



*GEOG 4130: GAMBIA Field Course
Winter, 2027, with Dr. Cathy Conrad*



COURSE DETAILS

GEOG 4130: Gambia Field Course

6 credit hours

Prerequisite: 27 credit hours AND
permission of the instructor

Term: Winter, 2027

Weekly Seminar Meetings on Fridays
(9:30am - 12pm)

Field trip Period: Winter Reading Week (mid-
February, 2027: approx: 11 nights and 12 days)

Class size: ~12 students

Leading faculty member: Dr. Cathy Conrad



Urban Gambia (3 days)

- Bijilo Monkey Park and Conservation Area
- Katchikally Crocodile Pond and Cultural Museum
- Serrekunda Market
- Fajara War Memorial
- Sanyang Beach



Urban Gambia (4 days)

- Makasuta Cultural Forest
- Kunte Kinte Island
- Cultural Markets
- Fajara Beach

Kanilai (1 day)

- Sindola Lodge
- Political Geography Sites

Up-Country (3 days)

- Janjangburreh Community-Based Tourism
- Environmental Sites
- Socio-Cultural Sites
- Historical Sites

Janjangburreh

0 10 km

TRIP ITINERARY (TENTATIVE):



Thursday, February 11, 2027: depart Halifax for Montreal

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Friday, February 12, 2027: arrive in Brussels: we will not leave the airport and will only transit through with approximately 5 hours in the Belgian airport

Friday, February 12, 2027: arrive in Banjul, the Gambia, in the early evening. We will have private vehicles with professional drivers hired to pick us up and take us to our accommodations.

Saturday, February 13 trips to Bijilo Monkey Park and Conservation area; Katchikally Crocodile Pond and Cultural Museum

Sunday, February 14: trip to Serrekunda market, visit the Fajara War Memorial, trip to Sanyang Beach

Monday, February 15: travel to Janjangburreh: accommodations for the nights of Monday, Feb.15, Tues., Feb. 16 and Wed., Feb. 17 will be at the Janjangburreh Community-Based Tourism Lodge.

Tuesday and Wednesday, February 16-17: visit to local cultural sites (of environmental, socio-cultural and historical significance, all in this rural setting) organized by certified local Gambian guides

Thursday, Feb. 18: travel to Sindola lodge, via the community of Bwiam: staying at Sindola Lodge the night of Feb. 18 and learning about the political geography of the Gambia in this important socio-cultural setting

Friday, Feb. 19: travel back to the coast and stay at Sanchaba Yellow apartments: back to the urban setting

Saturday, Feb. 20: visit to Makasuta Cultural forest

Sunday, Feb. 21: option to go to Kunte Kinteh Island and historical site

Monday, Feb. 22: final visit to cultural markets, Fajara beach and then depart for Canada the evening of Feb. 22: return flight itinerary takes us back the same route we came, arriving home on Tues., Feb. 23.



ACCOMMODATIONS

- 2 nights at: Hotel in Senegambia
- 3 nights at: Happy Lodge in Janjanbureh
- 1 night at: Sindola Lodge in Kanilai
- 3 nights at: Yellow Apartments in Sanchaba



Day 1 in The Gambia...

-Bijilo Forest Park

-Katchikally Crocodile Park

-Banjul



Day 2 in The Gambia...

-Serekunda Market

-Sanyang Beach





Day 3 in The Gambia...
-Travel to Janjanbureh





*Day 4-5 in The Gambia...
Rural villages: Tabanani
And Jamali*





Day 6 in The Gambia...

Kanilai



Day 7 in The Gambia...

Back on the coast:

Sanchaba





Day 8 in The Gambia...
Makasuta Forest





Day 9 in The Gambia...

Kunte Kinteh





*Day 10 in The Gambia...
Markets and final gems*





FIELD TRIP COSTS

Course fee (min: 8 students: cost could go down a few \$100 if the number increases to 12 students):
\$4900

What is included in this fee?

- round trip airfare and travel insurance
- ground transportation and professional drivers/logisticians in The Gambia
- shared accommodation in The Gambia for 11 nights
- some meals (up-country)
- most activities and entrance fees to parks

What is not included in this fee?

- tuition for 6-credit hour course
- meals on the coast/urban areas: \$25/day is sufficient
- personal expenses for shopping and individual activities
- vaccinations and medications

Available Financial Support?

SMU Mobility Grants

Named grants for GEOG/BES students

Formal letters can be provided that are individually tailored to your situation in support of targeted financial requests to specific organizations (MLAs/MPs/Alumni offices etc)



WHAT DO OUR FORMER STUDENTS WHO WENT IN 2025 HAVE TO SAY?



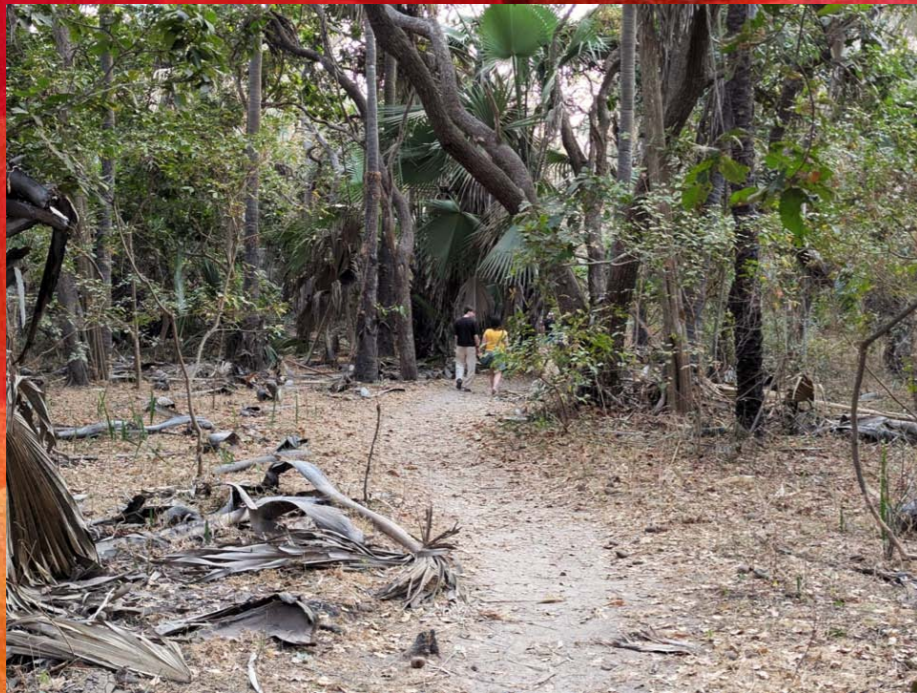
- *This was such an amazing and organized trip: I don't even know how you pulled it all off!*
- *"I could never have travelled to The Gambia or anywhere else in Africa and had the meaningful engagement with local people and organizations that I had on this trip."*
- *"Everything was so great! Everything was planned for: I literally can't think of a single thing that would have made it better."*
- *"The education I gained from this experience would not have been possible without the experiential learning opportunities facilitated by the field school."*
- *"My trip to The Gambia had a profound impact on my academic journey, allowing me to explore what it means to be a global citizen through the most immersive experience possible. I learned so much in those 10 days in The Gambia, with entirely new experiences that simply could not be taught in a classroom setting. This experience has deeply influenced my future career aspirations, particularly in the area of global environmental politics and climate change mitigation."*
- *"I don't think I exaggerate when I say that this will forever remain a highlight of my entire life."*



WHY GAMBIA!?

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- Connections with SMU
- Culturally diverse
- Fascinating history, cultures and environments
- The only field course to an African country currently offered at SMU
- You will learn local languages, eat amazing local foods, witness the African savanna, and the fusion of urban and rural. You will see sights only your imagination could have believed. You'll visit UNESCO world heritage sites and remote villages.
- You will see some of the most beautiful African beaches and experience daytime and nightlife!
- You will learn and experience beyond the typical tourist gaze...
- You will be forever changed.



WHY WINTER, 2027?

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- GEOG 4130 is typically offered every other year and was last offered in winter, 2025: it might not be offered again until winter, 2029, so this may be your one chance to take it!
- February is a great time to visit The Gambia: it is their winter as well, which means warm and dry: typical temperatures in the 30s and lots of sun and no rain.
- SMU has a global mobility fund and other funds you can apply for.
- Accompanied by a faculty member with lots of experience and local expertise; Dr. Conrad holds residency in The Gambia, has roots in the country, speaks a local language (Mandinka), has family connections to The Gambia and dozens of research connections that make the trip accessible to communities and experiences that you would not otherwise have.



WHAT'S NEXT?

Interested? Great! → Register for GEOG 4130 after securing an override registration from me.

GEOG 4130 Course Syllabus for Winter 2027 is available now.

Check your passport & Visa requirement if you are not a Canadian citizen

Start looking into recommended vaccinations for The Gambia from the Government of Canada and your personal physician.

For More Information or Any Questions:

Dr. Cathy Conrad
cconrad@smu.ca