Course Syllabus: Working, Studying and Conducting Research Abroad
(Dates Revised)

'Never make assumptions about another person's actions when working, studying or conducting research in another country as the difference in his/her culture may change the meaning of the action'

Week 1 (January 22) – Session 1: Introduction and Overview: The Post-World War II World (1945-Present) – So what?

**Class activities:** Introduce the teacher; review the syllabus; acknowledge the students' experience and their expectations of the class; present/discuss some basic materials to consult related to working, studying and conducting research abroad: The CIA World Factbook: 2016, and Mark Wilson, *The Medic's Guide to Work and Electives around the World: for doctors, nurses and other professionals*, 3rd edition, 2009.

**Required reading:** Bell and Gilbert, *The World since 1945: An International History*, 2nd edition, 2017, pp 8-36. (While this reading is relevant to discussions that will take place in this session of the class, 'required readings' generally relate to the next session. For example, the required readings assigned in Session 2 will be discussed in Session 3.)


**Writing Assignment:** Each student should prepare a one-page statement explaining why he/she wants to attend the course and to work, study and do research abroad. This statement is due on January 29 at the beginning of class (Week 2, Session 2).

Week 2 (January 29) – Session 2: The Origins and Evolution of International Development – Why, where and how. (Why is the US involved in other countries?)

**Class activities:** Review/discuss the Week 1 reading – required and other; discuss colonialism, the Cold War, the economic dimensions of the post-World War II order, the end of the colonial empires (1945-1982) and the rationale for international development assistance.

**Required reading for Session 3:** Rudyard Kipling, *The White Man's Burden* (available on the internet); Bell and Gilbert, *The World since 1945: An International History*, pp. 145-188. (A handout listing former colonial territories and their dates of independence will be distributed.)

**Other reading:** The literature on colonialism, its origins and the measures supporting de-colonialization during the post-World War II period is vast. There are many fine studies on the origins of colonialism and its end in specific countries. *Empires at War: A Short History of Modern Asia since World War II* by Francis Pike (London: I. B. Tauris, 2010) is an exhaustive treatise on the transforming dynamics in the Asian region. Many studies on colonialism and its
end focus on nations that were once part of the English or French empires. For a view into other empires and their colonies, I suggest that the following books on the Democratic Republic of Congo (once Zaire), a former Belgian colony, and Angola, a former Portuguese colony, might be of interest: Adam Hochschild, King Leopold’s Ghost, 1999 and Antonio Lobo Antunes, The Land at the End of the World, 2011. Joseph Conrad’s classic The Heart of Darkness (originally published in 1899) should be considered along with Robin D. G. Kelley’s essay in Aime Cesaire’s Discourse on Colonialism (2000).

Week 3 (February 5) – Session 3: The Practice and Results of International Development (ODA): Funders and Implementers

Class activities: This session will review/discuss the Week 2 readings – required and other; discuss international development and official development assistance (ODA) – the actors, the program focus from 1945 to the present, and the results to date.

The presentation and discussions will consider the roles of governments, the private sector, multi-lateral and bi-lateral agencies and non-governmental organizations with respect to their respective policies and programs in advancing well-being in the developing world. Development programming will be a focus of the discussion. (Why are first world countries involved in international development? Why should research be conducted and programs implemented?)


Information on the next Session and Assignment. Distribution of research studies and guidelines. These will be reviewed during the first session on Field Skills (Session 4) that will take place in Week 5, immediately following Spring Break.

Week 4 (February 12) – Session 4: An Introduction to Field Skills (1) – Data, data, data! (or) Lies, damn lies and statistics!

Class activities: Summarize/discuss the Week 3 readings – required and other; introduce the tools and skills needed to work effectively outside (and within the U.S.) on studies and projects/programs; formulate an understanding of the meaning and relevance of common terms in international development parlance, i.e., policy, program, proposal, research study, IRB, etc.

This session and the next two will discuss quantitative and qualitative studies and the methods and technologies needed to conduct these studies. These sessions will also share information on proposal development, project management, the skills required to define, implement and evaluate projects/programs, and the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to collect data and to manage studies and programs.
**Required reading for the next session:** Read carefully the research studies provided by Mr. Michael Thomas, the guest lecturer, who will lead this session and session 5 (week 6). Also, reserve a few minutes to read *Ithaca*, a poem by Constantine Cavafy (1863-1933) that can be found on the internet.

**Assignment:** During this session, students will be assigned a study topic/question and using a team approach prepare a *research design* on a specific ‘topic’ that will be presented and ‘critiqued’ during Session 5 (February 26) in Week 6. Guidelines will be provided for preparing the design, and students will be permitted to talk to others, including those on other teams, to prepare the research design. The study design will be submitted at the beginning of class on February 26.

**Guest presenter:** Mr. Michael N. Thomas.

**Week 5 (February 19) -- Session 5: An Introduction to Field Skills (2) -- What is *good* research?**

**Class activities:** Review/discuss the material on field skills shared in Week 5. Each team will present a study design that responds to/addresses the test topic assigned by Mr. Thomas in Week 5.

**Required reading for the next session:** Read Jim Myers, *The Undressed Manager*, 2009, pp. 3-11, 95-108 and 162-175. Also, become familiar with the Glossary of Terms on pages xvii-xxx. Myers starts his slim volume by noting: “more often than not organizations send their well-meaning people out to some developing country with little more than a handful of money and some encouraging words.” Myers’ handbook makes an effort to provide some support and guidance to the energetic, but perhaps inexperienced, new ‘Project Manager.’ (*Copies of Myers’ book will be distributed.*)

Also, read examples of Requests for a Proposal (RFPs) and the guidelines on how to respond to RFPs that will be distributed in class. Myers’ book and the other materials will be discussed in Week 7, Session 6 (March 5).

**Assignment:** Prepare a draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for an assignment related to a task proposed in one of the Requests for Proposal. The Terms of Reference are due at the beginning of class on March 5.

**Guest presenter:** Mr. Michael N. Thomas

**Week 6 (February 26) -- Session 6: An Introduction to Field Skills (3) -- Project Management -- What are the skills of a good project manager?**

**Class activities:** Review/discuss the assigned material on responding to proposals, designing and managing projects/programs, and preparing terms of reference (ToRs).


**Week 7 (March 5) – Session 7: Personal Safety and Security: What to do when the unexpected happens, and how NOT to get into a situation where the unexpected might happen**

**Class Activities:** Review the required (and other) readings and discuss the measures to take to ensure personal safety and security. This session calls on students to participate in ‘role play’ scenarios that pose different safety and security risks.

**Required reading for the next session:** Session 8 (March 19) will examine culture, i.e., the set of customs, traditions, values, language and religion, etc. of a society or community. Understanding at least two dimensions of culture, i.e., the assumptions, values and beliefs, and the behaviors, and living and working appropriately is essential to working, studying and conducting research abroad in an effective manner. Read Craig Storti, *Figuring Foreigners Out: A Practical Guide*, 1999, pp. 5-22.


**Guest presenter:** Mr. Nigel Stuart.

**Week 8 (March 12) – Spring Break**

**Week 9 (March 19) – Session 8: Culture – the meaning of words, dress, behavior, etc.**

**Class activities:** Session 8 will review the required (and other) readings and discuss culture. The class will suggest how to avoid acting/making judgements when in an unfamiliar location until cultural differences are understood and valued. The session will also provide some perspective on how to interpret the behaviors of others, not from your point of view but from theirs.

**Required reading for the next session:** Session 9 (March 26) in Week 10 will consider two important issues: ethics and gender. For the discussion on ethics, please read: David A. Crocker, ‘Development Ethics: Sources, Agreements and Controversies,’ 2004, and The World Association of Non-Government Organizations, ‘Code of Ethics and Conduct for NGOs,’ 2004. (*These publications will be distributed.*)

The session will also discuss gender and distinguish between gender and development, and promoting the development of women and girls. Read: Raewyn Connell and Rebecca Pearse, *Gender in World Perspective*, 3rd edition, pp. 1-12.

**Guest presenter:** Professor Jocelyn Lim Chua

**Week 10 (March 26), Session 9: Ethics and Gender – what are these issues and why are they important?**

**Class activities:** This session will review the readings and discuss ethics and gender in the context of working, studying and conducting research abroad.

**Required reading for the next session:** Session 10 (April 2) will address the challenge of defining/managing humanitarian assistance, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. While the majority of aid funding continues to support international development initiatives, the number of crises associated with natural disasters and political instability is steadily increasing.

**Week 11 (April 2), Session 10: Defining/Managing Humanitarian Assistance, IDPs and Refugees: New and Pressing Challenges in place, often in fragile states**

**Class activities:** This session will define and discuss the challenges of providing humanitarian assistance, ensuring the wellbeing of internally displaced people and working with refugees. The session will discuss these three different ‘conditions,’ their relationship to development and the measures in place/proposed to address the needs of those facing these conditions.

**Required reading for the next session:** There is no required reading for Session 11. Members of the UNC administration will provide information on visas, travel and living checklists, and university travel procedure and requirements. This session will also outline what to do in case of accidents and emergencies and maintaining communication while abroad.

**Week 12 (April 9), Session 11: University Support while Overseas: Travelling while at UNC – requirements and resources – what to do and when to do it.**

**Class activities:** Members of the university administration will discuss what UNC will do to support your work overseas and the requirements that must be completed to qualify for studying, working or conducting research abroad.

**Required reading and assignment for the next session:** There is no required reading for Session 12. However, students are to prepare and submit three written questions at the beginning of class for consideration by the panelists who will address the class in Week 13 (April 16). The questions should relate to your country of focus and the issues discussed in previous sessions, i.e., research, project management, ethics, gender, environment, etc. I will review and grade the questions.

**Guest presenters:** Members of the university administration.
Week 13 (April 16), Session 12: **Voices from the Field – Challenges, Successes, Frustrations, etc.**

**Class activities:** A panel of students from the US and overseas will briefly share their experiences and their counsel. The students will also respond to the questions submitted by the students in the course.

**Guest presenters:** US and Foreign students at UNC.

Week 14 (April 23), Session 13: **A World in Disarray?**

**Class activities:** This session will summarize the topics treated during the course, clarify any unresolved issues, contrast the challenges of the world of 1945 with the world of 2017 and debate the continued relevance of working, studying and conducting research abroad.

**Final Examination – Distributed in our last class and Due April 30, 2018**

**Course Assessment:**

Grades will be determined on the basis of student participation in class, on the quality and completeness of the assigned written work, and performance on the final examination. The requirements for each of the activities listed in the table below will be defined and discussed in class.

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<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
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<th>Possible Points</th>
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<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>Attend class</td>
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<td>Student Statement of Purpose</td>
<td>Jan. 29, 2018</td>
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<td>Research Study Design</td>
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<td>Three-page Terms of Reference (ToR)</td>
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<td>Three Questions for Student Panel</td>
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<td>Final Examination</td>
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