

Exploring Morocco: Tracing Morocco's Art, Culture, and Community WLLC 3110 5W1 Summer Session 2025

Instructor Information

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

"Exploring Morocco: Tracing Morocco's Arts, Culture, and Community" is an immersive study abroad program that offers students a survey of Morocco's art, history, culture, and social life. This course takes students to two major imperial cities—Rabat and Marrakech —along with the blue city, Chefchaouen; Tangier; and the Sahara Desert. Through academic seminars, guided tours of historical sites, and workshops with local artisans, students gain a deep understanding of Morocco's history and artistic heritage.

Program dates

Tuesday, May 20 - Monday, June 9

Locations

Rabat
Casablanca-Marrakech-Ait Ben Haddou-Risani/Merzouga
Chefchaouen - Tangier
Airport departure

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course. No knowledge of Arabic is required.

Expectations

Respond promptly to messages and phone calls from the instructor or the CIEE staff. You need to be sure you are reachable via phone at all times during the day and until the end of the activities for that day.

As participants in this study abroad program, we are collectively responsible for maintaining a positive experience. Flexibility is essential, as plans may change unexpectedly. Let's approach each day with optimism, even when faced with challenges, to ensure a rewarding experience for everyone. The mood of one person can influence the overall vibe of the program. Let's each bring our good energy and smile to contribute to a positive experience for all.

Course Description, Structure, and Objectives

Analysis and exploration of history, arts and society in the Arab world. This will be a topics course; for this syllabus, the topic of the course is Exploring Morocco.

This course will cover the following topics:

Cultural Values

Cultural humility orientation:

Students will be introduced to Cultural Dimensions that will provide them with lenses and tools by which to contextualize their experiences in Morocco.

Islam in a Moroccan and Global Context

An interactive discussion about Islam and the way it's embedded into nearly every part of the fabric of society.

Language

Sociolinguistic landscape and language Ideologies

Survival Darija (Moroccan Colloquial Arabic)

History

Rabat Crossroad of Civilization Tour

Art

Art Workshops (Pottery, bamboo, mosaic)

Architecture and the city

Architectural Tour of Marrakech

Visit of Kasbah Ait Ben Haddou

Religion and Religion & music

Casablanca Hassan II Mosque visit

The Gnawa music and its sufi elements (Merzouga)

Identity

Imazighen and Arab identities

Morocco's Jewish heritage (Chefchouen Jewish Walking Tour)

Contemporary social issues

Community engagement activity in Marrakech

Skills

The course is designed to enhance the following skills:

- Critical thinking
- Global competence
- Oral presentation skills
- Collaboration
- Research skills

Required Materials

There are no required materials to purchase for this course.

Below is a list of some references you might find useful if you are interested.

History of Morocco (animated video in Moroccan Darija with English subtitles) available on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rjgUvwR5XNE>

Sater James N. *Morocco: Challenges to Tradition and Modernity*. Second edition. Routledge, 2016.

Driss Maghraoui. "French Identity, Islam and North Africans: Colonial Legacies Post-Colonial Realities," Tyler Stovall (ed.) *French Identity and its Discontents*, Lanham: Lexington Books, 2003.

Clevenot D and Degeorge G. *Ornament and Decoration in Islamic Architecture*. Thames and Hudson, 2000.

Hedgecoe J and Damluji S. *Zillij –The Art of Moroccan Ceramics*. Garnet, 1992.

Introduction to the Islamic city

<http://muslimheritage.com/introduction-to-the-islamic-city/>

Abu-Lughod, Janet L. "The Islamic City-Historic Myth, Islamic Essence, and Contemporary Relevance." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 19, no. 2 (1987): 155-76.

Tances. Directed by Ahmed El Maanouni, 1981.

Peyron, M. *The Amazigh Studies Reader*. Ifrane: AUI Press, 2006.

Zafrani, Haim. *Two Thousand Years of Jewish Life in Morocco*. Ktav Pub, 2005.

Adil, Moustauoui. "Transforming the Urban Public Space: Linguistic landscape and new linguistic practices in Moroccan Arabic." *Linguistic Landscape: an International Journal* 5, no. 1 (2019): 80-102.

Ali Zaoua: Prince of the Streets. Directed by Nabil Ayyoush, 2000.

How to Succeed in this Course

Your success in this class is extremely important to me. If any aspects of this course prevent you from learning, please reach out as soon as possible. I will do my utmost best to work with you and to develop strategies that support your success. The best way to reach me during study abroad is via whatsapp, but I also check my email regularly.

This class relies heavily on Canvas where grades and assignments will be regularly posted. Be sure to check Canvas daily.

Supporting Your Success and Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment

I value the many perspectives students bring to our study abroad program. Please work with me to create a culture of open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. All discussions should be respectful and civil. Although disagreements and debates are encouraged, personal attacks are unacceptable. Together, we can ensure a safe and welcoming classroom for all. If you ever feel like this is not the case, please let me know. We are all learning together.

Learning objectives

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Respond critically to a broad range of literary, visual and auditory examples of Arab/Moroccan cultural products.
2. Explain the relationship between architecture and local factors and sociocultural needs in the Moroccan context.
3. Reflect on the development of artistic traditions.
4. Analyze contemporary social issues relevant to the Moroccan context.
5. Describe the impacts of complex, worldwide systems.
6. Demonstrate the ability to learn from and empathize with perspectives and experiences different from one's own.

Other learning objectives are:

- Developing global competence and understanding and appreciating different perspectives by learning about the history, economy, values, beliefs and practices of Morocco.

Grade Distribution

Attendance, Participation, and exit tickets (30%)

- You are expected to attend all classes and scheduled activities. Your daily attendance and participation grade will be on a scale from 1 to 10 and will be posted on Canvas after each class/activity, so please check Canvas daily to monitor your progress.
- The bus will depart promptly at the scheduled time to ensure we respect everyone's time and stay on track for our activities. To ensure a smooth journey, we kindly ask students to arrive at the meeting place around 10 minutes before the scheduled departure time. The bus will depart on time and those who arrive late will be responsible for arranging their own transportation to the activity's location.
- An exit ticket or attendance and participation grade will be assigned for each activity.
- In case of an absence, please inform your instructor before and not after the class/activity you will be missing. The grade for that activity's participation will be a "0." Students are responsible for any class work and any announcement made during their absence.
- To receive a grade of 10 on participation, students must:
 - Arrive on time and remain engaged in all class activities
 - Be respectful of the instructor and classmates
 - Actively participate in discussions
 - Maintain a positive attitude
 - Respond promptly to messages and phone calls from the instructor or the CIEE staff. You need to be sure you are reachable via phone at all times during the day and until the end of the activities for that day.
- Tardiness will result in deductions as follows:
 - Arrival during the first 5 mins.= 1 Pt.
 - Arrival during the first 10 mins.= 2 Pt.
 - Arrival during the first 15 mins. = 3 Pt.
 - During the first 20 mins. = 4 Pts.
 - During the first 30 mins. = 6 Pts.
 - Arriving more than 30 mins. Late will result in a "0" for class participation.

- As participants in this study abroad program, we are collectively responsible for maintaining a positive experience. Flexibility is essential, as plans may change unexpectedly. Let's approach each day with optimism, even when faced with challenges, to ensure a rewarding experience for everyone. The mood of one person can influence the overall vibe of the program. Let's each bring our positivity and smile to contribute to a positive experience for all.

Homework assignments (40%)

- Homework will be posted on Canvas. Late homework will not be accepted.

Creating a short movie (30%)

- Students will create a three-minute short movie chronicling their trip to Morocco or exploring a theme or topic of their interest. Examples could be: architecture, flowers and plants, sounds of Morocco, cuisine, fashion, daily life, historical sites, traditional crafts, music or even a personal reflection, a video about your experiences and insights gained throughout the trip.

Grade distribution:

Attendance, Participation, and exit tickets: 30 %

Homework 40%

Short movie 30 %

Grading Scale

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
59 and below	F

Here is a list of important links:

Undergraduate Catalog

<https://catalog.unt.edu/>

This is a link to the official catalog for all undergraduate students.

UNT Policy Manual

<http://policy.unt.edu/policy-by-number/1>

This is a link to the official policy manual for faculty and students.

Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The short SPOT survey will provide you with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. For additional information, please visit the spot website at www.spot.unt.edu or email spot@unt.edu.

Disability Accommodation

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with ODA to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For study abroad courses, students requesting accommodations should notify their faculty leader as early as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Note that while the ADA does not extend beyond US borders, and international accessibility requirements vary broadly from US standards, UNT study abroad programs will endeavor to provide accommodations wherever practicable. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information: UNT Office of Disability Access. You may also contact ODA by phone at 940.565.4323

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn and have a positive experience is unacceptable and disruptive; it will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom or activity, and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, study abroad programs etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.deanofstudents.unt.edu

Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, & Assault

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

UNT's Dean of Students' website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs: http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources_0. Renee LeClaire McNamara is UNT's Student Advocate and she can be reached through email at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students' office at 940-565-2648. You are not alone. We are here to help

[1] This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.