

HUM 2424 / AFS 4935: AFRICAN CULTURES AND LITERATURES (FALL 2022)

Instructor: Bisola Ajibade

Office Location: Dauer Hall 370

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:15 to 4:15 p.m.
(or by appointment)

Period: 3rd (9:35-10:25) MWF

Venue: CSE E220

Credit: 3

E-mail: bisolaajibade@ufl.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course provides an overview of images of Africa found in the continent's literary creative expressions. The first part of the course will look at the complexity of the African continent, its problems, social organizations, pre-colonial political system, thoughts, and religious belief systems, art, and popular culture. The larger part of the course will however be devoted to the various forms of literature and cultures on the continent. This section of the course will discuss the importance of the spoken word in Africa, the nature of African unwritten literature, the training of African oral artistes, and the place of the artistes in that society. We will also discuss the socio-political and cultural relevance of specific genres of African literatures such as folktales, riddles, proverbs, praise poetry, religious songs and poetry, topical and political songs, oratory, formal speaking, etc. We will also discuss multilingualism, food, fashion, and other important elements of cultures in African societies. The course will conclude with an assessment of the changing role of literature in contemporary Africa by examining selected works of contemporary African writers.

REQUIRED TEXTS: The following 4 books are required for this course:

1. Isidore Okpewho (1992) *African Oral Literature: Background, Character, and Continuity*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
2. Lola Shoneyin. *The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives*: Harper Collins e-book, 2021.
3. Diop Boubacar Boris (2006) *Murambi: The Book of Bones* (trans. Fiona McLaughlin) Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
4. Chinua Achebe (1959) *Things Fall Apart* New York: Anchor Books (1994 edition).

SUPPLEMENTARY READING: In addition, students may find the following texts useful as well. They are therefore encouraged to be familiar with them during the semester:

1. Martin, Phyllis M., and O'Meara, Patrick (eds.) *Africa*. (3rd or 4th edition) Bloomington and Indianapolis / London: Indiana University Press and James Currey, 1995 / 2014.
2. Bayo Ogunjimi & Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah (2005) *Introduction to African Oral Literature and Performance* Trenton: Africa World Press.
3. Russell H. Kaschula Ed. (1998) *African Oral Literature: Functions in Contemporary Contexts*. Claremont: New Africa Books.
4. Ruth Finnegan (1970) *Oral Literature in Africa* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND EXPECTATIONS

Students are encouraged to attend classes regularly and participate actively in class discussions. You can only do this if you complete all assigned readings before class. You are, however, allowed 2 unexcused absences. Beyond that, each additional absence will require a written excuse verifying illness or family emergency in accordance with UF policy, failing which, your final grade will be lowered by a one letter grade. Assignments are to be handed in by the designated date. Mark due

dates on your calendars now so that you can plan ahead. Late papers will be assessed a penalty of one-half letter grade out of fairness to those who hand in their work on time.

COURSE EVALUATION

Your final grade in this course will be based on the following grading rubrics:

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <i>Class attendance and participation</i> | <i>15%</i> |
| <i>Tests and quizzes (3)</i> | <i>30%</i> |
| <i>Assignments and homework (3)</i> | <i>15%</i> |
| <i>Oral presentation (in-class)</i> | <i>10%</i> |
| <i>5-page essay (due on 11/21)</i> | <i>10%</i> |
| <i>Final take-home exam (on the required texts 2, 3, and 4) 11/21-12/08</i> | <i>20%</i> |
| <i>Total:</i> | <i>100%</i> |

;

Individual 5-page essay on African literature of choice: The paper should be typed-written in font 12 and should be 5 full pages long and double-spaced with 1-inch margin. The stylistic requirement for this paper is APA or MLA. Typographical mistakes/errors, poor spellings, and grammatical faults will be penalized. (Submission is in class on Monday, 11/22).

Oral Presentation: Between 11/28-12/9 each student will choose a country at the beginning of the semester and make an oral presentation on any topic of their choice that will be discussed during the semester and its specificity to the country of choice. Each student is free to select any literature and search the library, surf the web, read newspapers, or consult electronic media for information about the topic. This is an opportunity for you to gain in-depth knowledge of a particular country. Each student will have 10 - 15 minutes for each presentation to be followed by a 5-minute discussion by others.

GRADE CORRESPONDENCE

| | | |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| 93-100 =A | 90-92 =A- | |
| 87-89 =B+ | 83-86 =B | 80-82 =B- |
| 77-79 =C+ | 73-76 =C | 70-72 =C- |
| 67-69 =D+ | 63-66 =D | 60-62 =D- |
| Below 60 =E | | |

Students will need to earn a C or higher to use this course toward a major or minor and/or earn General Education Credit.

To receive writing requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course.

For further information on UF's Grading Policy, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

General

Feel free to ask questions in the class so that you will not be left behind. However, if there are issues that we cannot resolve in class, you are encouraged to use my office hours or send me an email. I look forward to a rewarding semester with you all.

WEEKLY BREAKDOWN OF COURSE (may be modified according to class needs)

Week I (8/24-8/26)

| Days | Topic | Reading |
|------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| W | Course Introduction. | Phyllis M. Martin and Patrick O'Meara's Africa 4 th Edition Chapter 1: The Contemporary Map of Arica |
| F | An overview of facts and figures of the continent | Phyllis M. Martin and Patrick O'Meara's <i>Africa</i> 4 th Edition Chapter 1: Africa Problems and Perspectives |

Week II (8/29-9/02)

| Days | Topic | Reading |
|------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| M | Africa's problems and prospects | Phyllis M. Martin and Patrick O'Meara's Africa 4th Edition Chapter 1: Africa Problems and Perspectives |
| W | Africa and its involvement in WWI & II | Material for discussion will be supplied. |
| F | Africa and its interaction with the Americas. | Watch the documentary <i>Bigger than Africa</i> on Netflix. Material for discussion will be supplied. |

Week III (9/5-9/9)

| Days | Topic | Reading |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| M | No class on Monday, 9/5 | Labor Day |
| W | Political systems & governance | Phyllis M. Martin and Patrick O'Meara's <i>Africa</i> 4 th Edition Chapter 4: Aspects of Early African History |
| F | <i>Test 1: 'Map test' Know locations of African countries and their capitals</i> | <i>*Test 1: 'Map test' Know locations of African countries and their capitals</i> |

Week IV (9/12-9/16)

| Days | Topic | Reading |
|------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| M | Political systems & governance | Phyllis M. Martin and Patrick O'Meara's <i>Africa</i> 4 th Edition Chapter 4: Aspects of Early African History |
| W | Religion and systems of thoughts. | Phyllis M. Martin and Patrick O'Meara's <i>Africa</i> 4 th Edition Chapter 11: African Systems of Thought |
| F | No Class | No Class |

Week V (9/19-9/23)

| Days | Topic | Reading |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| M | Religion and systems of thoughts. | Phyllis M. Martin and Patrick O'Meara's <i>Africa</i> 4th Edition Chapter 11: African Systems of Thought |
| W | African Literature: An Overview of its classification | Phyllis M. Martin and Patrick O'Meara's <i>Africa</i> 4th Edition Chapter 13: African Music Performed Chapter 15: African Literature |
| F | African Literature: An Overview of its classification | Phyllis M. Martin and Patrick O'Meara's <i>Africa</i> 4th Edition Chapter 13: African Music Performed Chapter 15: African Literature |

Week VI (9/26-10/30)

| Days | Topic | Reading |
|------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| M | <i>Test 2 on facts and figures about Africa</i> | <i>Test 2 on facts and figures about Africa</i> |
| W | Hurricane break | No Class |
| F | Hurricane break | No Class |

Week VII (10/3-10/7)

| Days | Topic | Reading |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| M | African literary artistes and their society | Isidore Okpewho's <i>African Oral Literature</i> Chapter 2: The Oral Artist Chapter 5: Social Relevance |
| W | Narratives Analysis of samples of myths, legends, and folktales. | Isidore Okpewho's <i>African Oral Literature</i> Chapter 7: Oral Narratives (Myths, Legends, & folktales) Assignment 1: Each student to have 3 samples of African folktale, myth, or legend ready for class discussion. |
| F | No Class | Homecoming |

Week VIII (10/10-10/14)

| Days | Topic | Reading |
|------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| M | Proverbs & Riddles | Isidore Okpewho's <i>African Oral Literature</i> Chapter 7: Oral Narratives Chapter 8: Witticisms |
| W | Analysis of African proverbs and riddles. | Assignment 2: Each student to have a list of 10 proverbs and 10 riddles from across African countries ready for class discussion |
| F | Multilingualism in African Societies. | LANGUAGES IN AFRICA Multilingualism, Language Policy, and Education. Edited by Elizabeth C. Zsiga, One Tlale Boyer, and Ruth Kramer |

Week IX (10/17-10/21)

| Days | Topic | Reading |
|------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| M | Multilingualism in African Societies. | <i>LANGUAGES IN AFRICA: Multilingualism, Language Policy, and Education.</i> Edited by Elizabeth C. Zsiga, One Tlale Boyer, and Ruth Kramer Assignment 3: Each student will learn how to introduce themselves in one of the following African languages- Yoruba, Igbo, Swahili, Wolof, Hausa, Edo, Kinyarwanda, Afrikaans, Amharic, Akan, Zulu. |
| W | Food in African Cultures | Jonathan Bishop Highfield's <i>Food and Foodways in African Narratives Community, Culture.</i> |
| F | Test 3 | Distribute oral presentation schedule to students. |

Week X (10/24-10/28)

| Days | Topic | Reading |
|------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| M | Fashion, Photography, and Urban Cultures | Guest speaker: Felicity Tackey-Otoo |
| W | Marriage in African Cultures | Dominique Meekers's <i>The Process of Marriage in African Societies: A Multiple Indicator Approach.</i> |
| F | Rwanda: Historical background | <i>Murambi: The Book of Bones</i> |

Week XI (10/31-11/04)

| Days | Topic | Reading |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| M | Ethnic violence, war, and peace in Africa: Examples from <i>Murambi: The Book of Bones</i> | <i>Murambi: The Book of Bones</i> |
| W | The Rwandan genocide | <i>Murambi: The Book of Bones</i> The film <i>Hotel Rwanda</i> (DVD 1044) |
| F | Cultural elements in <i>The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives</i> | Lola Shoneyin's <i>The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives.</i> |

Week XII (11/07-11/11)

| Days | Topic | Reading |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| M | Cultural elements in <i>The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives</i> | Lola Shoneyin <i>The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives</i> |
| W | Cultural elements in <i>The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives</i> | Lola Shoneyin <i>The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives</i> |
| F | No class | Veteran's Day |

Week XIII (11/14-11/18)

| Days | Topic | Reading |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| M | Indigenous cultural practices in <i>Things Fall Apart</i> | Chinua Achebe's <i>Things Fall Apart</i> |
| W | Indigenous cultural practices in <i>Things Fall Apart</i> | Chinua Achebe's <i>Things Fall Apart</i> |
| F | Cultural Practices after the contact with the West: <i>Things Fall Apart</i> as a case study | Chinua Achebe's <i>Things Fall Apart</i> |

Week XIV (11/21-11/25)

| Days | | |
|------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| M | Oral presentation 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-page essay due today in class • Distribute take-home final exam |
| W | No class -Thanksgiving | No class -Thanksgiving |
| F | No class -Thanksgiving | No class -Thanksgiving |

Week XV (11/28-12/02)

| Days | | |
|------|----------------------------|--|
| M | Oral presentation 2 | |
| W | Oral presentation 3 | |
| F | Oral presentation 4 | |

Week XVI (12/5-12/9)

| Days | | |
|------|----------------------------|--|
| M | Oral presentation 5 | |
| W | Oral presentation 6 | |

GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

Canvas

All assignments, lecture notes, handouts, study guides, grades, etc. will be posted on the course website on Canvas. It is your responsibility to check the website regularly and keep up to date with the class.

Attendance and make-ups

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Attendance is mandatory and will be assessed by roll call. Acceptable excuses include illness, religious holidays, & military obligation. These need to be documented excuses. Should you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for informing yourself as to the material covered. Except in the case of certified illness or other UF-accepted excuses, there will be no make-up option for missed exams/assignments. Where possible, make-ups should be arranged prior to absence. Alternatively, students should contact me on return to classes.

Class Demeanor & Academic Integrity

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students. Please avoid the use of cell phones and eating during class time. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be held at minimum, if at all.

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Conduct Code](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Accommodations

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. For more information see <https://disability.ufl.edu/>.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

- U Matter, We Care: umatter@ufl.edu – <https://umatter.ufl.edu/> ; 392-1575
- Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx> ; 392-1575
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS): Student Health Care Center; 392-1161
- University Police Department: <http://www.police.ufl.edu/> ; 392-1111 (911 for emergencies)

ACADEMIC RESOURCES

- E-learning technical support: Learningsupport@ufl.edu; <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml> ; 352-392-4357 (opt. 2)
- Career Resource Center: Reitz Union; <http://www.crc.ufl.edu/> ; 392-1601
- Library Support: <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>
- Teaching Center: Broward Hall; 392-2010 or 392-6420
- Writing Studio: 302 Tigert Hall; <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> ; 846-1138
- *Student Complaints On-Campus*: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/> Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu> . Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/> .

In-Class Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

COVID-19 Statement

In response to COVID-19, the following recommendations are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit one.ufl.edu for screening / testing and vaccination opportunities.
- If you are sick, stay home. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 to be evaluated.
- Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence. As with any excused absence, you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up missed work.