be questions about the grade you receive. I will NOT change a grade or let you resubmit an assignment simply because you want a better grade. If, however, you think I have made a mistake I will consider changing a grade only after the following conditions have been met: 1) You must wait at least 24 hours but no more than ten days after receiving your graded assignment to file a complaint. 2) You must submit in writing (*typed* and *printed* out) a detailed explanation of why you think you deserve a different grade. I will review your submission and give you my final decision within a week of receipt at which time I will consider the “negotiation” complete and any further appeals on the issue will be directed to the department chair. Challenges that resemble “I’m an A student so there is no way this paper is a B,” “I was making a good argument it just did not come across in my paper,” “I was having a bad day can you cut me some slack,” or “I need to pass this class to graduate” will be summarily dismissed as they do not speak to the quality of the work.

DO know the university policy on “excused” absences – I do not take roll so the only time you need an excused absence is when there is an assignment due. The UT catalog has a detailed section on excused absences. It falls under the heading “Class Attendance and Participation” in the Academic Policies and Procedures section. There are no excuses for late written assignments. You know about them well in advance and a last minute illness or death in the family should not affect your ability to turn in the assignment or have a colleague do so on your behalf. Excuses for missed exams or presentations are granted following university procedures. The best way to be granted an excused absence is with prior approval. If you will miss an exam or presentation due to a previously scheduled event, let me know at least two weeks in advance and you will almost always be allowed an early exam or presentation. In the event that prior approval is not possible, you must provide acceptable documentation detailing the reasons for your excuse as soon as possible. Be thorough with this documentation as the burden of proving an absence is excusable falls on the student. For each assignment listed in this syllabus there is a detailed policy regarding late penalties. Many of these policies grant an exception for “excused” absences. Whether an absence is “excused” or not is up to the discretion of your professor based on the guidelines outlined above.

Travel Information:

To make our time in Ghana the most pleasant it can be, the following information should be noted.

Travel Fees – In order for the University of Tampa to purchase your ticket and make reservations for you, you must make your course travel payments to the International Programs Office by their set deadlines. Otherwise your travel might be placed in jeopardy or your fees may be increased.

Passports, Visas, Shots, and Anti-Malarials are YOUR Responsibility – Without a valid passport with a Ghanaian visa and proof of Yellow Fever vaccination you will not be allowed to enter Ghana or participate in the course trip. This means you should procure a passport with at least a year of validity still on it prior to February, be vaccinated for Yellow Fever and staple your Yellow Fever card into your passport before April, and send away for a Ghanaian visa following the Ghana Embassy in Washington DC guidelines to the letter by the end of Spring Break. Failure to follow these directions exactly may not only result in your failure to participate in the course travel but the loss of non-refundable portions of your travel fees. Though anti-malarial medications are not required to enter Ghana, it is strongly recommended that you speak with your medical provider about one of the many anti-malarial drugs and the market before the end of the semester. Malaria is a serious disease so if you chose not to use one of the Center for Disease Control's approved anti-malarial drugs you should let the International Program Office and your professor know of your decision before mid-February.

Comport Yourself with Respect and Dignity Abroad – We will be in Ghana for two weeks under sometimes challenging conditions. There will be days when we are riding on the bus for several hours on roads that are unpaved and rutted. You will have to share a room with at least one of your colleagues and we may encounter accommodations that are considered rustic by mainstream American standards. Ghanaian cultures are different from yours in many ways and you will likely encounter bathrooms and food which seem odd to you and social situations which seem awkward because of differences in language and customs. In order for this faculty-led trip to work you MUST put yourself in a mindset to make the most out of the situations we encounter and treat yourself, colleagues, professors, and Ghanaian hosts with respect. This trip takes place in the real world so we cannot account for in advance every eventuality. To better deal with unforeseen events that may arise, it is really important that you are prepared act with maturity and respect the faculty advisors as extensions of the University of Tampa in Ghana.