

NYU Accra

City as Text: Accra

CAT-UF 9301

Fall 2019

Instructor Information

- [Instructor name and title]
- NYU Accra Academic Centre. Office Room
- [Instructor office telephone]
- Instructor office hours: : Tuesdays 9:00am – 5:00pm; and by appointment
- [Instructor email address]

Course Information

- CAT-UF 9301
- City as Text: Accra
- The facilitation of this class is based on the seminar format, which is made up of classroom discussions, presentations and themed field trips to interesting corners of the City of Accra. “City as Text” presents a unique opportunity for students to explore the DNA of the City of Accra, through practical exploration and reflection. The course employs a multidisciplinary approach rooted in history, politics, the Arts, the environment, taboos, and a deconstruction of the social construct of the city and its people.
- Thursdays 11:00am – 2:00pm
 - [Class room number and building]

Course Overview and Goals

“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, the Agbogbloshie e-waste site, the Christiansburg castle, 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.

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

- 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.

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

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 on the class blog in “Prompts and Resources”.

“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 available on the class blog.

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 on the class blog.

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.

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%]

Letter Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

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

Letter Grade	Points	Percent
C	2.00	74-76
C-	1.67	70-73
D+	1.33	67-69
D	1.00	65-66
F	.00	Below 65

View Grades

All assignments will be graded and handed over in class. However, midterm grades and final grades will be uploaded onto NYU Albert.

Course Schedule

Topics and Assignments

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
[Week 1, 3 rd Sept.]	Introductory class: Accra as a Place and focus for diverse academic enquiry.	Tim Cresswell, Place: An Introduction, 2014, Chap. 1, "Defining place"	Post your expectations of the course on the class blog.
[Week 2, 10 th Sept.]	Narrative Account: The history of Accra and its people (by the Mayor of Accra)	(1) http://www.justiceghana.com/index.php/en/2012-01-24-13-47-17/6642-the-history-of-ga-people-introduction	A Reflection paper on aspects of the readings and narrative account that are new or similar to other historical narrations that you know of.

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
		(2) https://kpakpatseseroyalfamily.wordpress.com/2011/06/18/origin-of-the-ga-people-in-ghana/	
[Week 3, 17 th Sept.]	Critical excursion to Jamestown including a post-walk reflection	https://adesawyer.wordpress.com/2015/11/10/the-definitive-story-of-james-town-british-accra-by-nat-nuno-amarteifio/	Create a story map to present a spatial narrative on Jamestown-British Accra
[Week 4, 24 th Sept.]	The Christiansburg Castle narrative and the role of early master craftsmen in the rise of Osu-Accra	H. Nii-Adziri Wellington, <i>Stones Tell Stories at Osu</i> , Beaumont, Amerly Treb Books (2017)	A reflection paper highlighting any unique aspect of Prof. wellington's work.
[Week 5, 1 th Oct.]	A critical excursion to the Osu castle and a master craftsman at Teshie, and the artists alliance gallery, including a post-excursion reflection	Bodenhamer, David J., "Narrating Space and Place," in Bodenhamer, et al., eds., <i>Deep Maps and Spatial Narratives</i> , Bloomington: Indiana University Press (2015). See chapters in class blog.	"Through the lens" assignment See guidelines on the class blog.
[Week 6, 8 th Oct.]	Proposal and research writing	(1) https://www.scribbr.com/research-process/research-proposal/ (2) https://www.scribbr.com/category/research-paper/	Presentations of individual research proposals in a class. See class blog.

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
[Week 7, 15 th Oct.]	The role and place of religion in the city of Accra	Eric K. Oduro Wiafe The <i>three major religions in Ghana: History Theology and influence</i> (2010)	Reflection paper: a comparative look at religion in Accra and any city you have lived in.
[Week 8]		FALL BREAK	
[Week 9, 29 th Oct.]	Critical excursion to places of worship in Accra: A Shrine, Mosque, a 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.
[Week 10, 5 th 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. See class blog.
[Week 11, 12 th 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 lense"assignment due. See class blog.
[Week 12, 19 th Nov.]	Colonialism:Power,architecture and the geography of Accra.	CCE_Report_No3-Ghana_LivingTheColonialLegacy	A reflection paper on the residual impact of colonialism in the city of Accra
[Week 13, 26 th Nov.]	Critical excursion on the environment : Plastic, e-waste, and the future of Accra .	Boadi, Kwasi & Kuitunen, Markku. (2003). Municipal Solid Waste	Group discussion on causality and solutions to the problem of the

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
		Management in the Accra Metropolitan Area, Ghana.	environment as it pertains to Accra and other global cities.
[Week 14, 3 rd Dec.]	Make-up session for missed class as a result of NYU Accra fall term 3-day excursion		
[Week 15, 10 th Dec.]	Presentations and discussion of final research /projects		Preparation of 10 minutes presentations of final research/ project

Course Materials

Resources

- **Access your course materials:** [NYU Classes](http://nyu.edu/its/classes) (nyu.edu/its/classes)
- **Databases, journal articles, and more:** [Bobst Library](http://library.nyu.edu) (library.nyu.edu)
- **Assistance with strengthening your writing:** [NYU Writing Center](http://nyu.mywconline.com) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- **Obtain 24/7 technology assistance:** [IT Help Desk](http://nyu.edu/it/servicedesk) (nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)

Course Policies

Attendance and Tardiness

Study abroad 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 is mandatory, and unexcused absences will affect students' semester grades.** Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure. At all Global Academic Centers, unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade (for courses that meet once per week; for courses that meet twice per week, it is a one percent reduction per missed class).

Note: If for any other tenable reason you will be unable to attend class, you are FIRST required to contact and inform the NYU Accra Manager of Student Services directly at the Academic Centre or email mao9@nyu.edu .You are also required to email your professor directly to notify them before the day of the class. You will not be penalized only when this request for Nonattendance has been formally granted and communicated to you.

To seek an excused absence for medical reasons, students must use the online absence reporting form within 24 hours of their first missed class. Students may be required to produce a doctor's note with that day's date, especially if the student has missed any classes already that semester or if exams/presentations/papers occurred in the missed class.

Non-medical absences must be discussed with the Academic Staff at least 7 days before the missed date(s) in question. If faculty members do not receive notification of an excused absence, the student has not procured an excused absence.

NYU Accra expects students to arrive to class promptly (both at the beginning and after any breaks), to be attentive, and to remain for the duration of the class. If full class attendance and participation becomes a problem, it is the prerogative of each lecturer to apply the rule for unexcused absences, which may include a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade.

Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. This means they should initiate email and/ or office hour discussions to discuss any missed lectures and assignments and arrange a timeline for submitting missed work.

Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave the NYU Accra before the end of the finals week.

Please note that for classes involving a field trip or other external visit, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student's responsibility to arrive at the announced meeting point in a punctual and timely fashion. Staff members may always be reached by cell phone for advice regarding public transportation.

Late Assignment

- 1) Written work due in class must be submitted during the class time to the professor.
- 2) Late work should be emailed to the faculty as soon as it is completed.
- 3) Late work will be reduced for a fraction of a letter grade (e.g., A to A-, A- to B+, etc.) for every day it is late, including weekends.
- 4) Written work during the semester that is submitted 5 days after the submission date (including weekends) without an agreed extension fails and is given a zero.
- 5) Students who arrive to class late for an exam do not have automatic approval to take extra time to complete the exam.
- 6) Students who miss an exam (including the final) without previously arranged permission will receive a zero on that exam.
- 7) Assignments due during finals week that are submitted more than 3 days 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.

Incomplete Grade Policy

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the course.

An “incomplete” is a temporary grade that indicates that the student has, for good reason, not completed all of the course work. This grade is not awarded automatically nor is it guaranteed; rather, the student must ask the instructor for a grade of “incomplete,” present documented evidence of illness, an emergency, or other compelling circumstances, and clarify the remaining course requirements with the instructor.

In order for a grade of “incomplete” to be registered on the transcript, the student must fill out a form, in collaboration with the course instructor and the academic administration at the site; it should then be submitted to the site’s academic office. The submitted form must include a deadline by which the missing work will be completed. This deadline may not be later than the end of the following semester.

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.**

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.

NYU Accra takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. All your written work must be submitted as a hard copy AND in electronic form to the lecturer. Your lecturer may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form.

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](#)

Religious Observances

Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday.

Students must notify their professor and the NYU Accra Academics team in writing via email at least 7 days before being absent for this purpose.

Inclusion, Diversity, Belonging and Equity

NYU is committed to building a culture that respects and embraces diversity, inclusion, and equity, believing that these values – in all their facets – are, as President Andrew Hamilton has said, “...not only important to cherish for their own sake, but because they are also vital for advancing knowledge, sparking innovation, and creating sustainable communities.” At NYU LA, we are committed to creating a learning environment that:

- fosters intellectual inquiry, research, and artistic practices that respectfully and rigorously take account of a wide range of opinions, perspectives, and experiences; and
- promotes an inclusive community in which diversity is valued and every member feels they have a rightful place, is welcome and respected, and is supported in their endeavours.

Disability Disclosure Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Student Accessibility (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.

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