

**BROOKLYN COLLEGE
AFRICANA STUDIES DEPARTMENT
SUMMER SEMINAR TO GHANA**

**Special Topics in the Humanities:
Literature, History, Arts and Culture of Ghana
AFST 3290
Summer Session II
July 13-August 17 2018**

Description

This course will be a multi-disciplinary approach to the study of the history, culture, arts and culture of Ghana, a developing country on Africa's West Coast. The course will also explore related issues in African Diaspora Studies including the Atlantic slave trade and the cultural and historic connections among the peoples of the African Diaspora. This course will provide a number of vectors for study and learning in these various areas, including required readings, lectures by Ghanaian professors, visits to museums, historic sites, parks, and cultural centers. The course will enhance the undergraduate education of majors from a variety of fields including music, visual arts, literature, and history.

Objectives

Students will become familiar with indigenous/traditional political and religious practices, particularly those of the Asante people of central Ghana.

Students will become familiar with how the Atlantic Slave operated and the role played by European nations and various Ghanaian peoples in it.

Students will become familiar with traditional Ghanaian foods, customs, and patterns of daily living.

Students will begin to accept and appreciate cultural differences and in the process become more cognizant of their own cultural patterns.

Students will begin to understand the historic and cultural connections between Ghana and the rest of the African Diaspora, i.e. the USA and the Caribbean.

Students will gain a greater understanding of self, place, ethnic, regional, and national identity.

Lectures/Workshops on the following topics

- Asante history and politics
- Traditional and Contemporary Visual Arts
- The Atlantic Slave Trade
- Folk Music and Dancing
- Traditional Religion and Christianity in Ghana

Field Trips to the Following Sites

- W.E.B. Dubois Center (Accra)
- Manhyia Palace Museum (Kumasi)
- Center for National Culture (Accra)
- National Cultural Center (Kumasi)
- Kwame Nkrumah National Monument and Museum (Accra)
- Cape Coast Castle
- Elmina Castle
- Aburi Botanical Garden

Outcomes

- Students will be able to describe the history of the Diasporic connections between the Akan and the people of the Americas including the history of the Atlantic Slave Trade in Ghana and the Diaspora
- Students will be able to describe the basic history and structure of the Asante kingdom.
- Students will be able to identify, explain and describe the significance of many Asante cultural modes of expression including adinkra symbols, kente cloth, proverbs, musical styles, gestures, songs, and dances.
- Students will be able to use basic greetings and customary responses in the Akan language.
- Students will be able to discuss Ghanaian literary forms of expression such as poetry, drama and novels.

Assignments

- All students will attend lectures and field trips
- All students will keep a thoughtful log with at least five entries/week of the four weeks abroad for a total of twenty (20) entries. This log/journal will include 500 word minimum responses to the required readings. You are welcome to include your impressions and feelings about what you read, observe or experience.
- Your final paper will be a 5-7 page paper responding to 4 /8 of the syllabus topics and related field trips. The paper must include five scholarly references exclusive of the required readings.

Topics and Required Readings

A. Geography and General History

Maps and Illustrations

B. Traditional Visual Arts

Willett, "The Art of the Akan" from Willett, *Art of Africa*

C. Asante History

Aidoo, Agnes Akosua. "Asante Queen Mothers in Government and Politics in the 19thc." *Journal Historical Society of Nigeria* (1977) 9, 1:1-13.

Akyeampong, Emmanuel and Pashington Obeng. "Spirituality, Gender and Power in Asante History." *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* (1995) 28, 3: 481-508.

D. Asante Culture

Akan folktales and Ananse stories

E. Atlantic Trade and the Creation of the African Diaspora

Smallwood, *Salt-Water Slavery*, Intro-Chap. 1

Akosua Perbi, *A History of Indigenous Slavery in Ghana: from the 15th to the 19th Century*, Sub-Saharan Publishers & Traders, 2004.

F. Religion

Ashanti Drum Prayer

Elizabeth Graveling (2010) 'That is not religion, that is the gods': Ways of conceiving religious practices in rural Ghana, *Culture and Religion*, 11:1, 31-50.

Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy*, Indiana University Press,

G. Music and Dance

Joseph S. Kaminski, 'Surrogate Speech of the Asante Ivory Trumpeters of Ghana, *Yearbook for Traditional Music* Vol. 40 (2008), pp. 117-135.

Andrew L. Kaye, "Koo Nimo: a Contemporary Ghanaian Musician," *African Music: Journal of the International Library of African Music*, 14:7 (1999).

H. Ghana Nationalism and Independence

David Birmingham, *Kwame Nkrumah: the father of African Nationalism*, Ohio University Press. 1998.

Jean Allman, *Quills of the Porcupine: Asante Nationalism and an Emergent Ghana*, University of Wisconsin Press, 1993.

I. Contemporary Cultural Issues

Lynda Day, "What's Tourism Got to Do With It?" *Africa Today* (2004).

