

*CULTURES OF ACTIVISM IN DAKAR, SENEGAL*

*GLOBAL SEMINAR, DEPT. OF FRENCH AND ITALIAN, CU-Boulder*

*SUMMER 2022, 3 CREDITS, 3-WEEK GLOBAL SEMINAR FROM MAY 9<sup>TH</sup> TO MAY 27<sup>TH</sup>, 2022*

## INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Dr. Brian Valente-Quinn

My office is located in the Eaton Humanities building, room 317

I will be available to meet students by appointment before departure and throughout our stay in Dakar.

In Boulder, you can reach me at [Brian.Valente-Quinn@colorado.edu](mailto:Brian.Valente-Quinn@colorado.edu). In Dakar, students may contact me on my Senegalese cell or call our contact person at IDEAS for questions or emergencies.

## COURSE INFORMATION

This global seminar will offer students an immersive experience in the urban and performance cultures of one of Africa's most historically rich and electrifying capitals: Dakar, Senegal. This region has long been a central point of contact for waves of religious, economic and cultural influence, from the arrival of Islam, to the impact of later French colonialism, up to Dakar's current role as a cosmopolitan hub and entryway for the entire West African region. Senegal's long tradition of peace and hospitality, as well as its distinction as the most politically stable democracy of the region, have made this a common visiting place for visitors, scholars and students from around the world.

In this course, we will focus on the role of culture and its interaction with national identity, social relationships and economic development. Students will learn about the history, culture and religious practices of a country at the crossroads of global notions of African, Francophone and Muslim identities. We will explore, through our guest lectures and class visits, various contemporary activist movements in Senegal and their respective causes, methods and experience using art to bring about social change.

For the final week of class, we will focus on a collaborative project with the Senegalese theater troupe Kàddu Yaraax. This Dakar-based organization has worked for many years on cultural and performance projects funded by development-focused NGOs. Their collaboration in the seminar will give students the opportunity to witness how global discussions and initiatives toward economic and social development for the Global South take form in local contexts.

## LEARNING GOALS

We will build on the following 3 primary learning goals throughout the seminar:

- Historical and cultural context
  - To learn about the history and culture of Senegal and how, as a case study, it relates to broader historical narratives regarding Africa, Islam, the Francophone world and the so-called Global South.
- Insight through experiential learning
  - To relate experience and insights gleaned through learning experiences to an intellectual engagement with theoretical questions about culture and global and local power dynamics.
- Collaborative learning
  - To translate individual insight and experience into informative and intellectually enriching collective experiences bringing together the input and perspectives of a diverse group of participants.

## PREREQUISITES

Note that there are no prerequisites for this global seminar. You are not expected to have any previous experience with the French language or familiarity with Senegal or the region.

## STUDENT POPULATION

This seminar is open to students of all majors and will be of particular interest to students of French, International Affairs, History, African Studies, Development Studies, Theater, Religious Studies, Art History, Cultural Geography and Anthropology. The course is also open to students in STEM disciplines looking for a hands-on, experiential global seminar in the Humanities. French students will have the option of completing all assignments and group work in French so that the seminar will count toward their French major or minor.

## A NOTE ON LANGUAGE

The official language of Senegal is French, with over a dozen African national languages, the most predominant of these, especially in Dakar, being Wolof. Our courses will be in English. In our group work sessions and presentations, students will be placed in specific language groups. Those who are taking the course exclusively in English will either be matched with Senegalese collaborators who speak English or they will work on a project using physical theater to address social topics, thus removing the language barrier. Professor Valente-Quinn and others will be on hand for all group work sessions and meetings with the theater troupe to provide translations and guidance as necessary.

## HOUSING, COURSE LOCATIONS AND LOGISTICS

- Students will be assigned homestays in conveniently located residential neighborhoods that are also safe and relatively central.

- Housing and logistics will be managed by our on-site provider, IDEAS. Each student will receive the contact information for our on-site program manager. This person will be available to assist with any logistical concerns or emergencies, as will Professor Valente-Quinn.
- Our class location will be managed by the on-site provider.
- Our group work sessions on week 3 and our final presentation will take place in the neighborhood of Yarakh. We can arrange group departures from a meeting point in the Amitié 3 neighborhood. A taxi ride to Yarakh will cost approximately 3,500 FCFA (about 7 dollars) and can be split among 3 people.

## COURSE MATERIALS

All of our course readings will be made available in PDF form via our Canvas course site (see note on Canvas access). You do not need to purchase any books. However, I suggest that you download all of our materials before leaving for Dakar.

## USING CANVAS

You will be able to access our readings and class calendar via the university's Canvas learning management system. Use your personal Identikey and password to access your Canvas Home site. From there, select our course name to access our course Canvas site.

## ASSIGNMENTS

The course is evaluated on a scale of 100 total points, so that an assignment worth 15 points, for example, will account for 15% of the final seminar grade.

During our stay in Dakar, students can expect to have access to wifi, however connections can be unreliable. Our final exam and paper will be due after our departure from Dakar and will be submitted via the designated Canvas link.

### ARRIVAL BASELINE QUIZ ON PRE-DEPARTURE READINGS (10 POINTS)

On our first week of class in Dakar, students will take a short quiz on the readings and discussions covered in our pre-departure meetings.

### 2 REFLECTION PAPERS (10 POINTS EACH)

These will be due on Monday of weeks 2 and 3. The reflection papers will consider both readings and the learning experiences of the seminar. Papers should be about 3 pages in length.

### COLLABORATIVE PROJECT WITH KADDU YARAAX (10 POINTS)

The final presentation project will be a collaborative, process-based assignment that begins with our week-2 group discussions, includes group work sessions with Kàddu Yaraax, and ends with the final presentation on Thursday of week 3. The content of the final presentation will be based on the small groups' discussions and ideas regarding topics covered in lectures and readings. Presentations can include creative, performed

sketches, staged interactions with the audience, or a discussion of a central issue around the theme of culture and development. Students will *not* be assessed based on their comfort level or skill presenting or performing before an audience. They will be assessed based on their willingness to engage with their Senegalese and CU peers around the issue the group has chosen to address. The objective of this exercise is to facilitate active exchange among young students of widely different backgrounds as they collaborate in the creation of a public presentation focused on the importance of social change and global awareness. The student is therefore expected to bring a level of critical engagement and openness to the exercise so as to participate in making the group work sessions and presentations an open space of discussion and interaction. Professor Valente-Quinn will be on hand at all times, and students are free to discuss any concerns or questions they may have at any point of the seminar. This assignment focuses on the third (collaborative learning) of our learning goals.

### FINAL EXAM (20 POINTS)

There will be a relatively short final exam on the last day of class. The exam will focus less on facts or memorization and will rather ask students to engage in critical thinking on some of the main issues addressed over the course of our seminar.

### FINAL PAPER (25 POINTS)

This will be an 8-page final paper due 2 weeks after the global seminar. Topics for this assignment will vary depending on each student's major and interests. But students must discuss their topics with Professor Valente-Quinn beforehand. Paper topics will take the form of a question. For example, students of French might ask, "How important is the French language in Senegal today?" Or a theater student may ask, "Is theater an effective tool for social change in a country like Senegal?" Students will attempt to answer their chosen question drawing now from their own experience as well as our readings, lectures and discussions.

### PARTICIPATION (15 POINTS)

The overall participation grade will reflect each student's preparedness in class, respect toward his or her Senegalese and CU peers, willingness to participate actively in questions and collaborative projects, and overall contribution to making the global seminar a fruitful and intellectually engaging experience for all.

## COURSE CALENDAR

Required readings (available on Canvas) are written in red and must be read before class. See the "Readings" section below for full bibliographic info. Assignments to prepare for a given class meeting are written in blue.

### PRE-DEPARTURE (IN BOULDER, DATES AND TIMES SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Topic: Introductions, Syllabus, Orientation.

Read: *Slimbach, Becoming World Wise*, pp. 14-28.

Watch: *Sembène, Borom Sarrett*

Topic: History, culture and customs of Senegal

Read: *Grabski, Market Imaginary*

### IN DAKAR / LOCATIONS: AT PROVIDER'S, OR KADDU YARAAX HEADQUARTERS

WEEK 1, MAY 9-13

Upon arrival (May 7):

- Students will be picked up from the airport and taken to their accommodations. We will have a welcome dinner for students who arrive early enough.

Sunday. May 8

- There will be a first orientation organized on this day dealing with things like getting around the city and negotiating a taxi.

Mon. May 9,

Topic: Orientation.

Read: *Aminata Sow Fall, The Beggars' Strike* (first half)

Prepare: [Quiz on pre-departure readings and discussions](#)

Tues. May 10,

Topic: Islam in Senegal, Sufism today

Read: *Villalón, "Islamism in West Africa: Senegal,"*

Wed. May 11,

Topic: Colonial history and francophone culture

Read: *De Jong, "Recycling Recognition."*

Thurs. May 12

Topic: Postcolonialism and national culture

Read: *Bryson and Enz, "Fed Up"*

Fri. May 13

Sat. May 14

## WEEK 2, MAY 16 -20

### Mon. May 16

Topic: Guest speaker

Read: *Aminata Sow Fall, The Beggars' Strike* (second half)

Prepare: *Reflection paper # 1 due.*

### Tues. May 17

*Optional reading: Forsdyck, "Cette île n'est pas une île"; Ebron, "Tourists as Pilgrims."*

### Wed. May 18

Topic: Senegal and the global media

Read: *McLaughlin, Fiona, "Youssou N'Dour's 'Sant Yàlla/Egypt'"; Gueye, "Senegal's Fear of Outspoken Women."*

### Thurs. May 19

Topic: Guest speaker

Read: *Seynabou Diop, et. al. "Senegalese activists persevere despite setback"*

### Fri. May 20

Topic: Topics in Senegalese literature + post-visit discussion with Diol

Read: *Sembène, "Niiwam."*

### Sat. May 21

## WEEK 3, MAY 23- MAY 27

### Mon. May 23

Topic: Addressing cross-cultural social issues

Read: *Perry, Donna, "Muslim Child Disciples"; Oudenhuijsen, "Quietly queer in Senegal."*

Prepare: *Reflection paper # 2 due.*

### Tues. May 24

Topic: Guided group work on final presentations

Read: *Valente-Quinn, "Crafting the Popular Stage Space in Urban Senegal" (optional)*

Wed. May 25

Topic: Guided group work as class + group feedback on presentations

Prepare: [Presentation for class and KY troupe members](#)

Thurs. May 26

Topic: [Final presentation + discussion](#) with the Yarakh community

Fri. May 27

Topic: Exam, discussion of final projects and course conclusion.

Prepare: [Final project presentation](#)

Sat. May 28

- Departure

## READINGS AND FILMS

Bryson, Devin and Molly Krueger Enz. "Fed Up: Creating a New Type of Senegal through the Arts." *African Studies Quarterly*, 14, 3, 2014, 1-12.

Boahen, A. Adu. "The Operation of the Colonial System." *African Perspectives on Colonialism*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989, 58-93.

Buggenhagen, Beth. "Global Senegal." *Muslim Families in Global Senegal: Money Takes Care of Shame*, Indiana University Press, 2012, 14-38.

Cooper, Frederick. "Citizenship, self-government, and development: the possibilities of the post-war moment (excerpt)." *Africa Since 1940: The Past and the Present*, Cambridge University Press, 2002, 38-49.

Cooper, Frederick. "Development and Disappointment: social and economic change in an unequal world, 1945-2000." *Africa Since 1940: The Past and the Present*, Cambridge University Press, 2002, 91-132.

Cooper, Frederick. "Senegal: managing the gate." *Africa Since 1940: The Past and the Present*, Cambridge University Press, 2002, 168-171.

De Jong, Ferdinand. "Recycling Recognition: The Monument as *Objet Trouvé* of the Postcolony." *Journal of Material Culture*, 13, 2, 2008, 195-214.

Diouf, Mamadou. "Introduction: The Public Role of the 'Good' Islam: Sufi Islam and the Administration of Pluralism. A Senegalese Story." *Tolerance, Democracy and Sufism in Senegal*, edited by Mamadou Diouf, Columbia University Press, 2013, 1-35.

Ebron, Paulla. "Tourists as Pilgrims: Fashioning of Transatlantic Politics." *American Ethnologist*, 26, 4, 1999, 910-932.

Fall, Aminata Sow. *The Beggars' Strike, or, The Dregs of Society*. Translated by Dorothy Blair, Longman, 1986.

Forsdyck, Charles. "Cette île n'est pas une île: Locating Gorée." *At the Limits of Memory, Legacies of Slavery in the Francophone World*, edited by Nicola Frith and Kate Hodgson, Liverpool University Press, 2014, 131-153.

Grabski, Joanna, director. *Market Imaginary*. Indiana University Press, 2013.

Irele, Abiola. "What is Négritude?" *African Literature: An Anthology of Criticism and Theory*, edited by Tejumola Olaniyan and Ato Quayson, Blackwell Publishing, 2007, 203-209. (optional)

McLaughlin, Fiona. "Islam and Popular Music in Senegal: The Emergence of a 'New Tradition.'" *Africa*, 67, 4, 1997, 560-581.

--. "Youssou N'Dour's 'Sant Yàlla/Egypt': a musical experiment in Sufi modernity." *Popular Music*, 30, 1, 2011, 71-87.

Meredith, Martin. "The Birth of Nations." *The Fate of Africa: A History of the Continent Since Independence*, Public Affairs, 2011, 141-161.

Manning, Patrick. "Economy and Society, 1940-1985." *Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa, 1880-1995*, Cambridge University Press, 1998, 110-132.

Perry, Donna. "Muslim Child Disciples, Global Civil Society, and Children's Rights in Senegal: The Discourse of Strategic Structuralism." *Anthropological Quarterly*, 77, 1, 2004, 47-86.

Piot, Charles. *Doing Development in West Africa: A Reader by and for Undergraduates*, edited by Charles Piot, Duke University Press, 2016.

Quinn, Brian. "De-centering Theatrical Heritage: Forum Theater in Contemporary Senegal." *African Studies Quarterly*, 14, 3, 2014, 75-88.

Rabine, Leslie. "Dressing Up in Dakar." *L'Esprit Créateur*, 37, 1, 1997, 84-108.

Renders, Marleen. "An Ambiguous Adventure: Muslim Organisations and the Discourse of 'Development' in Senegal." *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 32, 1, 2002, 61-82.

Sieveking, Nadine. "We Don't Want Equality; We Want to be Given our Rights': Muslim Women Negotiating Global Development Concepts in Senegal." *Africa Spectrum*, 42, 1, 2007, 29-48.

Sembène, Ousmane, director. *Borom Sarret*. Produced by Ousmane Sembène, 1963.



Senghor, Léopold Sédar. "Negritude: A Humanism of the Twentieth Century." *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory*, edited by Patrick Williams and Laura Chisman, Columbia University Press, 1994, 27-35.

Slimbach, Richard. *Becoming World Wise: A Guide to Global Learning*, Stylus, 2010.

Stepan, Alfred. "Rituals of Respect: Sufis and Secularists in Senegal in Comparative Perspective." *Comparative Politics*, 44, 4, 2012, 379-401.

Sumner, Andy and Michael Tribe. "What Could Development Studies Be?" *Development Issues in Practice*, 18, 6, 2008, 755-766.

Villalón, Leonardo. "ASR Focus: Islamism in West Africa." *African Studies Review*, 47, 2, 2004, 61-71.

## ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT

I am committed to providing everyone the support and services needed to participate in this course. If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to your professor a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner (for exam accommodations provide your letter at least one week prior to the exam) so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or by e-mail at [dsinfo@colorado.edu](mailto:dsinfo@colorado.edu). If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Medical Conditions: Injuries, Surgeries, and Illnesses guidelines under Quick Links at Disability Services website and discuss your needs with me.

## RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

[Campus policy regarding religious observances](#) requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required assignments/attendance. If this applies to you, please speak with me directly as soon as possible at the beginning of the term.

## CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, ability, and nationality. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the policies on [class behavior](#) and [the student code](#).

## DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU-Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. CU-Boulder will not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment based upon Protected Classes or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. For purposes of this CU-Boulder policy, "Protected Classes" refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at 303-492-5550. The [full policy on discrimination and harassment](#) has more information.

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All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to [the academic integrity policy](#) of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu); 303-735-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). The [Honor Code Office](#) has more information.