

Morocco ARAMFO 2014
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The 2014 ARAMFO course to Morocco was excellent. Participants had an opportunity to visit a variety of urban sites and rural locales – including Tangier, Casablanca, Marrakesh, Fes, and Rabat - throughout this expansive and colorful country. While the field course lasted for just two weeks, our large group managed to see an incredible amount of environmental geography and culture in this short amount of time. Traveling by bus allowed us long stretches upon which to reflect on all that we saw and experienced– from the markets of Marrakesh to the mosques of Casablanca. The people of Morocco were consistently warm and gregarious and impromptu walks to the medina allowed us ample opportunity to practice language skills and learn about unique local customs. Hotel staff members at the various destinations were helpful and always eager to lend a hand when needed. As a professor who has led study abroad field courses in the past, this experience has inspired me to organize an ARAMFO sponsored course for my students at UNC.

While there were numerous highlights of this experience, the act of becoming better acquainted with students and faculty in Casablanca perhaps ranks the highest. Thanks to the academic conference scheduled at Hassan University, I'm now developing partnerships with Moroccan professors for future faculty exchanges. The combination of academic conference and in country travel also provided a nice balance of scholarly activity and leisure travel.

I particularly enjoyed getting to know undergraduate and graduate students from the USA who participated in the ARAMFO course. Faculty led field courses provide rare opportunities for students to coalesce– whether along dusty roadsides and rocky beaches, over a piping hot Berber lunch, in sparkling hotel lobbies, and on long, meandering walks through ancient ruins and raucous market centers. We start these trips in search of exotic North African landscapes but like any other sojourn abroad they conclude with enduring memories of great people. Special thanks to Abeer and Sarah for organizing a great program!