The African Experience
AFS 2002 / ANT 3930
University of Florida
Center for African Studies
Department of Anthropology
Fall 2012
Tuesdays: Period 10 (5:10 – 6:00) in CSE E222
Thursdays: Periods 9 – 10 (4:05 – 6:00) in RNK 110

Instructor: Meredith Marten
Email: mgmarten@ufl.edu
Office: 425 Grinter Hall
Office Hours: Wednesdays 11:00 – 1:00

Course Description and Objectives
This class is an introduction to contemporary Africa and its modern history, cultural
diversity, politics, economies, arts and literature, its roles in globalization and its
relationships with international communities. Africa is a very large and diverse continent,
and this class will function as an overview and springboard for interested students to
learn more about particular peoples, cultures, subjects and issues. By the end of the
course students will have a working knowledge of the contemporary African experience,
as well as experience in thinking critically about current issues and the place of Africa in
the global community.

Course Texts
Achebe, Chinua

Birmingham, David

Ferguson, James
2006 Africa in the Neoliberal World Order. Duke University Press, Durham, North
Carolina.

Gordon, April A. and Donald L. Gordon
London.

Course Format
This course is primarily lecture-based, with some classes set aside for small group
discussions. Relevant questions, discussions and participation among students are always
couraged. Lectures will include information from the books and readings, as well as
outside sources, including online materials and films. All readings and assignments are
required and are to be completed before class to best understand lectures and to be able to participate meaningfully.

**Attendance & Participation**
Students are required to attend class and participate in class discussions. Though attendance is not taken, 10 pop-quizzes will serve as its proxy and cannot be made up except in exceptional circumstances. Additionally, all material from lectures, readings, assignments, class discussions, films and other classroom activities are fair game for tests and quizzes, so students are strongly advised to come to every class and take careful notes to best succeed in the course.

**ASSIGNMENTS**
All assignments are announced well in advance, and cannot be made up for any reason unless in the most exceptional circumstances, such as illness or a family emergency. Students must provide a doctor’s note or note from the proper University authorities, and alert the instructor prior to missing an assignment’s due date. Additionally, University policy states that individual students may not be offered extra credit opportunities that are not offered to all students, so please do not ask for individual opportunities for bonus points.

**10 In-class Quizzes** (unannounced, 10 points each)
We will have 10 unannounced pop-quizzes throughout the semester to assess students’ comprehension of class materials and discussions. These quizzes will also serve as proof of attendance. Students will not be allowed to make-up missed quizzes or exams without a doctor’s note and must notify the instructor before the missed class.

**Midterm Exam** (Tuesday, Oct. 9; 100 points)
The midterm will cover material from the first half of the course. It will include information from all lectures, class discussions, readings, videos and online materials.

**Country Reports and Poster Presentations** (November 20 – 29; 75 points)
Each student will pick a country in Africa and will present information on a poster about the country’s geography, colonial history, politics, languages, music, education, relationship with international governing bodies, and other information you find relevant and interesting. During one of three class periods, students will present their posters to fellow students and engage in discussions one-on-one or in small groups about their countries. Posters must be turned in to Meredith on the day you are scheduled to present. More information will be posted about these presentations on Sakai.

Students must submit a list of countries they prefer to report on by Tuesday, September 4, and on Thursday, September 6, will be assigned a country. Duplicates will only be allowed if class size mandates them. More information will be posted on Sakai and announced in class.
**Regional Current Event Reporting/Participation** (throughout semester; 25 points)

Students will be arranged into small groups based on the region in which their country is situated, and will work with these groups over the course of the semester for small group discussions. Additionally, each student will be responsible for keeping track of current events in their region, and will periodically report for the class what’s going on there during discussions about current events. Participation in these discussions and the quality of news contributions will be rated on a 25-point scale. See Sakai for more information.

**Final Exam** (Wednesday, December 12, 10 am – 12 pm; 100 points):

The final will cover material from the second half of the course. It will include information from all lectures, class discussions, readings, videos and online materials. More information about the final exam will be added to Sakai toward the end of the semester.

**Assignments:**

- 10 pop quizzes: 10 points each, 100 total
- Midterm: 100
- Country Report: 75
- Current Events/Participation: 25
- Final: 100

**Total: 400**

**Grading**

No grades will be discussed via email. If the student has a problem with or question concerning the grade, please make an appointment to come speak with the instructor or stop by during office hours. Letter grades will be assigned based on the total percent of points according to the following scale:

- A = 93% or above  
- A- = 90-92.99%  
- B+ = 86-89.99%  
- B = 83-85.99%  
- B- = 80-82.99%  
- C+ = 76-79.99%  
- C = 73-75.99%  
- C- = 70-72.99%  
- D+ = 67-69.99%  
- D = 63-66.99%  
- D- = 60-62.99%  
- E = 59.99% or below

That breaks down to:

- A = 372 and up  
- A- = 360 – 371  
- B+ = 344 – 359  
- B = 332 – 343  
- B- = 320 – 331  
- C+ = 304 - 319  
- C = 292 - 303  
- C- = 280 - 291  
- D+ = 268 - 279  
- D = 252 - 267  
- D- = 240 - 251  
- E = 239 or below

Please note that the University implemented minus grades beginning in Summer 2009. Under the new system, a grade of C-will not qualify for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College
Basic Distribution credit. Please see the following for more information:
https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

COURSE GUIDELINES

E-Learning
Sakai will be used for posting announcements, readings and links to websites, uploading assignments, and updating grades. All students are required to familiarize themselves with Sakai and check Sakai weekly for class-related announcements. Online tutorials are available for students at https://lss.at.ufl.edu/sakai-training/index.shtml and are highly recommended.

Class Announcements
Important information and announcements will be made in class and distributed to students through their UF email and posted on Sakai. All students are expected to read and be aware of all emails and class announcements as they are given out. There are no allowances made for students who fail to stay abreast of class announcements for any reason, including absences, full email in-boxes or forgetfulness.

Use of Electronics
Cell phones, iPods, MP3 players etc. are not be permitted during class time, and all students must turn off or silence their phones prior to class. A student caught talking on their phone or texting will be asked to leave class. Laptops are permitted for note taking purposes only.

University Academic Honesty Policy
Students will be responsible for the completion of their own academic work. Unless noted for specific assignments, all work should be completed individually, and evidence of cheating, collusion (working with someone not connected to the class or assignment), plagiarism (use of someone else’s published or unpublished words or design without acknowledgment), multiple submissions (submitting the same assignment multiple times to different classes), and/or other acts of academic dishonesty will be handled by the Department’s and the University’s procedures for dealing with academic dishonesty. All students are expected to honor their commitment to the University’s Honor Code and the student conduct code. If you are unsure whether your activities are legitimate regarding paper writing and exam taking, please do not hesitate to ask me.

Accommodations for Disabilities:
Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Students who wish to find out if they are eligible for services can contact the Disability Resource Center at www.dso.ufl.edu/drc. Please make any requests by the second week of class.
University Counseling Services
The Counseling Center at the University of Florida has a variety of services that may be of use to students during the semester. This includes individual, group and couples counseling, as well as workshops for stress management and time management. For more information, students may visit http://www.counsel.ufl.edu for the University Counseling and Wellness Center, at 3190 Radio Road, 392-1575. Also, additional resources are available on-campus that may be of help:

1. Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling
2. Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling
3. Reading & Writing Center, Broward Hall, 392-0791, writing assistance, study skills, test preparation

COURSE SCHEDULE

All readings are required, and students are expected to read the assigned material prior to the class date designated on the syllabus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics and Readings</th>
<th>Class Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Th: Review of syllabus, class expectations, overview of course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 23</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Human Origins, Historical Context</td>
<td>T: African Geography; Human Origins in Africa</td>
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<td>Aug 28, 30</td>
<td>T: GG, Chs. 1 and 2; Wong (2012); National Geographic Human Origins Project (browse online)</td>
<td>Th: Historical Context</td>
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<td>Th: GG, Ch. 3</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Anthropological Context, Decolonization</td>
<td>T: Anthropology of Africa</td>
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<td>Sept. 4, 6</td>
<td>T: Ferguson, Introduction; About Anthropology (UF Anthropology)</td>
<td>Turn in Country Report picks</td>
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<td>Th: Birmingham, Introduction, Chs. 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>Th: Overview, Decolonization in North and West Africa</td>
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<td>Assign countries, arrange small ‘regional’ groups</td>
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| Week 4  | Sept. 11, 13 | Decolonization | T: Decolonization: East and Central Africa  
Th: Decolonization: Southern Africa, Discussion |
|---------|--------------|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | T: Birmingham, Chs. 3 & 4  
Th: Birmingham, Chs. 5 & Conclusion |
| Week 5  | Sept. 18, 20 | Current African Politics, Revolution and Conflict | T: African Politics  
Th: Arab Spring; Politics and Conflict |
|         | T: GG, Ch. 4  
| Week 6  | Sept. 25, 27 | Women & Kinship | T: Kinship and Family  
Th: Gender |
|         | T: GG, Ch. 9  
Th: GG. Ch. 10; Abu-Lughod (2002) |
| Week 7  | Oct. 2, 4    | Environment & Production | T: Climate Change and the Environment  
Th: Religion |
|         | T: GG, Ch. 8  
Religion  
Th: GG, Ch. 11 |
| Week 8  | Oct. 9, 11   | African Art & Literature | T: Midterm  
Th: African Literature, brief introduction; African Cinema (film) |
|         | T: No readings, midterm  
Th: Achebe, Chs. 1 – 4 |
| Week 9  | Oct. 16, 18  | Art & Literature, cont. | T: Guest Speaker: Erik Timmons, East African Hip-Hop  
Th: Small group discussions, Achebe |
|         | T: Achebe, Chs. 5 - 10  
Th: Achebe, Chs. 11 - 18 |
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Oct. Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>T: Required/Recommended</th>
<th>Th: Required/Recommended</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>23, 25</td>
<td>Trade &amp; Economies</td>
<td>GG, Ch. 5; Ferguson, Ch. 2</td>
<td>GG, Ch. 6; Ferguson, Ch. 3</td>
<td>T: African (and Global) Economies, Th: International Trade and Relations</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>30, Nov. 1</td>
<td>Globalization &amp; Neoliberalism</td>
<td>George (1999)</td>
<td>Ferguson, Ch. 1; Ferguson, Ch. 8</td>
<td>T: Neoliberalism, Political Economy, Th: Small group discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>20, 22</td>
<td>Country Reports</td>
<td>No readings, prepare for presentations</td>
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<td>T: Country Reports, Th: No class, Thanksgiving</td>
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### Week 15
**Nov. 27, 29**

| **Country Reports**  | **T:** Country Reports
|----------------------|-----------------------------
| Th: No readings, prepare for presentations | Th: Country Reports

### Week 16
**Dec. 4**

| **Review**  | **T:** Final Thoughts/Review
|-------------|-------------------------------
| T: GG, Ch. 13 |-----------------------------

### Week 17

| **Finals**  | **Final Exam – Wednesday, Dec. 12, 10 am – 12pm**
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------

### Readings
All readings and websites (except books) are available on Sakai unless noted otherwise.

Abu-Lughod, Lila  

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Clemens, Michael  

The Economist  

Fischer, Max  
George, Susan

Hamdy, Sherine

Nordstrom, Carolyn

Richey, L. and S. Ponte

Robins, Steven

Schlesinger, Victoria

UNAIDS

Wong, Kate

Zachary, G. Pascal

Websites: