

THIS DRAFT SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

SOUTH AFRICA: THE ROLE OF BUSINESS IN SOCIETAL OPPORTUNITY

MARCH 10-14, 2025

Professors Kenneth Shropshire and Eric Kacou

OVERVIEW

For long South Africa stood as a poster child of inequality because of apartheid, a system of institutionalized racial segregation and discrimination in South Africa from 1948 to 1994. Thirty years into the democratic era, post-apartheid South Africa provides a unique canvas to understand and examine the impact business can have in creating opportunity for all individuals in a society.

For business and beyond, what lessons can be learned from the journey of South Africans in economic opportunity for all in the U.S. and other countries? As importantly, how might those lessons be applied in other contexts? While we are particularly interested in business, what role can other stakeholders, particularly government, civil society organizations and NGOs, play?

In this course, we will wrestle with the questions above, seeking insights from South Africa's experiences and research on equity, opportunity, growth, leadership, and change. Our goal as a class and as individuals is to draw on our visits, observations, readings, reflections, and discussions to yield answers that enrich not only our collective understanding of South Africa's past, present, and possible futures, but also our individual behaviors, choices, and guiding principles as leaders of organizations.

OBJECTIVES

Understanding the Historic Context

- Much of what is occurring in South Africa is reflective of and influenced by the history of the nation. Such influences are not unique to this country, but that power of history is starkly revealed by looking at the formation of the country, apartheid and the relatively recent reconciliation and transformation. How should history be contextualized in efforts to move forward in business and society?

Examining Governmental Policies

- In South Africa a relatively new constitution and ongoing policy development, such as Black Economic Empowerment, seek to rectify historic inequities. What are these policies? How have they worked or not? How do these resemble similar efforts around the world? What actions is the government of South Africa taking to address issues of inequity systemically?

Grasping the role of business and entrepreneurship

- South Africa boasts a vibrant business sector including publicly traded multinationals. What roles have these corporations played in addressing issues of equity and opportunity? Is there an equivalent U.S. “DEI moment” taking place in South Africa and how is that impacting the relevant efforts?
- Entrepreneurship is often viewed as a path to greater equality. Entrepreneurship is also often a path to provide positive societal impact. What can we learn from entrepreneurial ventures in promoting equity in South Africa? What are comparative impacts of entrepreneurship in the U.S. and elsewhere?

Engaging in the Role of Civil Society

- Civil society organizations played a significant role in the anti-apartheid movement and the transition to democracy in the 1990s. How has this role evolved to address issues of equity? What lessons can we learn from South Africa?

Contemplating the Ongoing Influence of Culture

- Music, motion pictures, sports and other forms of entertainment and cultural activities have a great deal of influence on progress. What are the roles these play in South Africa? What lessons can be learned?

COURSE FORMAT

The course format will include:

- Course kick-off in Johannesburg, South Africa beginning at 8:00am on Monday, March 10.
- Daily meetings typically from early morning through the evening:
 - Johannesburg: Monday, March 10 to Wednesday, March 12, 2025 (late day flight to Cape Town)
 - Cape Town: Wednesday, March 12 (evening) to Friday, March 14, 2025
- Course closing in Cape Town, South Africa on Friday, March 14 (evening) with optional activities on Saturday, March 15.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE IN SOUTH AFRICA

THIS SCHEDULE IS PROVISIONAL AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Monday, March 10, 2025

On this day, kick-off the course in the morning with in-person introductions; a preview of the class including our schedule, upcoming meetings, key themes, shared norms and expectations; a discussion of insights, questions, and surprises generated by the assigned readings and by our first hours in the country. We will also examine the history of South Africa with a focus on Apartheid and the steps that leaders in South Africa’s government, non-profit, and business sectors to rebuild society since the advent of democracy in 1994. Potential sessions include:

- Site visits to:
 - Constitution Hill
 - Soweto
 - African Leadership Academy
- Meetings with:
 - Dr Saths Cooper
 - Rick Menell, Mining executive
 - Dr Greg Mills, Brenthurst Foundation
 - Shaka Sisulu

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

On this day, our day starts with understanding key policy to foster equity through business. We travel to Pretoria to meet with the Department of Trade and Industry. We then return to meet with some of South Africa's extraordinary leaders in corporate, entrepreneurship and finance.

- Site visits with potential speakers
 - Department of Trade and Industry (Pretoria) hosted by Lerato Matoboge, DG Trade
 - Alexandria (Joburg) to visit, Jozi My Jozi, B & C social enterprises
 - RaizCorp hosted by Allon Raiz, Founder & CEO
 - Absa Bank, CEO
 - Wharton GMC South Africa Networking Dinner with Thabang Skwabane and Wharton Alumni

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

On this day, we look at the influence of culture and sports on South Africa's journey to building equity. We travel to Cape Town in the evening to begin the second part of our learning journey.

- Site visits including:
 - Royal Bafokeng
 - NBA Africa
 - Cultural Visit Session

Thursday, March 13, 2025

On our first day in Cape Town, we start with a visit of a leading social enterprise in the Cape Flats followed by a session with some of South Africa's legislators and a panel with business, political and social leaders.

- Site Visits: R-Labs hosted by Marlon Parker, Founder & CEO
- Panel with South Africa Parliament Members
- Panel discussion with Wharton Alumni: Kobi Sam, Khoabane Poofolo and Yolanda Walker

Friday, March 14, 2025

On this day, we reflect on all we have learned during our intense days in South Africa. We will end our day a session to distill learnings from our time in South Africa.

- Site visit: Robben Island
- District 6 Museum
- Class closing session

OPTIONAL: Saturday, March 15, 2025

On this optional day, we revisit South Africa's past with a trip to Stellenbosch University, one of the country's historical colleges. We also take advantage of this trip to visit a winery.

- Stellenbosch University
- Winery Visit

REQUIREMENTS

This course may not be taken Pass/Fail. Grades will be based on:

- Short Video Introduction and Pre-Travel Preparation and Responsiveness: 10%
- South Africa Preparation, Exploration, and Analysis Essay: 40%
- Course Participation: 30%
- Post-GMC Reflection: 20%

ABOUT THE COURSE LEADERS

The backgrounds of the professors reflect the passion that will be brought to our time together. Both have had immersive periods in South Africa and an understanding of equity and opportunity from cultures around the world.

Kenneth Shropshire: Professor Shropshire has been on the Wharton faculty since 1986 and recently became professor emeritus. He created the course *Diversity and the Law* at Wharton and the Africana Studies and is and author of multiple books and articles primarily focused on diversity issues in sport. From 2022-2024 he assisted Dean Erika James in launching the Wharton Coalition for Equity & Opportunity. Before, during and after the 2010 FIFA World Cup, Professor Shropshire studied the impact of the event, with particular focus on the Royal Bafokeng Nation. He has served on the board and is now the lead director for Moelis and company and was a founder of a community bank, Valley Green Bank, acquired by Univest in 2014. He also holds an honorary doctorate from Stellenbosch University.

Eric Kacou: A native of Cote d'Ivoire, Eric Kacou is co-founder and CEO of Entrepreneurial Solutions Partners (ESP), an investment and advisory firm providing thousands of entrepreneurs and leaders with the right mix



of insight and capital in more than 23 countries across Africa. Eric led the Rwanda National Innovation and Competitiveness (RNIC) Program, as Managing Director of OTF Group initially based out of South Africa. Eric earned his MBA at the Wharton School and his MPA at Harvard Kennedy School as a Mason Fellow. The World Economic Forum honored Eric Kacou as a Young Global Leader. Eric authored two books *Entrepreneurial Solutions for Prosperity* (2011) and *Fly Africa* (2018).