

Issues of Development in Kenya
COURSE SYLLABUS
(Provisional)

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND RELEVANCE

This course will explore the promises and challenges of development in the Chogoria area of Central Kenya. We will look at similarities and differences facing this area compared to other economically developing and developed regions. We will attempt to hone our observational skills, especially as viewed through the lens of development. We will raise many questions and provide a few answers. An overriding theme will be the relationship between development and culture. We will also look at the role of globalization and development. Specific topics will involve wildlife conservation, economic solvency, ecotourism, cultural diversity, language, the impact of disease, the feasibility of creating sustainable programs, and classical and modern imperialism. We will take the opportunity to experience some of the premier African ecotourism illustrating a variety of ecology venues. A unique feature of the course will be our ability to interface with an innovative microfinance program, Village Hopecore.

FORMAT

The class will meet every day from Wednesday June 25, 2008 to July 15, 2008. Scheduled free time will be included.

Key points in the class will be underscored by appropriate field trips, guest lectures, student presentations, and discussions. In addition, students will each undertake an assessment of an individual microfinance group

The course is modeled on a highly successful overseas seminar run out of the Arusha region of Tanzania. The Kenya venue was chosen to take advantage of the remarkable features this region has to offer.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process is described more fully on the Program Application Form.

Students are selected from a pool of applicants using the Program Application Form and a series of scheduled interviews. Strong preference will be given to current Stanford University students and recent grads.

PROGRAM FACULTY

Robert Siegel, MD PhD has been teaching at Stanford University for over 25 years. He has appointments in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology where he is in charge of the required microbiology/infectious disease thread for preclinical medical students; in the Program in Human Biology where he teaching courses on undergraduate virology, international health, and on Darwin; and in the Center for African Studies where is focuses on issues of health and development. This will be his seventh trip to East Africa.

Phil Rasori, MD has been the medical director of Village Hopecore International for the last 20 years. He is the director of Global Survival International and teaches and consults in the fields of Global Health and International Development. For 17 years, he taught global health and travel medicine as an Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine in the Department of Family and Community Medicine at UCSF.

Kajira Mugambi, JD is the founder and the director of VHI. Born in Kenya and educated in the US, he is a graduate of UCLA and UCLA Law School. After many years of living in America, he has returned to the village of his birth to operate VHI's poverty eradication program.

VILLAGE HOPECORE INTERNATIONAL

Village Hopecore International (VHI) is a non-profit organization dedicated to fighting poverty in Africa. For the last seven years, it has operated a very successful and cutting edge micro finance and HIV treatment, and healthcare program in the village of Chogoria, Kenya. The program combines basic health interventions, adult education and economic development. VHI was among the first organizations to provide loans and anti-retroviral medications to HIV+ individuals in Africa.

MICROFINANCE MODULES

This field seminar explores a unique and innovative development project that integrates micro-loans, basic village level healthcare interventions and adult education for the poor of central Kenya.

The focus on microfinance will be divided in three teaching modules. The first module will focus on the history, evolution and current status of micro-enterprise organizations in the developing world. We will trace the origins of the micro-enterprise village bank from its beginnings in the 1970's with Mohammad Yunus' Grameen Bank to the present. We will examine the existing data as to how effective and efficient micro-enterprise is as a poverty eradication tool.

The second teaching module will focus on the advances of village level healthcare over the last 25 years. We will outline the effectiveness of child survival technologies, including water pasteurization, immunizations, basic antibiotics, affordable anti-malarials, oral rehydration therapy, growth chart monitoring, protein supplementation, child spacing, family planning and treated anti-malarial bed nets. We will explore how these inexpensive yet extremely effective healthcare interventions can markedly improve the under five year survival rates of children in the developing world. We will also examine the availability, effectiveness and role of anti-retroviral medications in village Africa as a means to blunt the current HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The third teaching module will explore the combination of micro-enterprise village banking with the village level healthcare interventions discussed above and the potential for this model becoming an extremely effective poverty eradication strategy for the developing world. We will be able to observe firsthand this approach in the village of Chogoria, Kenya the site of VHI's development project. Students will have the opportunity to meet the staff of VHI and spend time at home stays with VHI loan families.

The culmination of the microfinance modules will be a project involving an analysis of the individual microfinance collaborative groups.

HOME STAYS

An important element of the course is the opportunity to participate in a ten day home stay experience in the village of Chogoria. Home stays are set up in conjunction with the microfinance assessment project. Most home stays will include groups of two students per household. Families receive a small reimbursement for the services they provide, but the primary motivation is to work with foreign students and provide services for VHI. On most days students will eat breakfast and dinner with their home stay families. It is recommended to student bring gifts for their home stay families.

SAFARI

Our week long safari will allow students to experience a variety of ecosystems including wetlands, open plains, and arid, desert. We will also have the opportunity to see a wide diversity of animal life.

We will visit the following parks:

- Maasai Mara National Park
- Lake Nakuru National Park in Kenya's Rift Valley
- Samburu reserve

And we will be able to contrast these with the fertile areas near the base of Mount Kenya.

LANGUAGE

The course will be run in English. However, there will be ample opportunity to practice Swahili. Students are encouraged to enroll in the spring quarter introduction to Swahili through the language department at Stanford.

ACADEMIC CREDIT

While the program is run as an academic course, it is not directly affiliated with Stanford or any other academic institution.

If needed, students may receive academic credit in a variety of ways: as a Human Biology internship, as a research project, as a directed reading, as prefield course, or as a post-field seminar.

Credit will be arranged through Dr. Siegel on an individual basis, depending on the level of time and engagement.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The seminar schedule will be handed out separately. It represents our best understanding of the content and timing of the seminar events. Given the exigencies of working in Africa, however, students are expected to be flexible in accepting schedule changes. Students will be informed of these changes as they arise.

SEMINAR ASSIGNMENTS:

1) Background reading

A course bibliography with required and recommended reading will be distributed to students during the prefield workshop. These are intended to enhance your in-country experience.

2) Prefield seminar workshops

There will be a series of workshops focused on background course information, cultural orientation, and travel health and safety. These may take place during a single session or on several occasions depending on scheduling issues. Course participants are expected to attend these workshops. Exceptions may be made for students studying abroad.

3) Oral presentations

This will serve several purposes:

- Get you engaged in a specific aspect of life in Kenya.
- Get you thinking about the trip
- Help to prep the rest of us on a topic of relevance.
- Stimulate discussion in country.
- Serve as a focal point for assignment 2

You should plan to have this assignment completed (along with your packing) before you leave.

When you are in-country, I would like you to further investigate your topic by asking local people about their opinions on that subject. Does your research accord with what they are saying?

4) Village Hopecore program assessment project

Students will each undertake an assessment of an individual microfinance group. A series of techniques will be involved including interviews, observation, photography, and quantitative data assessment.

In the aggregate, these research projects will provide valuable data, documentation, and feedback that may further enhance this innovative program.

5) Journaling

Other seminars have required extensive in-country writing. While I strongly encourage extensive journal keeping, I would like to focus on your observational and analytical powers.

- Every day, I would like you to write down 5 observations. These can be single sentences. They can be related to assignments 1 and 2, but they do not have to be.
- At least one of these should relate to development, globalization, or culture clash.

- You will be expected to pick one observation per day (ideally but not necessarily the development observation) and comment upon it at greater length. You might include the following.

- Explain the observation in greater depth.

- Explain the context in which it was made.

- Comment on why you picked it.

- Speculate on its history, current significance, and future impact.

- At the end of the seminar, you will be expected to type up and turn in your observations. I would like to combine these into a resource.

(One side benefit of this assignment is that this material is great to include in letters to home, blogs, your personal journals, etc.)

6) Active seminar participation

Students are expected to be active participants in all phases of the program and work cooperative with their fellow students. This includes content discussions, participation in field trips, and consideration of others in the various living situations. It also means that potential concerns should be raised with the seminar leaders at the earliest possible moment.

7) Photo documentation

Both Drs. Siegel and Rasori are published photography. They hope to pass on their passion to the seminar participants. Students are expected to create a photo archive of at least two pictures per day for the duration of the seminar. There will be opportunities to practice a variety of types of photography including landscape, wildlife, portrait, documentary, and photo journalism. Our home stay time in Chogoria will provide especially valuable opportunities to capture the friendly and colorful people of East Africa

8) Formulate a plan for the future

Formulate a plan for building upon your seminar experience and for sharing your experience with others.

This may include future research, web pages, scrap books, photo shows, jpersonal letters, letters related to political action, starting your own NGO, etc.

We will discuss these assignments at greater length during the seminar.

In the meantime, you should bring one or more bound journals or lab notebooks for your journaling assignment.

PRESENTATIONS:

Content:

Make sure you keep the themes of Development and Kenya in mind. Also make sure you consider potential conflicts between developments and culture (or in Thomas Friedman's words: conflicts between "The Lexus and the Olive Tree").

Presentations should present some factual background information. They should also outline areas of conflict or controversy in order to stimulate discussion.

We will try to weave the information in the presentations to our various outings.

You should also include an introduction as to why you chose your topic.

Structure:

Presentations should be 15-20 minutes long. Longer is OK – as long as the content is good.

(Some people have asked about doing a second topic. This should be OK, but they need to be separate, complete presentations.)

Format:

You may choose the format. Creativity is appreciated.

If you wish you can use PowerPoint, you may do so.

We intend to provide a computer and projector (and hopefully electricity).

If you are not bringing a computer (per other email), you can bring the presentation on a USB drive. (This would be my strong preference.) You could also use a CD, or send it to yourself on email, or put it on your AFS folder.

Timing:

The presentations will be spaced through the seminar. We will try to coordinate them with the field trips.

They should be largely prepared before you leave for Africa.

Sources:

There are a number of good books on development, on international health, on globalization, on ecotourism, on HIV, on women's issues, etc. Unfortunately, many of these light on information pertaining to Kenya, hard to access, or dated.

Therefore web is going to be an important resource. This is especially true for those of you who do not have good library access over the summer.

Use reliable, credible (or at least interesting) sites.

You may want to start with sites from the WHO, the CDC, Kenyan government sites, CIA, wikipedia, etc.

Also consider NGO sites.

If anyone finds a great site send it to the group.

Topics:

In choosing a topic, you can get ideas from the list below or on the website:
<http://www.stanford.edu/~siegelr/kenya/kenyaseminar2008/tzseminar2008.html>

Additional Suggestions:

Are welcome.

Suggested topics

- History of microfinance and the Grameen model
- Microfinance in Kenya
- The economic impact of HIV in Kenya
- Land ownership and use
- Public transportation
- Schools and education
- The extent and impact cultural and/or linguistic diversity
- Primary and/or secondary education
- Higher education
- The Impact of Religion on Development with emphasis on pre Christian, Christian, Islamic traditions
- Impact of malaria
- Standard of living and the distribution of wealth
- Women's empowerment in Kenya
- Traditional medicine
- The impact of British colonialism in Kenya
- PEPFAR and the role out antiretrovirals
- The positive and negative impacts of NGOs on development in Kenya
- The positive and negative impacts of philanthropic foundations
- Vaccination
- Farming or other specific industries
- Sustainable ecotourism in the National Parks of Kenya
- Large game hunting
- Brain drain
- Conceptions and misconceptions in art, literature, and journalism
- The impact of cell phones, internet, or other technologies
- Energy
- Is Kenya becoming flat? (a la Thomas Friedman)
- The impact of national governance in Kenya
- The impact of local governance in Kenya

COURSE WEB SITE

<http://www.stanford.edu/~siegelr/kenya/kenyaseminar2008/tzseminar2008.html>

NEW AND HOT

Each day, students are expected to discuss their observations and tie them into the content of the course.

COOPERATION BETWEEN STUDENTS/WORKING TOGETHER

Students are encouraged to work together on most phases of the course.

FILES NAMES

In emailing or submitting electronic files, it is necessary to name them as follows:

Student + Your name + Date + Course name + draft number if applicable

Although this is longer and annoying, it is extremely helpful and descriptive. Credit will not be given for files named "presentation", "siegel presentation", etc... It may be my class but it is your presentation.

ADDITIONAL HANDOUTS

- Program itinerary
- Program at a glance
- Program Application Form
- Cover letter and description
- Program fee information
- Village Hopecore International literature and DVD
- Health and safety information – distributed at the prefield workshop
- Course bibliography

EXTRA CREDIT

Students may augment their performance in the class by composing a thoughtful op-ed based on their experiences or their assignment research. Ideally this would be suitable to be submitted for publication.