

CARLETON COLLEGE FRANCOPHONE SEMINAR IN MALI

Winter 2012

PROGRAM DATES

Late December 2011 to early March 2012;
The program dates will correspond roughly to Carleton's winter term.

DIRECTOR

Chérif Keïta, Professor of Francophone Studies

Chérif Keïta has been at Carleton since 1985, where he teaches French and courses on Francophone African and Caribbean literature, African cinema, and Mande culture. He has directed four Carleton French language and culture programs to Pau and Paris, one St. Olaf interim in South Africa, and six programs to Mali. A native of Mali, he grew up in Bamako, the capital city, where the Carleton program will be based.

PREREQUISITES

Completion or exemption of the Carleton French language requirement. Preference will be given to candidates who have demonstrated their interest in Africa through previous coursework or living (volunteer, internship, etc.) experience in Africa or the developing world in general.

LOCATION

This program is aimed at introducing students to the rich culture and history of Mali as well as its daily existence as one of the most economically challenged countries in the world. Located in the center of West Africa, Mali (formerly called the French Soudan) is dotted with cities such as Segou, Timbuktu,

Jenne, and Mopti, where the blending of Islam and Black African traditions in the Middle Ages and the rich tradition of cross-cultural exchange have created one of Africa's most inviting and prepossessing cultures. A country of many ethnic groups--such as the Bambara, Malinke, Fula, Khassonke, Tuareg, Songhai, Dogon, and Senoufo--modern Mali was shaped by the rich political and cultural legacy of the Empire of Mali (11th century to the 14th century), the prestige of which is celebrated to this day through a vibrant tradition of epic songs, narratives, and unique performance and plastic art forms. Emerging in 1960 from many decades of French colonial domination and in 1991 from the stranglehold of one-party politics and military rule, Mali has been experiencing many successes on its road to democracy, with several political parties, a vocal independent press, and a free market economy.

COURSE OF STUDY, 18 CREDITS

All courses will be taught in French. The following courses will be required of all the participants:

FREN STUDIES 290-17: DIRECTED READING (2 CREDITS) S/CR/NC

Directed reading during the month of December 2011 (winter break) on Malian history and culture.

Instructor: Professor Chérif Keïta

FREN 250-07: FILM AND SOCIETY IN MALI (6 CREDITS)

This course will concentrate on the dynamics of traditional orality within the art of cinema in Mali. Feature films and documentaries by award-winning filmmakers such as Souleymane Cissé, Cheick Oumar Sissoko, Adama Drabo, Dany Kouyaté, and Abderrahmane Sissako will be screened and analyzed. Discussions with some of these filmmakers will introduce the student to the challenges and successes of filmmaking in economically-challenged countries such as Mali and Burkina Faso.

Instructor: Staff

FREN 251-07: NEGOTIATING THE PAST--THE CHALLENGES OF NATION-BUILDING IN MALI (4 CREDITS)

This course will look at various issues in Malian history, (ancient and modern), and the process of political and economic change. A component of this course will be an introduction to conversational Bambara, the lingua franca of Mali.

Instructors: Faculty from local universities

FREN 252-07: LITERATURE AND SOCIETY IN MALI (6 CREDITS)

This course will focus on the theme of social change in different genres of Malian literature, from the colonial period to the present. By studying oral and written works by traditional and modern poets, novelists, and playwrights such as Seydou Badian and

Massa Makan Diabaté, Moussa Konaté, and Amadou Hampaté Bâ, the student will get an understanding of issues such as education, marriage, and traditional vs. modern political power in contemporary Malian society. Meetings will be arranged with many writers and oral performers.

Instructor: Professor Chérif Keïta with Malian teaching assistants.

HOUSING

Students will live with Malian families, with a great likelihood of sharing a room with a host brother or sister. They will have breakfast and dinner with their families unless other program commitments intervene.

EXCURSIONS

Upon arrival in Bamako, the capital city, the participants will travel by road to a small village for an orientation to life in a Malian family, including some training in Bambara and in various aspects of Malian social etiquette. The group will then return to the capital city to be placed in host families. Numerous excursions will be organized in Bamako and its surrounding areas, and to other historical sites around Mali: Segou, the capital of the old Bambara Kingdom; Mopti, called the "Venice of Mali"; the Dogon country, known as the land of the cliff-dwellers; the neighboring country of Burkina Faso, and possibly the medieval city of Timbuktu. A number of non-credit orientation meetings in fall term 2011 at Carleton are considered part of the seminar.

EXPENSES

The 2011-2012 Carleton comprehensive fee covers orientation, room and board, instruction, public transportation in Bamako, group excursions and some cultural events. Students are expected to pay for their own airfare between the US and Bamako (Mali) and for books and personal expenses, as well as the expenses of any independent travel. An estimated \$400 would be a reasonable amount for personal expenses and the purchase of some local artifacts. Student financial aid is applicable as on campus. See the Off-campus Studies Office or website at <http://go.carleton.edu/ocs> for further information regarding loans and other subjects related to financial aid.

INFORMATION MEETING

There will be a seminar information meeting on Thursday, April 7, 2011 from 5-6 PM in LDC 104.

APPLICATIONS

Application forms are available from the Office of Off-Campus Studies as well as on its website: go.carleton.edu/ocs.

Applications are due by 4:30 PM, Friday, April 15, 2011 to Mary Tatge,

Administrative Assistant, Language and Dining Center, room 340. Individual interviews will be scheduled with the Director. Students will be notified of acceptance shortly thereafter.

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