



1. Will this new course affect a current program?  
 If "yes", has a Program Revision Form been submitted concurrently?

Yes  No   
 Yes  No

2. Teaching Department:

Geography

3. Administering Faculty/Unit:

Science

6. Responsible Instructor

T. Merediith

4. Campus  
 (Downtown, Macdonald, Off Campus, Distance Ed, Other – specify)

Downtown

5. Effective Term of Implementation  
 (Ex. Sept. 2004 = 200409)

Term:

200801

7. Course Title (Limit 30 Characters) - required for all courses:

Res in Society & Dev in Africa

9. Course Title to Appear in the Calendar (optional)  
 (Limit 59 characters):  
 Note: This can ONLY be an expansion of word(s) abbreviated in the 30 character course title above.

Research in Society and Development in Africa

10. Credit Weight  
 (or CEU's for non-credit CE courses):

3

8. Course Number(s)  
 Indicate course number & the number of terms spanned:  
 (tick all that apply)

Subject/course number: GEOG 451

Course(s) Span:

- 1 term
- 2 consecutive terms (D1, D2)
- 2 non-consecutive terms (N1, N2)
- 3 consecutive terms (J1, J2, J3)

11. Rationale for new course

McGill's experience teaching in Africa has demonstrated that, to optimize the educational benefit of field study in Africa, it is essential that students be exposed to certain elements of a core curriculum and that they be required to participate in active research. This course is intended to do that. It provides a unifying core curriculum for students and introduce them to field research. Each theme in the core curriculum is taught in a module that optimizes pedagogical use of local sites and institutional partners. In addition, students will work in research teams that will allow active engagement with the areas we travel through and an ongoing comparative analysis of the sites we visit. Students will keep individual field journals to record and synthesize their experience. These activities will enhance the educational benefit of field study in Africa.

12. Course Description  
 (as it will appear in the Calendar [maximum 50 words]):  
 (N.B. Faculty of Medicine must append complete course outline)

Three intersecting components: 1) core development themes including culture change, environmental conservation, water, health, development (urban and rural), governance and conflict resolution, 2) research techniques for topics related to core themes, including ethics, risk, field methods and data analysis 3) field documentation, scientific recording and communication.

13. Supplementary information to appear in the Calendar in addition to the course description.  
 Such as: equivalent course(s), contact hours, enrolment limitations, language of instruction etc.  
 Please enter the information as it should appear in the calendar notes.

14. Schedule Types(s):  
(Enter all that apply – see course guidelines for a complete list.)  
(i.e. Lecture, Labs, Tutorial)

	Hours per Week		Hours per Week		Hours per Week
lectures	<input type="text" value="2"/>	Field visits	<input type="text" value="3"/>		<input type="text"/>
seminars	<input type="text" value="1"/>	Field exercises	<input type="text" value="3"/>		<input type="text"/>
Total Hours per Week:					<input type="text" value="9"/>
Total Number of Weeks:					<input type="text" value="10"/>

15. Projected Enrolment:

16. Required text and/or preliminary reading list sent to library?

 Yes     No

17. Prerequisite(s) (Courses or Tests)  
Specify course number(s) or name(s) of test(s):

  


If the student does not have a prerequisite should web registration be blocked?  
 Yes     No

If "Yes" complete A and B:

A. Indicate minimum grade or test score(s) the student must attain in prerequisite course(s) or test(s):

B. Can the prerequisite course(s) or test(s) be taken in the same term as this course?  
 Yes     No

18. Corequisite(s) Course Number(s):  
Specify course number(s) and title(s):

  


If the student does not register for the corequisite in the same term should web registration be blocked?  
 Yes     No

19. Restriction(s):

  

  


20. Consultation Reports Attached  
 Yes     N/A

21. Additional Course Charges (must be approved by the Fee Policy Committee)

Description of Fee (e.g. screening fee)	Amount
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

22. Requires Teaching, Physical, or Financial Resources Not Currently Available (attach explanation)  
 Yes     No

**INFORMATION FOR ADMISSIONS, RECRUITMENT & REGISTRAR'S OFFICE**

*To be completed by the Faculty*

Slot Course:  Yes  No

Thesis Component:  Yes  No

*To be completed by ARR*

CIP Code

*For Continuing Education Use*

CE Admin. Unit :

CE Non-Grant Courses:

Flat Rate: CdnFlat Rate:  Yes  N/A

**23. Approvals:**

Routing Sequence	Departmental Meeting	Departmental Chair	Other Faculty	Curric/Academic Committee	Faculty	SCTP
Name	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Signature	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Date	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Departmental Contact Person (name/phone/email)	<input type="text"/>					

**Canadian Field Studies in Africa  
African Field Studies Semester 2008**

***GEOG 451 - Research in Society and Development in Africa***

**Coordination:** Thom Meredith and CFSIA faculty.

**Project assistance:** Bridget Meigs, Silvanos Otieno, Yussuf Watol

**Rationale** Field study in Africa is a unique and valuable experience. Most of the courses taught in the African Field Studies Semester (AFSS) are intensive courses that run for approximately three weeks and address specific topics. Two courses run for the full duration of the field semester and serve as a unifying framework for the full field experience, as a means to ensure all students are exposed to certain themes that are essential to study in Africa, and as a means to introduce students to research. This is one such course; it focuses on the role that social science plays in understanding and advancing sustainable development in Africa.

**Content** The course has three goals: students should

- 1) learn about critical issues in East Africa and about on-going research that addresses these issues,
- 2) participate in interdisciplinary team research that exposes students to field research experience and to local conditions related to their research topic and
- 3) develop powers of observation and independent inquiry.

The course consists of three activities related to these goals. Each is outlined below. The instructional approaches and learning outcomes for each are presented at the end of each description.

**1) Core Curriculum Modules: learn about existing research in East Africa (35% of grade)**

The program work with leaders in various local research and development institutions. Eight core themes have been identified (Table 1) that allow students to work with McGill instructors and local researchers to study research issues, targets and methods. Each theme will be developed in a “module” that will last several days and draw on attributes of the site we are in. Each of the eight modules will be graded out of 10 marks, with half (5) coming from daily exercises and half (5) from a final assignment that will be completed within the module. Instructional approaches include lectures, field visits, field exercises and final write-ups.

Learning outcomes include knowledge of

- principles of the core theme (such as health and nutrition)
- research priorities, programs and goals
- research methods and problems
- research needs and opportunities

In total, these modules will count for 35% of the final grade (17.5% exercises, 17.5% write-ups)

**2) Student Research: participating in interdisciplinary team activities (50% of grade)**

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are an important statement of an international consensus on development priorities and they require integrated solutions drawing on natural and social science. Selected MDGs provide an ideal framework for integrated, interdisciplinary, team research. Six feasible research themes are outlined below (Table 2). Students, working in teams, will be expected to define manageable topics, develop and adapt repeatable methodologies for collecting data at each site, conduct the research during assigned times at each visit, synthesize the information they collect, and then present a final report on the work.

Because this is a field program where the entire group resides and studies together, there is much closer contact between instructors and students, allowing for more informed continual evaluation. Grading of the group project will be based on

- development of research statement (background, importance, goals) (10 marks)
- development of methodology (10 marks)
- execution of methods in the field (30 marks)
- analysis and synthesis of data (20 marks)
- final presentation of results (20 marks)
- individual contributions (10 marks)

Instructional approaches include seminars for planning and periodic review, field visits, field data collection, written reports plus a plenary final presentation session. Learning outcomes include knowledge of

- core issues in research subject area
- applied field research practices
- conditions in areas where data are collected
- application of their own finding to on-going research in the subject area.

In total, these activities will count for 50% of the final grade.

### **3) Independent inquiry (15% of grade)**

Faculty will support active and systematic observation, documentation, integration and analysis of experiences occurring during the program. Students will participate in group activities and “round table” seminars at which those activities are discussed. Each student will keep a field journal that demonstrates systematic recording of and reflection on experiences. Grading is based on participation (5%) and the field journals (10%). Instructional approaches include group activities, seminars on group activities, individual experience, analysis and interpretation of the individual experience, recording experience and interpretations in field journals. Learning outcomes include development of

- the capacity for independent observation
- the capacity to participate in “round table” seminars of complex issues
- the understanding broad array of African issues that arise in the field
- the discipline of keeping a field journal

In total, these activities will count for 15% of the final grade.

### **Grading Summary**

Core Curriculum Modules	35%
8 modules with	
10 marks for field exercises	
and final write-up	
Research	50%
10 marks research statement	
10 marks methodology	
30 marks execution	
20 marks analysis	
20 marks presentation	
10 marks individual contribution	
Independent Inquiry	15%
5 marks participation	
10 marks journal	

**Link to Co-requisite** This course is one of two required courses for the students participating in the AFSS. The courses are co-requisites and represent natural science and social science perspectives on issues that require interdisciplinary analyses. Activities for these courses will be coordinated and student assignments will be set and assessed according to the social science, natural science or interdisciplinary characteristics of the activity. In some cases assignments will be set and evaluated only for social science or natural science objectives. In other cases, assignments will be integrated and evaluation will be collaborative.

**Reading:** A course pack will be available and individual readings will be presented in association with modules, special events and research topics.

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**Student Integrity:** Ideas are the currency of universities and they must be treated with the appropriate respect. We are now obliged to post the following quote (Article 15) from the Handbook on Student Rights and Responsibilities. *“No student shall, with intent to deceive, represent the work of another person as his or her own in any academic writing, essay, thesis, research report, project or assignment submitted in a course or program of study or represent as his or her own an entire essay or work of another, whether the material so represented constitutes a part or the entirety of the work submitted.”*

## **Appendices**

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<b>Table 1: List of themes and descriptions of Core Curriculum Modules</b>
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### **1 Integrated conservation planning**

Biodiversity conservation and economic/social development are increasingly seen as being closely intertwined, with a history of conflict but a putative potential for compatibility. Drawing on primate ecology, habitat diversity and conservation policy, the management of Kibale Forest vis a vis the surrounding community provide an ideal location to consider integrated conservation planning.

### **2 Water conservation**

Water is vital, conservation is critical, pressure on resources is mounting, conflict and negotiations will be inevitable. Lake Victoria is immensely important and it feeds what is one of the most contested river systems. Yala Wetland is important not only for biodiversity and water conservation, but also for its role in sustaining local culture. It is the site of controversial large scale drainage and agribusiness development programs.

### **3 Health and Nutrition**

Human health in Africa is compromised by two major factors: malnutrition and disease. AIDS and malaria are the most discussed diseases, but GI diseases related to food and hygiene are the most lethal. Food systems must be compatible with local practices and production and technological capabilities, but they must also be environmentally reasonable and economically sound. Mbita is the site of advanced agricultural research and also of ambitious health management programs.

#### **4 Wildlife management and land tenure.**

Closely related to Theme 1, the issue of land tenure and land use conflict is critical in resolving tensions between conservation/tourism interests and the economic aspiration of land owners and land users. Masai Mara and Laikipia are excellent sites to explore these issues.

#### **5 Rural Development**

Rural areas of East Africa are in a process of social transition; traditions are strong and cultural diversity is great, and yet communities have been exposed to common external transformative forces. Aspirations, expectations, capabilities and experiences vary greatly as rural communities deal with the dilemmas of development. The transition from the Mara to Nguruman provide an array of conditions of rural development. The community of Elangata Wuas provides an opportunity to explore, over an extended period, the internal, community level, intentions and responses to development challenges and opportunities.

#### **6 Urban Development**

As circumstances change in rural areas, urban settlements play an ever more important role in the economic and social life of developing area populations. The urban challenges are enormous: overcrowding, food, water, waste, employment, housing, transportation, health and education, security, and governance are critical, inter-linked issues. Nairobi suffers from all of these challenges but is also a global hub of research and innovation.

#### **7 Biodiversity resources and institutional management of conservation programs**

Linked to themes 1 and 4, this module examines the distinct biodiversity assets of three contrasting environments and examines the strategies adopted by research organisations for management and conservation.

#### **8 History, Governance and Conflict**

It is the right of every person to know their own history, and it is knowledge of history that informs present and future actions. A knowledge of East African history is thus essential for understanding current problems and for policy making and governance in the region. This part of the module deals with the history and impact of human migrations, and with the history of conflict and of conflict resolution in East Africa.

<p><b>Table 2. Millenium Development Goals that can serve as research topics</b> (projects selected for MDGs with feasible social and natural science field research components)</p>
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**Goal 1** Eradicate extreme poverty & hunger (***Research topic 1***)

**Goal 2** Achieve universal primary education (***Research topic 2***)

**Goal 3** Promote gender equality & empower women (*merge with 1 and 2*)

**Goal 4** Reduce child mortality (*see MDG 5 and 7*)

**Goal 5** Improve maternal health (***Research topic 3** but focus on health infrastructure and delivery*)

**Goal 6** Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria & other diseases (***Research topic 4** but focus on malaria*)

**Goal 7** Ensure environmental sustainability (***Research topics 5 and 6***)

**Goal 8** Develop a global partnership for development (*General: all should be aware of intuitional partnerships, governance issues and agency resources*)