

**HUM 2420: African Humanities---- Spring 2024**

**Class #: Venue-Mat 0113**

**Section # 7W44 & HUM2**

**Class times: Tue 11:45 AM-1:40 PM & Thurs 12:50-1:40 PM**

**Instructor:** Kole Odutola

email: kodutola@ufl.edu

**Office:** 351 Pugh Hall phone: 352-

**Office Hours:** Tue & Thur. 10 -11 & by appointment

March 9 to 16 (Spring Break)

## **1. Course Description**

This course engages the human landscape of contemporary Africa, through an attentive viewing of a selection of films (mostly documentaries) from diverse cultural and geographical areas. The films are discussed against a backdrop of information about forms of socio-political organization, economic strategies, cultural expressions, and challenges facing modern African women and men. We will look at Africa from an African perspective using African indicators to measure Africa's progress or otherwise.

Relevant reading materials to combine with and contextualize the films are scanned and posted on Canvas. We will explore and discuss differences in settings, the educated/ruling elites and poor people, men and women, and the forces that draw all of these together.

Encompassing themes include African politics, the economies of Africa, urbanization and related pop culture, women and development, as well as religion in Africa.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that this course does not attempt to survey all peoples and their circumstances in modern Africa, but rather to use the selected cases to distill and feature certain themes of especially wide relevance.

## **2. Course Objectives**

Students should be able to formulate their own informed views on the complex realities pertaining to modern Africa. As the course progresses students are expected to demonstrate evidence that they can freely and confidently express their new views on Africa – participate in a group dialogue and articulate what they find compelling, fascinating, strange, or even appalling or 'worthless' about Africa's human landscape.

## **3. Instructional Approach**

Class meetings in this course are exploration and reflection sessions. They are NOT lecture sessions. They are modeled along the traditional African storytelling format. This is what is called "sustainable learning" approach. The instructor comes to the classroom to guide or facilitate students to explore, discover new ideas, analyze, synthesize information and eventually formulate their own views on contemporary Africa. This will involve a close reading of selected articles, reading quizzes, in-class viewing of feature films and documentaries (stories on modern Africa), conversations, written discussions, observation of current events in Africa,

and assignments on specific topics of their interest. Active interaction among students is strongly encouraged.

**4. Text-** There is NO specific textbook. Scanned articles will be posted on Canvas.

## **5. Films**

### **5.1 Who are Africans?**

(a). The Untold Stories of the Great African Empires | A Journey Through Time (33 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBf3pA3L1OQ>

(b). Basil Davidson (1984), Different but Equal.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X75COneJ4w8>

(c ) Topic : Understanding how an African analyses the continent.

**Audiovisual:** *The Africans: A Triple Heritage* by Ali Mazurais (1986).

(d). Afrocentric Approaches to History (1993) Dr. Molefi Asante, Chairman of the African-American Studies Department at Temple University, spoke about his idea to teach more history in the schools which would relate to African-American roots. He called this type of teaching "Afrocentric" teaching.

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?38158-1/afrocentric-approaches-history#>

**5.2 RELIGION IN AFRICA**---Wonders of the African World (The Swahili Coast, 60 min.)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rdhQL\\_w4FFc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rdhQL_w4FFc) Meet the African women reviving traditional religions - BBC Africa (9 mins)

*Go through the comments section and bring out 5 points that add to what we are learning*

### **5.3 POLITICS & ECONOMICS**

(a). TED Talk: Why Africa is Rising - Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala: Former Nigerian Finance Minister Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala delivers a powerful TED Talk, highlighting Africa's economic potential and the need for sound policies to foster inclusive growth. (**15 mins, 2016**)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/ngozi\\_okonjo\\_oweala\\_how\\_africa\\_can\\_keep\\_rising](https://www.ted.com/talks/ngozi_okonjo_oweala_how_africa_can_keep_rising)

(b). How Sports Could Drive Africa's Economy (2018)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/masai\\_ujiri\\_how\\_sports\\_could\\_drive\\_africa\\_s\\_economy](https://www.ted.com/talks/masai_ujiri_how_sports_could_drive_africa_s_economy)

(c ) Power, Politics and Reinventing Yourself in Africa (2017)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/dickson\\_jere\\_power\\_politics\\_and\\_reinventing\\_yourself\\_in\\_africa](https://www.ted.com/talks/dickson_jere_power_politics_and_reinventing_yourself_in_africa)

## 5.4 WOMEN, SOCIETY, & DEVELOPMENT

### **Question: What does development mean?**

Afro-Feminism: A way to liberate African politics--

[https://www.ted.com/talks/murunwa\\_mutele\\_afro\\_feminism\\_a\\_way\\_to\\_liberate\\_african\\_politics](https://www.ted.com/talks/murunwa_mutele_afro_feminism_a_way_to_liberate_african_politics)

Talk Africa: Women Empowerment (2015) (YouTube) (30 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZiKtF1VyVo>

## 5.5 URBANIZATION, YOUTH & POP CULTURE

<https://venturesafrica.com/vabizhive2023issue04/> (Newsletter Biz Hive)

- Talk Africa: World Cities Day: Urbanization & Africa (YouTube, 30 min)
- Africa, you won't see on TV (You Tube, 10 min)
- Living Spaces in Africa

[https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-e&q=David+Aradeon+#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:df3b3b83,vid:\\_gm2nOPXrWo](https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-e&q=David+Aradeon+#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:df3b3b83,vid:_gm2nOPXrWo) (30 minutes)

<https://florida.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/nvdh-sci-humanorigins/discovering-human-origins-in-africa/>

Statistics

<https://www.afrobarometer.org/about/>

### Important Dates

Week 3: Tuesday January 23 (Reading Quiz #1)

First Short Discussion paper due Thursday January 25th:

Week 5: February 6, 2024 (Double period) Reading Quiz #2

2nd Short Discussion paper on the questions below (Due February 15th)

Week 8-Thursday February 29, 2024: Reading Quiz #3

Week 14 Tuesday April 9th- African thinkers/ writers (Presentation)

3rd Short Discussion paper on the questions below (Due March 21)

## 6. Responsibilities, Assignments, and Grading

Reading assigned articles and close viewing of selected films, as well as attending class are, of course, the keys to the success of this course. Please have the readings done by the day they are assigned in the schedule below - they constitute the foundation for what goes on in the course.

Films will be viewed at home as part of homework assignments (to be graded by how you participate in class conversations) and discussed in class as part of class conversations alongside relevant readings or new experiences. Every individual's active participation is expected including active viewing – a viewing guide will be provided for each film. The material discussed in this course guides us to experience how to learn and rethink the way we think about Africa

Please note: occasionally, lectures or films/performances outside of class time may be recommended. Some of you may have schedule conflicts, but do try to participate whenever your schedule allows you. This will earn you extra credit.

Your course grade will be based on a combination of, class attendance, participation, reading quizzes, keeping a learning journal (activities in class), three (3) short discussion papers, and presentation (African Thinkers). The breakdown of the grading is as follows:

Collection of reactions/ comments of those who watched the movies (1) 5% (50 points)

Class attendance [CA] 10% (100 points)

Participation [P] 5% (50 points)

Reading quizzes/ presentation [RQ] (4) 20% (200 points)

Learning journal [LJ] 15% (150 points)

Short Discussion papers [SDP] (3) 30% (300 points)

Final project [FP] 15% (150 points)

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Total 100% [1000 points]

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The authorized letter grades (A, B, C, D, E) are as follows:

A = 94-100	A- = 90-93	B+ = 87-89	B = 83-86	B- = 80-82	C+ = 77-79
C = 73-76	C- = 70-72	D+ = 67-70	D = 63-66	D- = 60-62	E = 59 and below

**Grade Points:**

A = 4.0	A- = 3.67	B+ = 3.33	B = 3.0	B- = 2.67
C+ = 2.33	C = 2.0	C- = 1.67	D+ = 1.33	D = 1.0

D- = 0.67; E = 0.0

NOTE that this class has no in-class FINAL EXAM but there is a final class project.

**6.1** Collection of reactions/ comments of those who previously watched the movies 5% (50 points). Collect the comments from the discussion sections. Look for profound comments that throw light on the documentary assigned for that week

**6.2** Class attendance (CA) [10%] (100 points) **Double periods are two points each time**

Given the instructional approach elaborated above (3), attendance is REQUIRED.

**6.3** Class Participation (CP) [5%] (50 points)

Active participation is expected. The more you read assigned articles thoroughly and watch films actively and think about them seriously, the greater chances are for you not only participate productively in this exploration, but also enjoy the class. For every discussion session (conversational session), a number of students will be selected to be lead discussants, and you will be graded accordingly.

**6.4** Reading Quizzes/ presentation (RQ) [20%]

A total of four (3) reading quizzes (RQ) will be administered as indicated in the schedule below. Each RQ will have either five or ten items of such types as multiple choice, fill in the blanks, matching items or True/False. This is just to check if you read the articles.

**6.5** Learning journal [LJ] 15% (150 points)

You will keep a learning journal on points raised in the article, new concepts you checked up such as Monogenesis theory of Africa, neoliberalism and so on (the learning journals will be typed and collected 5 times through out the semester). Make sure your learning journal is comprehensive. It will be appreciated to include new facts that surprised you about Africa or that you learned in a new way. Keep notes of all

**6.6** Short Discussion papers [SDP] (3) 30% (300 points)

You will write three (3) short discussion papers (minimum: 1 page and max: 2 pages, typed single space, font 12 pts), each responding to prompts provided in the syllabus. This will be a chance for you to write about aspects of the readings and films in the context of your new way of viewing at Africa's human landscape. Each paper carries 10%.

**DUE DATES** are already in the syllabus

**6.7 Final project [FP] 15% (150 points).** This will be due after the reading period during finals week **April 27 to May 3rd**). As the semester progresses, start to think about positive aspects of the African continent that interests you. This is not about what is wrong about Africa but aspects in which Africa is making progress.

### **7.0 Academic Honesty**

The University of Florida's honor code requires all students to be honest in their academic work. University policies on cheating, plagiarism, and related issues are available at:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/academicguide.html>

### **8.0 Students with disabilities**

Students with disabilities will be accommodated accordingly. Those requesting such accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office which will provide them with documentation.

### **9.0 Minor in African Studies**

Please note that this course (in combination with others) can count towards a Minor in African studies, an ideal complement to your disciplinary major. Contact Dr. Todd Leedy for more information: [tleedy@ufl.edu](mailto:tleedy@ufl.edu)

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## **Books about Africa.**

[https://lib.ugent.be/en/catalog?q=Africa+Politics+and+government+1960-&search\\_field=subject](https://lib.ugent.be/en/catalog?q=Africa+Politics+and+government+1960-&search_field=subject)

**Resources:** The African Nomad is a channel that brings you important historical and current information about the great continent of Africa! If you'd like to know more about the Cultures, Great Histories, Great Heroes and the Current Affairs from every corner of Africa, then you're in the right place!

<https://youtube.com/channel/UCrTTiu7MKChU3iu2YuppR3Q>

**First Short Discussion paper due Thursday January 25th:**

**2nd Short Discussion paper on the questions below (Due February 15th)**

**3rd Short Discussion paper on the questions below (Due March 21)**

**Proposed Schedule and Assignments** Tue 11:45 AM-1:40 PM & Thurs 12:50-1:40 PM

Week Dates Topic/Theme Assignment Remarks

Week 1- Double periods (January 9th)

Introductions & Review of syllabus 'Africa –

**Reading for the week:** read the syllabus thoroughly (course objectives, instructional approaches, your rights & responsibilities, etc).

**Discussion for the week: Topic:** What was Africa like before colonialism? What is colonialism? What is neo-colonialism? Why are students calling for de-colonialism?

**Double period-** January 9th 1 **Who are Africans?**

(a). The Untold Stories of the Great African Empires | A Journey Through Time (33 minutes)

**Reading for next class** on Thursday- It never existed. The idea of a 'precolonial' Africa is theoretically vacuous, racist and plain wrong about the continent's actual history (It will be uploaded to the canvass and sent to your emails)

Thursday **January 11:** Watch video and discuss paper

Human origins in Africa-<https://florida.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/nvdh-sci-humanorigins/discovering-human-origins-in-africa/>

Week 2- Tuesday, **January 16th**

The Untold Stories of the Great African Empires | A Journey Through Time (33 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBf3pA3L1OQ>

Reading for the week (To be discussed in class):

Topic: Understanding the cultures of Africa (2 periods)

<https://www.fieldmuseum.org/science/research/area/cultures-africa/cultures-africa-research>

Thursday January 18th (b). Basil Davidson (1984), Different but Equal.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X75COneJ4w8>

Week 3: Tuesday January 23 (Reading Quiz #1)

Topic : Experiencing how an African analyses the continent.

**Audiovisual:** *The Africans: A Triple Heritage* by Ali Mazurai (1986). [57 minutes]

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-pksToXSL4&list=PLAHNc6z70-daQHaiV5CP-htux\\_Zyiwe7](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-pksToXSL4&list=PLAHNc6z70-daQHaiV5CP-htux_Zyiwe7)

**First Short Discussion paper due Thursday January 25th:**

- (1). Who is Professor Molefi Asante
- (2). What new ideas did you learn from the lecture by Professor Molefi Asante
- (3). How and what did you learn about African History in High School
- (d). Afrocentric Approaches to History (1993) Dr. Molefi Asante, Chairman of the African-American Studies Department at Temple University, spoke about his idea to teach more history in the schools which would relate to African-American roots. He called this type of teaching "Afrocentric" teaching.

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?38158-1/afrocentric-approaches-history#>

Thursday **January 25th** (Complete the watching of the Asante lecture)

Week 4 Tuesday, January 30 : **RELIGION IN AFRICA**----Wonders of the African World (The Swahili Coast, 60 min.)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rdhQL\\_w4FFc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rdhQL_w4FFc)

Meet the African women reviving traditional religions - BBC Africa (9 mins)

*Go through the comments section and bring out 5 points that add to what we are learning*

Reading for the week (Bring your copy to class) : Lugira, A. M. (2009) World religions: African Traditional Religion (Third Edition)Chapter 1 (pp. 8 to 25). Chelsea House Publishers

Week 4-Thursday February 1, 2024. Shaka Zulu

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATJbDka0zWA>

Finish the reading for the week. Raise questions about the reading

Week 5: February 6, 2024 (Double period) Reading Quiz #2

**POLITICS & ECONOMICS**

**Reading for the week:** Africa Rising: After decades of slow growth, Africa has a real chance to follow in the footsteps of Asia The Economist).

<https://www.economist.com/leaders/2011/12/03/africa-rising>

- (a). TED Talk: Why Africa is Rising - Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala: Former Nigerian Finance Minister Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala delivers a powerful TED Talk, highlighting Africa's economic potential and the need for sound policies to foster inclusive growth. (15 mins, 2016)



[https://www.ted.com/talks/ngozi\\_okonjo\\_oweala\\_how\\_africa\\_can\\_keep\\_rising](https://www.ted.com/talks/ngozi_okonjo_oweala_how_africa_can_keep_rising)

(b). How Sports Could Drive Africa's Economy (2018)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/masai\\_ujiri\\_how\\_sports\\_could\\_drive\\_africa\\_s\\_economy](https://www.ted.com/talks/masai_ujiri_how_sports_could_drive_africa_s_economy)

Thursday February 8

Questions: What does power mean?

How do men arrogate power to themselves

How powerless are Africans?

How powerful are you?

(c) Power, Politics and Reinventing Yourself in Africa (2017)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/dickson\\_jere\\_power\\_politics\\_and\\_reinventing\\_yourself\\_in\\_africa](https://www.ted.com/talks/dickson_jere_power_politics_and_reinventing_yourself_in_africa)

Reading for the week: TBA

Week 6 Tuesday, February 13th 2024-- WOMEN, SOCIETY, & DEVELOPMENT

**2nd Short Discussion paper on the questions below (Due February 15th)**

**Questions: What does development mean?**

**What does empower mean?**

Afro-Feminism: A way to liberate African politics--

[https://www.ted.com/talks/murunwa\\_mutele\\_afro\\_feminism\\_a\\_way\\_to\\_liberate\\_african\\_politics](https://www.ted.com/talks/murunwa_mutele_afro_feminism_a_way_to_liberate_african_politics)

Talk Africa: Women Empowerment (2015) (YouTube) (30 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZiKtF1VyVo>

Thursday February 15th 2024: Reading for the week:

Discuss the article by M. Jacqui Alexander (2005)

Questions: What is the main objective of Feminism on the continent of Africa?

How different is the notion of western feminism from that of Africa?

**Week 7 Tuesday, February 20th 2024 ---URBANIZATION, YOUTH & POP CULTURE**

<https://venturesafrica.com/vabizhive2023issue04/> (Newsletter Biz Hive)

Talk Africa: World Cities Day: Urbanization & Africa (YouTube, 30 min)

Africa, you won't see on TV (You Tube, 10 min)

Reading for the week: Sommers, M. (2010). Urban Youth in Africa. *Environment & Urbanization* Vol 22(2): pp 317-332.

Thursday, February 22 Guest Presentater: TBA

**Week 8 Tuesday 27th 2024- Topic:** Exploring the media in Africa: Print, TV, & Blogs

**Reading:** Admire Mare, Hayes Mawindi Mabweazara & Dumusani Moyo (2019) "Fake News" and Cyber-Propaganda in Sub-Saharan Africa: Recentering the Research Agenda, *African Journalism Studies*, 40:4, 1-12, DOI: 10.1080/23743670.2020.1788295

Thursday Februray 29, 2024: Reading Quiz #3

Class Debate CNN and BBC represent Africa as it is?

What can we learn from the representation of Africa in western media

**Week 9:** Tuesday March 5th 2024 Topic: Doing research about Africa: Topics, tensions & triumphs

**Reading:** Tomaselli, K. (2016). Research ethics in the Kalahari: issues, contradictions and concerns. *Critical Arts*, 30(6), 804-822.

Working on possible Research topics for the final project

Thursday March 7th 2024-- Participatory use of video

**Week 10- Spring Break March 9 to 16**

Week 11: Tuesday March 19th---Topic: African living Spaces

**3rd Short Discussion paper on the questions below (Due March 21)**

**Questions:** What influences designs of living Spaces on the continent

- Do all Africans live in huts, what influences the kind of houses in cities and in the villages?
- What kind of buildings do you expect in African cities?

**Audio visual:** [https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-e&q=David+Aradeon+#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:df3b3b83,vid:\\_gm2nOPXrWo](https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-e&q=David+Aradeon+#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:df3b3b83,vid:_gm2nOPXrWo) (30 minutes)

Reading for the week: : Aradeon, D. (1998). Architecture: the search for identity and continuity. Being text of inaugural lecture delivered Wednesday, 11th February, 1998 at the University of Lagos Nigeria.

Thursday March 21-<https://vimeo.com/68235307> (2:27 minutes) David Aradeon speaks on spaces

**Class Assignment:** If you were to build a house in a village on the continent of Africa which type of building would you build and why?

Week 12 Tuesday March 26th - Beswick, J. (2010). Exploring Eye-West Africa's vernacular architecture.

**Assignment:** Look for pictures of 5 buildings in different parts of Africa. You can only choose one from a country. Why did you decide on the building you chose?

Thursday March 28th---Guest Presenter

Week 13 Tuesday April 2- Video on What is Culture

Reading for the week: Idang, G. R. (2015). African culture and values. Phronimon (16) pp. 97-111

Thursday April 4: **Institutions in Africa,**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IjnLW9iKwIw&t=108s>

(1). Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) in Dakar, Senegal, (2). Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA), (3). African Union, Addis Ababa

**Week 14** Tuesday April 9th- African thinkers/ writers

**Class Presentation:** Choose any 5 thinkers or writers from 5 different parts of Africa and tell us first about the country they come from and the story about their ideas or writing

Thursday April 11 – Collective analysis of all the presentations

Week 15 Tuesday April 11th- Guest Presenter

Thursday April 18- **Institutions in Africa,** (4) African Development Bank , (5). ACALAN

**Week 15** Tuesday April 23rd- Discussion on your final Project. Bring your ideas to the class and let us collectively think about it

**Classes end April 24**

Final Exams April 27-May 3