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City as Text

Fall 2022

Course Code: CAT-UF 9301

Instruction Mode: Blended

If you are enrolled in this course 100% remotely and are not a Go Local/Study Away student for NYU Accra, please make sure that you've completed the online academic orientation via Brightspace so you are aware of site specific support structure, policies and procedures. Please contact nno211@nyu.edu if you have trouble accessing the Brightspace site

Instructor Information

- Nicholas Okai, PhD.
- Instructor office hours: : Tuesdays 9:00am – 4:00pm; and by appointment
- Email :

Syllabus Last Updated on: 5/7/2022

Units earned 4 Credits

Course Details

- Meetings: Wednesday 1:15pm – 4:15pm GMT
- All times are GMT
- Location: Rooms will be posted in Albert before your first class.
- Remote Participants: Your instructor will provide you with the Zoom link
- COVID-related details: In the interest of protecting the NYU Accra community, we are closely following CDC guidance around COVID-19 and adjusting our recommendations and policies accordingly. Your health and well-being is our top priority.
 - If you are attending in person, you will be assigned a seat on the first day and are expected to use that seat for the entire semester due to NYU COVID-19 safety protocol. Please note that you are expected to attend every class meeting in-person; however, this may change during the drop/add period if in-person student registration increases significantly or at any point during the semester if local COVID-19 regulations require additional physical distancing.
 - Additionally, in-person students will be split into cohorts who will attend sessions.

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Course Description

“City as Text: Accra” is a rigorous, 4-credit seminar designed to introduce students to Accra through an intensive academic program of cultural preparation and local immersion. Through scholarly and journalistic readings from interdisciplinary perspectives, students develop a nuanced understanding of the local, regional, national, and global forces that bring shape to the character of the city. Multiple class sessions take place in locations around the city, such as the Jamestown chief’s palace, the Makola market, home of the former mayor of Accra, Osu Oxford street, Agbogbloshé, traditional artisan shops, and other points of interest, where students apply direct observation to examine critically formed questions of place, space and identity. Students draw on the city as a primary resource for academic research and critical inquiry and they produce innovative research projects (digital or print) that reflect on the city at the crossroads of local and global identity.

Course objectives:

- Understand the theoretical conceptions of place.
- Develop an interdisciplinary understanding of the local, regional, national, and global forces that have shaped the character of the city.
- Engage the cultural and social practices of the city through firsthand experiences.
- Advance research skills and sharpen ability to analyze and interpret the surrounding environment.

Assessment Components

You are expected to attend class in person or remote synchronously. Failure to submit or fulfill any required component may result in failure of the class, regardless of grades achieved in other assignments.

Teaching & Learning Philosophy

The teaching and learning philosophy for this class is based primary on the Kolb’s learning cycle

Required Texts

1. Tim Cresswell, *Place: An Introduction*, 2014, “Defining place”
2. <http://www.justiceghana.com/index.php/en/2012-01-24-13-47-17/6642-the-history-of-ga-people-introduction>
3. <https://kpakpatsewerooyalfamily.wordpress.com/2011/06/18/origin-of-the-ga-people-in-ghana/>
4. <https://adesawyerr.wordpress.com/2015/11/10/the-definitive-story-of-james-town-british-accra-by-nat-nuno-amarteifio/>
5. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279514640_Fundamental_Causes_of_Poverty_in_Sub-Saharan_Africa
6. Dibazar, P., Naeff, J., *Visualizing the Street: New Practices of Documenting, Navigating, and Imagining the City*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018

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Course Requirements

Class Participation

Students are expected to attend classes and participate actively in discussions and submit all class assignments on time. Students are to read all relevant materials for a given session in advance, and coupled with the immersive experiences that will be gleaned through the field trips, be able to contribute their thoughts, ideas and reflections to class discussions.

Assigned Readings

All assigned readings must be completed before class at the latest, and usually at least a day prior, when the weekly assignment is due: deadlines will be clearly indicated each week. Please come to class ready to participate in the discussion. Failure to do so will lower your class participation grade and overall performance in the class.

Fieldwork and Research Notebook

Students are expected to keep a Fieldwork and Research Notebook; and a digital journal to gather notes on class discussions and readings, responses to questions on assigned readings and short reflective writing assignments, observations from everyday experience and critical excursions, ideas and methods for research assignments. Questions and prompts, due dates and average expected length of short reflective writing assignments will be indicated each week.

“Through the lens” Assignment

This assignment will allow you to approach your experiential study of place through the lens of your concentration and will be associated with critical excursions. Students will be expected to develop a topic, research question and method of analysis consistent with their concentrations or critically examine from a perspective that reflects their chosen field. Guidelines and objectives for this project will be made available.

Final Project

For the final project, students will develop a place-based research topic that draws on the readings, excursions, class deliberations/discussions and gleaned skills. The format, expected content and due dates for the presentation of a proposal and the final project will be announced in class.

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Topics, Meeting Patterns and Assignments

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
[Week 1, 7 Sept]	Introductory class: Accra as a Place and focus for diverse academic enquiry.	Tim Cresswell, Place: An Introduction, 2014, Chap. 1, "Defining place"	
[Week 2, 14 Sept.]	Time with former Mayor of Accra. Overview of the Infrastructural and General Developmental Challenges of Accra as a City : Problems, Solutions And Constraints	(1) http://www.justiceghana.com/index.php/en/2012-01-24-13-47-17/6642-the-history-of-ga-people-introduction (2) https://kpakpatseweroyalfamily.wordpress.com/2011/06/18/origin-of-the-ga-people-in-ghana/	A Reflection paper on aspects of the readings and narrative account that are new or similar to other historical narrations that you know of. Due 20 Sept.
[Week 3, 21 Sept.]	Critical excursion to parts of Accra, including a post-walk reflection	https://adesawyerr.wordpress.com/2015/11/10/the-definitive-story-of-james-town-british-accra-by-nat-nuno-amarteifio/	
[Week 4, 28 Sept.]	Employment, Unemployment, Under-employment: The work People do in Accra.		A comparative reflection paper highlighting differences and similarities. Due 4 Oct.
[Week 5, 5 Oct.]	A critical occupational mapping through the Osu oxford and visit to autochill Works		"Through the lens" assignment. Due 11 Oct
[Week 6, 12 Oct.]	Thematic Project Discussion	(1) https://www.scribbr.com/research-process/research-proposal/ (2) https://www.scribbr.com/category/research-paper/	

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[Week 7, 19 Oct.]	The role and place of religion in the city of Accra	Eric K. Oduro Wiafe <i>The three major religions in Ghana: History, Theology and influence(2010)</i>	
[Week 8, 26 Oct.]	Critical excursion to places of worship in Accra: Shrine/Mosque/ Pentecostal Church.		A reflection paper that highlights differences and similarities of purpose of the places visited and how they relate to any other religious place visited in another country. Due 1 Nov.
[Week 9, 2 Nov.]	Wealth, poverty occupations and social class in the city of Accra	https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279514640_Fundamental_Causes_of_Poverty_in_Sub-Saharan_Africa	A group discussion session on causality and solutions.
[Week 10, 9 Nov.]	Critical Excursion: A walk through Accra's rich and poor neighbourhoods and the makola market.	Dibazar, P., Naeff, J., <i>Visualizing the Street: New Practices of Documenting, Navigating, and Imagining the City</i> . Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018	"Through the lens" assignment Due. 15 Nov.
[Week 11, 16 Nov.]	Interrogating Accra's culinary diversity: Street food, restaurants and globalization.		A reaction paper on the impact of colonialism, migration, and globalization on food in the city of Accra. Due 22 Nov
[Week 12, 23 Nov.]	Cross campus Discussion: The environment, Plastic, e-waste, and the future of Accra .		Group discussion on causality and solutions to the problem of the environment as it pertains to Accra and other global cities.

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[Week 13, 30 Nov]	Group 1 presentation of Final project		
[Week 14, 7 Dec.]	Group 2 presentation of Final project		
[Week 15, 14 Dec.]	End of Semester		

Note: Aspects of this schedule could change in the course of the semester

Classroom Etiquette

To optimize the experience in a blended learning environment, please consider the following:

- Please be mindful of your microphone and video display during synchronous class meetings. Ambient noise and some visual images may disrupt class time for you and your peers.
- Please do not eat during class and minimize any other distracting noises (e.g. rustling of papers and leaving the classroom before the break, unless absolutely necessary).
- If you are not using your cell phone to follow the lesson, cell phones should be turned off or in silent mode during class time.
- Make sure to let your classmates finish speaking before you do.
- If deemed necessary by the study away site (ie COVID related need), synchronous class sessions may be recorded and archived for other students to view. This will be announced at the beginning of class time.
- Students should be respectful and courteous at all times to all participants in class.

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Academic Policies

Grade Conversion

Letter Grade	Points	Percent
A	4.00	94%-100%
A-	3.67	90% – 93%
B+	3.33	87% - 89%
B	3.00	84% - 86%
B-	2.67	80% - 83%
C+	2.33	77% - 79%
C	2.00	74% - 76%
C-	1.67	70% - 73%
D	1.00	65% - 69%
F	.00	65 or lower

Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:

Assignments/Activities	% of Final Grade
Class Attendance	5
Critical Excursions attendance and participation	15
“Through the lens” Assignment, including presentation in Class	35
Final Project Proposal	10
Final Project	30
Final Project Presentation in class	5

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Attendance Policy

Studying at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers, or online through NYU Brightspace if the course is remote synchronous/blended, is expected promptly when class begins. Attendance will be checked at each class meeting. If you have scheduled a remote course immediately preceding/following an in-person class, you may want to write to nno211@nyu.edu to see if you can take your remote class at the Academic Center.

As soon as it becomes clear that you cannot attend a class, you must inform your professor and/or the Academics team by e-mail immediately (i.e. before the start of your class). Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, Moses Center accommodations, religious observance or emergencies. Your professor or site staff may ask you to present a doctor's note or an exceptional permission from an NYU Staff member as proof. Emergencies or other exceptional circumstances that you wish to be treated confidentially must be presented to staff. Doctor's notes must be submitted in person or by e-mail to the Academics team, who will inform your professors.

Unexcused absences may be penalized with percent deduction from the student's final course grade for every week's worth of classes missed, and may negatively affect your class participation grade. Four unexcused absences in one course may lead to a Fail in that course. Being more than 15 minutes late counts as an unexcused absence. Furthermore, your professor is entitled to deduct points for frequently joining the class late.

Exams, tests and quizzes, deadlines, and oral presentations that are missed due to illness always require a doctor's note as documentation. It is the student's responsibility to produce this doctor's note and submit it to site staff; until this doctor's note is produced the missed assessment is graded with an F and no make-up assessment is scheduled. In content classes, an F in one assignment may lead to failure of the entire class.

Regardless of whether an absence is excused or not, it is the student's responsibility to catch up with the work that was missed.

Final exams

Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Should there be a conflict between your final exams, please bring this to the attention of the Academics team. Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave the site before the end of the finals period.

Late Submission of Work

- (1) Work submitted late receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100 point scale for each day it is late (including weekends and public holidays), unless an extension has been approved (with a doctor's note or by approval of NYU SITE Staff), in which case the 2 points per day deductions start counting from the day the extended deadline has passed.

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- (2) Without an approved extension, written work submitted more than 5 days (including weekends and public holidays) following the submission date receives an F.
- (3) Assignments due during finals week that are submitted more than 3 days late (including weekends and public holidays) without previously arranged extensions will not be accepted and will receive a zero. Any exceptions or extensions for work during finals week must be discussed with the Site Director.
- (4) Students who are late for a written exam have no automatic right to take extra time or to write the exam on another day.
- (5) Please remember that university computers do not keep your essays - you must save them elsewhere. Having lost parts of your essay on the university computer is no excuse for a late submission.

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

As the University's policy on "[Academic Integrity for Students at NYU](#)" states: "At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others." Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the University and school policies.

NYU takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. Your lecturer may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form, and may check your assignments by using TurnItIn or another software designed to detect offences against academic integrity.

The presentation of another person's words, ideas, judgment, images, or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism. It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you **MUST** inform your professor.

For guidelines on academic honesty, clarification of the definition of plagiarism, examples of procedures and sanctions, and resources to support proper citation, please see:

[NYU Academic Integrity Policies and Guidelines](#)

[NYU Library Guides](#)

Inclusivity Policies and Priorities

NYU's Office of Global Programs and NYU's global sites are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. In order to nurture a more inclusive global university, NYU affirms the value of sharing differing perspectives and encourages open dialogue through a variety of pedagogical approaches. Our

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goal is to make all students feel included and welcome in all aspects of academic life, including our syllabi, classrooms, and educational activities/spaces.

Attendance Rules on Religious Holidays

Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Students who anticipate being absent due to religious observance should notify their lecturer and the NYU Accra Academics Office in writing via e-mail one week in advance. If examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Academics Office will schedule a make-up examination or extend the deadline for assignments. Please note that an absence is only excused for the holiday but not for any days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. See also [University Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](#)

Pronouns and Name Pronunciation (Albert and Zoom)

Students, staff, and faculty have the opportunity to add their pronouns, as well as the pronunciation of their names, into Albert. Students can have this information displayed to faculty, advisors, and administrators in Albert, the NYU Home internal directory, as well as other NYU systems. Students can also opt out of having their pronouns viewed by their instructors, in case they feel more comfortable sharing their pronouns outside of the classroom. For more information on how to change this information for your Albert account, please see the [Pronouns and Name Pronunciation website](#).

Students, staff, and faculty are also encouraged, though not required, to list their pronouns, and update their names in the name display for Zoom. For more information on how to make this change, please see the [Personalizing Zoom Display Names website](#).

Moses Accommodations Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented and registered disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Student Accessibility (+1 212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance. Accommodations for this course are managed through NYU Accra.

Bias Response

The New York University Bias Response Line provides a mechanism through which members of our community can share or report experiences and concerns of bias, discrimination, or harassing behavior that may occur within our community.

Experienced administrators in the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) receive and assess reports, and then help facilitate responses, which may include referral to another University school or unit, or investigation if warranted according to the University's existing Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy.

The Bias Response Line is designed to enable the University to provide an open forum that helps to ensure that our community is equitable and inclusive.

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To report an incident, you may do so in one of three ways:

- Online using the [Web Form \(link\)](#)
- Email: bias.response@nyu.edu
- Phone: 212-998-2277
- 030 276 1528