AFS 2002: The African Experience  
Section: 1G68  
Building CSE, Room E211  
Tuesday: 2-3 (8:30AM-10:25AM)  
Thursday: 3 (9:35-10:25)

Course Description  
This course presents an opportunity to discover the rich and fascinating tapestry of diverse peoples, societies and cultures in an important and little known continent which shares a long history of relations with the Americas.

The course approach will be highly interdisciplinary. We will discuss issues related to the history, culture, arts, politics, and languages of African peoples, as well as to the socio-economic development of their societies. An important theme of the course will be the diversity of Africa: with 54 countries, perhaps 2000 languages (about 1/3 of all the languages spoken by humans today), and a wide variety of cultures and religions, it is hard to generalize about Africa. Yet at the same time, there are important commonalities in “the African experience” (the title of this course). These are rooted in some shared cultural norms, a largely shared history of European colonization, and similar positions in the global political and economic order since independence in the 1960s. This course will examine both the commonalities of the African experience, and its variations.

Course Objectives  
By the end of this course you should have:

• Acquired a broad knowledge of the African realities,
• Become aware of the diversity of the African experiences,
• Acquired some basic knowledge of African geography, history, politics, religions, societies and cultures,
• Grasped some of the complexity of African contemporary challenges (socio-economic development, uneven patterns of trade and globalization, HIV/AIDS).

Course Requirements:  
Your final evaluation is based on the following components:

∙ Presence and participation (20%)
∙ Map Quiz (15%)
∙ Reaction Paper (15%)
∙ Poster Project (25%)
∙ Final Test (25%)
Each component/assignment will be given a percentage grade. After calculating the weighted average of such grades, the final grade will be assigned according to the table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>A-</th>
<th>B+</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>B-</th>
<th>C+</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>C-</th>
<th>D+</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>D-</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tot %</td>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>63-66</td>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>&lt;60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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For information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points you can consult the appropriate undergraduate catalog web page
http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html

- **PRESENCE AND PARTICIPATION (20%)**: Attendance is mandatory and will be taken at the start of each class - it is therefore important you arrive in class on time. You are allowed two absences, after which I will take one point off every further unjustified absence.
  - **POSITIVE ENGAGEMENT**: This course succeeds when students engage with each other and the course material in a positive, informed, and constructive way. Participation in class discussions, and taking responsibility for your role in classroom debates, is key, and contributes to your final score. Readings must be completed prior to the start of every class. Disrespectful class demeanor (e.g. talking and disturbing others, using lap-tops for anything else than taking class notes, and using cell phones) will be heavily penalized, after a first warning.

- **MAP QUIZ (15%)**: On Tuesday, September 5, 2013, you will be tested on your knowledge of the names and locations of the 54 sovereign African countries and critical geographic features. Blank maps and the full list of countries will be distributed in advance so that you can practice before the test.

- **REACTION PAPER (15%)**: Each student is required to write one short reaction paper (of about 500 words, typed, single-spaced) analyzing Laye’s *The Dark Child*. This will be due on October 22nd, 2013 at midnight (submission through e-mail.)

- **POSTER (25%)**: Students will be responsible for researching and creating a poster on an assigned theme. This semester, the theme is Democracy in Africa. Student can chose to focus on a single country or a whole region. All students will be expected to present their poster in class in November.

- **FINAL TEST (25%)** will be based on course readings, videos and lectures. It will be a combination of multiple choice, fill-in the blank and other types of questions. It will be held on Tuesday December 3rd.

**Academic Honesty**: The University places a high premium on academic honesty. Accordingly, severe penalties are imposed for plagiarism and other instances of deception or fraud. The university’s policies regarding intellectual honesty are detailed in the Academic Honesty Guidelines, printed in full in the current Undergraduate Catalog.

**Campus Helping Resources**

Students experiencing crisis or personal problems that interfere with their general wellbeing are encouraged to utilize the university’s counseling resources. Both the Counseling Center
and Student Mental Health provide confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal or lacking clear career and academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance. The Counseling Center is located at 301 Peabody Hall (next to Criser Hall). Student Mental Health is located on the second floor of the Student Health Services in the Infirmary.

- University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575; [www.counsel.ufl.edu](http://www.counsel.ufl.edu)
- Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, [www.hsc.ufl.edu](http://www.hsc.ufl.edu)
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161
- Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.

**Students with Disabilities Act**

The Dean of Students Office coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes the registration of disabilities, academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services, and mediating faulty-student disability related issues. Dean of Students Office, 202 Peabody Hall, 392-7066, [www.dso.ufl.edu](http://www.dso.ufl.edu).

Do you like courses with African content and you want to know more? Then learn about the many opportunities UF offers to increase your knowledge of Africa:

- The Center for African Studies offers many courses with an African content. You can pick up a free booklet with details from 427 Grinter, and ask for more information.
- Many stimulating opportunities exist, such as Semester and Summer Study Abroad Programs (including the prestigious Lumbardi Program). For more info contact the CAS deputy director Todd Leedy (427 Grinter; email [tleedy@africa.ufl.edu](mailto:tleedy@africa.ufl.edu)).
- Do you want to meet your foreign language requirement in a different and exciting way? Learn one of several African languages taught by AALL department. For more information contact Dr C. Bwenge at [cbwenge@africa.ufl.edu](mailto:cbwenge@africa.ufl.edu).
- Are you taking, or planning to take, other courses in African Studies? If so, you may qualify for a Minor in African Studies. Make sure you declare it: in the past, some students who qualified, failed to declare it! Dr Leedy will be happy to help you make the process even easier: he will send the form for you!

**Reading and other course material:**

There is one core textbook for this course:


Plus three other texts:

- *Unbowed: A Memoir*, by Wangari Maathai (required)
Other required class material will be available on the course website on the UF Sakai system, and will include chapters, books, and journal articles (as detailed in the class schedule below)

The course site on Sakai can be accessed through http://lss.at.ufl.edu, by entering your Gatorlink username and password. You need to consult this site on a regular basis since it is here where all announcements related to the course will be posted, as well as instructions regarding the assignments. The videos shown in class are part of the class material on which you may be tested. If you miss class in which a video is shown, it is your responsibility to borrow and watch the video.
CLASS SCHEDULE:
Please note: the instructor reserves the right to make minor changes to the following schedule during the semester

You are required to do the relevant reading before each class.

Week 1: Introduction
Th. Aug. 22: Course overview
Reading: UCA Introduction

Week 2: Natural Resources and Geography
Th. Aug. 29: Researching Africa at UF: Dr. Dan Reboussin, African Studies at Smathers Library Class meets at Library West Room 212
Tu. Sep. 3: Lecture by Dr. Abe Goldman (Geography & CAS)
Reading: UCA, “Africa: A Geographical Preface”

Week 3: Pre-Colonial, Colonial, and Slave Histories
Th. Sep. 5: Map Quiz, Slavery and the pre-colonial period
Reading: UCA, “The Historical Context” & TS 1
Tu. Sep. 10: The colonial period: film
Reading: UCA, “The Historical Context”

Week 4: Contemporary states and politics
Th. Sep. 12: The Politics of African Independence and Post-Colonial States
Reading: UCA “African Politics” & TS 16
Tu. Sep. 17: Lecture by Dr. Todd Leedy (CAS)
Reading: UCA “African International Relations”

Week 5: Economics and Development
Th. Sep. 19: The politics of development aid
Reading: UCA “The Economies of Africa” & TS 4, TS 5
Tu. Sep. 24: Economic Development:

Week 6:
Th. Sep. 26: Lecture by Renata Serra (CAS)
Reading: UCA “Religion in Africa”

Week 7: Tradition and Modernity
Th. Oct. 3: Childhood and Education
Reading: Laye’s *The Dark Child* (1-92) & TS 13
Tu. Oct. 8: Adulthood and Aspirations
Reading: Laye’s *The Dark Child* (93-188)
Week 8: Family and Kinship
Th. Oct. 10: Family ties
   Reading: UCA “Family and Kinship”
Tu. Oct. 15: Film: Return to Belaye

Week 9: Environment, Health, and Food security
Th. Oct. 17: Main environmental issues
   Reading: UCA “Africa’s Environmental Problems”
Tu. Oct. 22: Lecture by Dr. Richard Rheingans (Public Health & CAS)
   Reading: TS 9-12

Week 10: Globalization: International Center Panel on “How to go to Africa from UF”
Tu. Oct. 29: Discussion on Globalization
   Reading: Part 2 of Piot’s Remotely Global ch.8

Week 11: Women in Africa
Th. Nov. 5: Gender issues
   Reading: UCA “Women and Development” & Unbowed, A Memoir (1st half)
Tu. Nov. 5: Lecture by Marit Østebø, (CAS)
   Reading: Unbowed, A Memoir (whole book) & TS 14, TS 17

Week 12: Music and Arts
Th. Nov. 7: African Music:
Tu. Nov. 12: Visit to the Harn Museum of Art Collection on African Art

Week 13: Population, Urbanization, and AIDS
Th. Nov. 14: Reading: UCA “Population, Urbanization, and AIDS” TS 15
Tu. Nov. 19: Poster presentations

Week 14: The Future of Africa: Climate Change and Social Change
Th. Nov. 21: Lecture by Dr. Alyson Young, Anthropology
   Reading: UCA “Trends and Prospects”

Tu. Nov. 26: Poster presentations

Week 15: Th. Nov. 28: Thanksgiving
Tu. Dec. 3: Final Test