

Instructor: Dr. Kane Abdoulaye

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Office hours: Wednesday from 10:30 to 12:30

AFS2002 “African Experience”

Monday: Period 6 (12:50 PM - 1:40PM), MAT0003

Wednesday: Period 6-7 (12:50 PM - 2:45 PM), MAT0003

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 Africa and the complexity of its historical, political, economic, religious, and socio-cultural realities. 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 either generalize about Africa or talk about it as a single place. 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, vulnerability of health systems).

Course Requirements:

Your final evaluation is based on the following components:

- Presence and participation (10%)
- Map Quiz (5%)
- Weekly Questions (10%)
- Midterm Test (20%)
- Reaction Paper (15%)
- Country Profile Project (20%)
- Final Test (20%)

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:

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
Tot %	94-100	90-93	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	<60

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 (10%): 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 (5%): On Monday, January 23, you will be tested on your knowledge of the names and locations of the 54 sovereign African countries. A blank map and the full list of countries will be distributed in advance so that you can practice before the test.
- Weekly questions (10%): Every week students required to send two questions about the reading materials that will be discussed on that week.
- Midterm Test (20%) will be based on the first half of class reading and discussion. The midterm test will be taken on March 1st.
- Reaction Paper (15%): Each student is required to write one short reaction paper (of about 1000 words, typed, single-spaced) analyzing Camara Laye's *The Dark Child*. This will be due on March 15 at midnight (submission through canvas.)
- A country profile (25%): Students will be responsible for researching and creating a country profile looking at geography, history, politics, the economy, ethnic and religious composition, and cultural and artistic aspects (Music, Art, and Sport). All students will be expected to present their country profile in class in the two last weeks of class (from April 12 to April 24).
- 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 Wednesday April 26.

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; counsel.ufl.edu ([Links to an external site.](#))[Links to an external site.](#)[Links to an external site.](#)
- Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, hsc.ufl.edu ([Links to an external site.](#))[Links to an external site.](#)[Links to an external site.](#)
- 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 faculty-student disability related issues. Dean of Students Office, 202 Peabody Hall, 392-7066, 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).
- 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.
- 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 textbook for this course:

- Peter J. Schraeder, ed. (2020). *Understanding Contemporary Africa*, Lynne Rienner, 6th (henceforth UCA)

Plus one other text:

- *The Dark Child: The Autobiography of an African Boy* by Camara Laye (required)

Other required class material will be available on the course website on the UF Canvas and will include chapters, books, and journal articles (as detailed in the class schedule below)

The course site on Canvas can be accessed through <http://lss.at.ufl.edu> ([Links to an external site.](#)) [Links to an external site.](#) [Links to an external site.](#), 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

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

Week 1: Introduction

Mon. Jan. 9: Course overview

Wed. Jan 9. 11: What do you know about Africa?

Reading:

-Understanding Contemporary Africa (UCA) Introduction

Week 2: Natural Resources and Geography

Mon. Jan. 16/ Wed. Jan. 18: The maps of Africa: preparation for the Map Quiz

Reading:

-UCA, "Africa: A Geographical Preface," pp. 9-24.

Week 3: Pre-Colonial, Colonial, and Slave Histories

Mon. Jan. 23/ Wed. Jan. 25: Slavery and the pre-colonial period

Reading:

-UCA, "The Historical Context"

-Film: The African experience: from "Lucy" to "Mandela." Part 2, lecture 19-20.

Wed. Jan. 25: **Map Quiz**

Week 4: Contemporary states and politics

Mon. Jan. 30/ Wed. Feb. 1: The Politics of African Independence and Post-Colonial States

Reading: UCA, "African Politics"

Reading: UCA "African International Relations"

Week 5: Economics and Development

Mon. Feb. 6 / Wed. Feb. 8:

Reading:

-UCA "The Economies of Africa"

Week 6: Cultural, and Religious Diversity in Africa

Mon. Feb. 13 / Wed. Feb. 15:

Language and Religion in Africa:

Religion in Africa

-Reading: UCA "Religion in Africa

Language and culture in Africa

Week 7: Tradition and Modernity

Mon. Feb. 20 / Wed. Feb. 22: Childhood and Education

-Reading: Laye's *The Dark Child* (1-92) & TS 13

Adulthood and Aspirations

-Reading: Laye's *The Dark Child* (93-188)

Week 8: Family, Kinship and Social Life in Africa

Mon. Feb. 27 / Wed. Mar. 1: Family ties

-Reading: UCA "Family and Kinship"

-Film: Return to Belaye

-Wed. Mar 1: **Midterm Test**

Week 9: Spring Break

Mon 6. Mar. 3/ Wed. Mar. 8: Spring Break

Week 10: Environment, Health, and Food security

Mon. Mar. 13 / Wed. Mar. 15 : Main environmental issues

-Reading: UCA "Africa's Environmental Problems"

Week 11: Land, Food Security and Health

Mon. Mar. 20 / Wed. Mar. 22.

-Reading: AGC, chapter 5, Rural Africa, pp. 109-124

AGC chapter 9, Health

AGC chapter 11, Climate change

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Week 12: Women in Africa: Social Position, Policy and Change

Mon. Mar 27 / Wed. Mar. 29: Gender issues

-Reading: UCA "Women and Development"

Week 13: Population, Urbanization, and Migration

Mon. Apr. 3 / Wed. Apr. 5:

Reading: UCA "Population, Urbanization, and AIDS"

Week 14: Africa and the New Technologies of Communication

Mon. Apr. 10 / Wed. Apr. 12:

-Reading: AGC, Chapter 6, Africa's mobile phone revolution

Week 15: Country Project Presentations

Mon. Apr. 17 / Wed. Apr. 19:

Reading: UCA "Trends and Prospects"

Week 15: Review and Final Test

Mon. Apr. 24 / Review

Wed 26: Final Test