**Course Overview**

South African life is frequently portrayed as a singular unified experience. Yet, South African communities are dynamic: in their cultural, racial, ethnic, linguistic and historical diversity, and in their responses to the legacies of apartheid and the challenges of the contemporary global context. While this course will examine many of the problems that contemporary South Africans face, we will also contextualize these problems and counter prevailing narratives about South Africa by exploring the resilience and rich cultural life in Gqeberha and South Africa more broadly. Much of the course will connect readings and films with experiential learning and written reflections. Topics will include: South African history and apartheid, race, ethnicity and gender, kinship and social organization, religion, health, globalization, sexuality, music and art. Because of the emphasis on service learning, we will also investigate some of the assumptions and ideas students have about volunteering while in Gqeberha and read about and discuss concepts such as voluntourism and humanitarianism.