



THE PEACE ADVOCATE



**An occasional newsletter about SMCM's Gambia PEACE program
Special Issue Focus: Fall 2011 Signature Semester
Number 9**

Mission: To expand the exchange of SMCM and other non-Gambian students, faculty and staff with the University of The Gambia and other educational institutions in The Gambia and Senegal to increase understanding and enhance academic excellence among all partners.

This special issue of *The PEACE Advocate* is to inform the SMCM community about plans for the PEACE program's Signature Semester in The Gambia for the fall, 2011. The dates for the fall program are August 23 – December 14, 2011.

The St. Mary's program in The Gambia, West Africa has grown steadily since its inception in 1996. Its designation as an SMCM Signature Program in 2006 was in recognition of a full decade of mutually beneficial collaborative activity with a wide range of educational, research and service organizations in The Gambia. Every year, SMCM students, faculty, staff, and community members travel to The Gambia through this program. SMCM's PEACE program in The Gambia is uniquely positioned to enhance academic excellence at both the University of The Gambia and St. Mary's College of Maryland.

This newsletter informs you about and invites you to support our PEACE program. Enjoy, and contact me if I can answer any questions.

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2011 Fall Signature Semester

On Tuesday, January 25, the International Education Office hosted an informational chat in the Glendening Annex. Nine SMCM students attended the session to learn more about the plans for the fall 2011 Signature Semester in The Gambia.

Applications for the fall semester are due March 1, 2011. Early submission of application paperwork will help to ensure a \$1200 (one thousand two hundred dollar) stipend to help defray the cost of RT airfare to Dakar. Please contact the International Education Office for more information.

For more information about the application process, see <http://www.smcm.edu/internationaleducation/Programs/gambia/index.html>

Introducing the 2011 Fall Signature Semester PEACE Lecturer

Ms. Susannah Chapman (PhD candidate, UGA) will be the PEACE lecturer in The Gambia for the fall semester, 2011. Ms. Chapman has been in The Gambia for over one year conducting her dissertation research among Gambian female rice farmers. As an undergraduate, she majored in anthropology and political science. Ms. Chapman's interests include food security, globalization, intellectual property rights, legal anthropology and political ecology. She speaks both French and Mandinka in addition to her native English.

Susannah will teach a required seminar course for all fall participants and students from the University of The Gambia, *Farmers, Food and Globalization in Senegambia: Transformations in Local Environments, Social Relations, Cultures, and Foodways*.

SMCM Courses for 2011 Fall Signature Semester in The Gambia

Required - ANTH 150 – *Gambian Languages and Culture* (fulfills SMCM Cultural Perspectives Core requirement). Instructor – Mr. Baboucarr Jallow (PEACE program).

Beginning with an intensive introduction during the orientation and continuing over the course of the semester, PEACE program participants will study either the Wolof or Mandinka language, with particular emphasis on vocabulary, grammar and appropriate use in the broader Gambian social and cultural contexts. Students have the opportunity, within the course of a single semester, to gain conversational competency in Wolof or Mandinka and interact in a culturally appropriate manner with Gambians from all walks of life. This course is designed to meet students' communication needs as newcomers in The Gambia, to support their integration into a new culture and prepare them for meeting the challenges of daily life during their stay in the Gambia.

Required - ANTH 352 - *Farmers, Food and Globalization in Senegambia: Transformations in Local Environments, Social Relations, Cultures, and Foodways*. PEACE Lecturer Ms. Susannah Chapman (SMCM).

How have international and global connections influenced the lives of farmers in Senegambia? What is the history of “globalization(s)” in Senegambia? Are these processes relatively new in the region or are they rooted in a larger history of regional and international connections? In what ways has Senegambia’s relationship with different parts of the world influenced gender relations, labor relations, food production, foodways and local identities? What do groundnuts, Jumbo®, and Nerica® (“**New Rice for Africa**”) have in common (other than constituting the ingredients for an excellent groundnut soup, known in Mandinka as *tiya durajo*)?

For centuries peoples and foodways of Senegambia have influenced and have been influenced by other parts of the world, via regional and trans-Saharan trade, colonialism, industrial capitalism, and other instruments of contemporary globalization(s), such as regional and international organizations, NGOs, and various media sources. In this course we will explore these relationships and the effects these processes have had on the organization of food production, agricultural ecologies, social relations, cultural identity, and ritual traditions throughout the region. This course will explore these transformations from the beginnings of agricultural production in Senegambia to contemporary agricultural development projects and emerging issues that affect food production and farmers today, such as climate change, international trade agreements, and the fluorescence of processed and imported foods in local markets.

Optional – ANTH 397 – *Service-Learning/Directed Research in The Gambia*. Instructor of Record Prof Bill Roberts (SMCM).

The purpose of this course is to enable you to work with Gambians in areas of mutual interest by identifying a professional organization that works in an area that matches your academic or career interests. Once an organization has been identified and indicated their willingness to work with you during the semester, you will devote at least 6-8 hours per week applying and testing your knowledge, skills, energy and enthusiasm in a Gambian workplace environment. You will be challenged to use your language and intercultural skills in a Gambian workplace under the supervision of PEACE partners, including an on-site supervisor, who you will meet during or shortly after your orientation program.

Optional – HIST 3xx – *20th Century Gambian History* (approved fall 2010). Lecturer Mr. Cajetan Nnaocha (UTG).

This course provides an overview of the historical background of The Gambia and its relationship with other regions of the world especially Europe, analyzing the major historical events and external influences that have shaped its history. Besides, the course also looks into developments which accompanied European expansion (Colonialism) and the subsequent struggle and regaining of

independence. Moreover, it examines the post independent period of The Gambia, up to the time the Military took over in 1994.

Optional – SOCI 2xx – *Sociology of Religion* (pending approval). Lecturer Mr. Charles Ebere (UTG).

Religion, no doubt exists in a social context in all societies. But what is its role in the world today? Does it matter in everyday life? While many today presume that religion is concerned primarily with deeply personal beliefs, emotions, and experiences, there is a long tradition of scholarship that examines the behaviors and institutions defined as “religious” as products of—or the effects of—their social, political, and economic environments. This course examines these views by exploring the mutually influencing interaction between religion and other social institutions as well as its role in shaping people, events, and societies in the contemporary world from a sociological perspective. The peculiar nature of African traditional religion and the way it shapes the world view of the people will also be explored.

Optional - POSC 2xx – *The Rise of Nation States in the West Africa sub-Region* (pending approval). Lecturer Mr. Ismaila Ceesay (UTG).

The course provides a comparative analysis of colonial and post- colonial West Africa. Fundamentally, the course will follow the fortunes of countries in the West African sub-region in modern times and the years that it sped towards independence and encompassing the half-century that has passed since. It focuses in particular on the role of a number of leaders whose characters and careers had a decisive impact on the rise of their nation states. This will help students understand the origins of present political, economic and social development dynamics in the West African Sub-Region.

Summary of Academic Program

Students who successfully complete a semester in The Gambia as part of the fall 2011 Signature Semester cohort accomplish the following:

Experiencing the Liberal Arts in the World – Core Curriculum Requirement

CORE 350 Reflection on Experiencing the Liberal Arts in the World – see catalog for more information

<http://www.smcm.edu/corecurriculum/ELAW/ELAWOverview.html>

Cultural Perspectives – Core Curriculum Requirement (ANTH 150)

Earn credits towards minor in African and African Diaspora Studies – see catalog for more information <http://www.smcm.edu/catalog/programs/aads.html>

All students will take ANTH 150, *Gambian Languages and Culture*, and ANTH 352, *Farmers, Food and Globalization in Senegambia: Transformations in Local*

Environments, Social Relations, Cultures, and Foodways. These are SMCM courses, and grades in these courses are reflected in a student's transcript and affect the Grade Point Average.

Students may select any of the optional courses listed above. Once reviewed and approved, these courses become SMCM courses for fall 2011 in The Gambia and grades in these courses are reflected in a student's transcript and affect their Grade Point Average.

Students may also select from any University of The Gambia courses offered during the fall semester, 2011. The list of course offerings for fall 2011 is generally available by August, 2011. Courses are taught in the following programs: School of Arts and Sciences, School of Communication and Technology, School of Business and Public Administration; School of Law, School of Education, School of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences, School of Agriculture and Environment. For more information about the University of The Gambia, visit <http://www.utg.edu.gm/>

Most students who study in The Gambia take 16 - 19 credit hours of study.

Travel and Adventure in Senegambia, Fall 2011

PEACE program participants in next fall's Signature Semester in The Gambia will have an opportunity for many and diverse experiences while there, including:

Weekend visits with UTG students to Gambian villages, including: Tumani Tenda (<http://www.smcm.edu/gambia/Publication/pdfs/2002/SentaBennett.pdf>); Brefet, Sanyang, and the World Heritage sites of Juffure and James Island.

At the conclusion of the fall semester, students will travel to the endangered World Heritage Site of Niokolo Koba National Park (<http://www.senegal-online.co.uk/niokolo-koba-national-park.htm>) for a safari experience.

Just before returning to the US in December, students will spend a night (or two) at another UNESCO World Heritage Site, the famous trading community at Gorée Island (<http://webworld.unesco.org/goree/en/index.shtml>).

Gilman Grant Applications

Looking for scholarships or grants to study abroad? Three SMCM students and one student from Agnes Scott College who studied in The Gambia in 2006 all received grants of at least \$5000 (five thousand dollars) from successful Gilman Grant proposals. To learn more about this opportunity, visit their website <http://www.iie.org/en/Programs/Gilman-Scholarship-Program>

The PEACE Program and Peace Corps, The Gambia

The PEACE program and Peace Corps, The Gambia, have agreed to strengthen their relationship through enabling more home visits by PEACE program student participants to their US Peace Corps volunteer counterparts in The Gambia. PEACE program participants meet volunteers and volunteer leaders during orientation in The Gambia. During the semester program, students are able to make arrangements through the PEACE program and Peace Corps, to visit volunteers working in one of three areas of intervention: Education, Environment, or Public Health and Community Development. For more information, see <http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=learn.wherepc.africa.thegambia>

Wanted – Proactive Students Majoring in Expressive Arts

Among the things that come to mind when you think of Senegambia are the following: Music – *djembe* drums, *kora* and *balafon* music; Dance – traditional, modern, and hybrid blends; Art – painting, sculpture, batik; Fashion – exciting and colorful blends of traditional motifs with stylish innovations.

The PEACE program encourages creative, proactive students majoring or minoring in the expressive arts to strongly consider study abroad in The Gambia. Study with a Senegambian *jali* or other musician, artist or artisan, and help pioneer course offerings in these areas.

Interested in learning more? Read this interview with Jaliba Kouyate: <http://observer.gm/africa/gambia/article/jaliba-kuyateh-one-of-africas-greatest-musicians>

What's Happening in The Gambia for Spring, 2011?

Mr. Thanawuth Kittivan (aka Champ) is the first Thai student to study in The Gambia through the PEACE program. Champ is an English major and is doing his senior research project in The Gambia working with the Youth Ambassadors for Peace project. Three SMCM students are also in Gambia this semester. Sarah Brown and Bethany Townsend are conducting service-learning/directed research projects at the Royal Victoria Teaching Hospital and Kay Zagrodny is working with the Gambian Women's Financial Association.

Gambian Student Sering Touray at SMCM, Spring 2011

University of The Gambia Economics major Sering Touray arrived at St. Mary's for the start of the spring semester in January, 2011. Sering served as Vice President of the UTG Student Union in 2010, and has met many SMCM students studying in The Gambia over the past two years. Take time to meet and talk with Sering when you can so he can experience the warmth of the SMCM community even though the winter climate has been extremely COLD.