

HUM 2420: African Humanities

Class #: 23681 & 31474

Section # 7W44 & HUM2

Spring 2021

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

Classroom: FLG 0260

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IMPORTANT

- The first week of this class will be entirely on-line in order to have enough time to prepare everyone for the new classroom protocols.
- UF is instituting a mandatory Covid-19 test for all students in F2F courses every two weeks. Students will not be permitted to come to class unless they are cleared and have a GREEN CHECK on the class roster. Do check your roster prior to each class. Faculty are also URGED to take advantage of the free weekly COVID tests offered by UF.
- Despite the good news about the vaccine, the situation remains unprecedented and patience and flexibility will be required by all to maximize learning while preserving individual and public health.
- We all are committed to maximizing your educational experience as well as the health and safety of the UF community, including faculty, staff and students.
If UF HEALTH's SCREEN TEST & PROTECT office communicates concern about in-class exposure, a class may shift to on-line only. In any case, I will be available and do whatever it takes to ensure your success in this class and your educational experience at UF.

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.

Relevant reading materials to combine with and contextualize the films are scanned and posted on Canvas. We will **explore** and **discuss** rural and urban settings, the educated/ruling elites and poor masses, 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, family and kinship, 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 I call “sustainable learning” approach. I come in 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 working in groups on a specific topic 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 POLITICS & ECONOMICS

Extra Bitter: the Legacy of the Chocolate Islands (52 min.)

Zimbabwe Countdown (ROBERT MUGABES ZIMBABWE 2)- YouTube, 55:11 min

Liberia: A Fragile Peace (You Tube, 60 min.)

Nigeria’s Oil war (You Tube, 23 min)

5.2 WOMEN, SOCIETY, & DEVELOPMENT

Africa Rising: the grassroots movement to end FGM (62 min)

Is Kenya winning the war against FGM? (You Tube, 22 min)

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

5.3 URBANIZATION, YOUTH & POP CULTURE

Ladysmith Black Mambazo: - Africa 360, (You Tube, 25 min))

Ladysmith Black Mambazo Turns 60: SABC News (You Tube, 12:30 min)

Papa Ngwasuma – Congolese Soukous (Koffi Olomide)

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

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

5.4 RELIGION IN AFRICA

Wonders of the African World (The Swahili Coast, 60 min.)

Man, God, and Africa (You Tube, 51 min.)

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, I will recommend lectures or films/performances outside of class time. 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 a map quiz, class attendance, participation, reading quizzes, keeping an African country journal (current events), three (3) short discussion papers, and group presentation (Roundtable). The breakdown of the grading is as follows:

Map quiz [MQ] (1)	5%
Class attendance [CA]	5%
Participation [P]	10%
Reading quizzes [RQ] (4)	20%
MyAfricancountry journal [J]	15%
Short Discussion papers [SDP] (3)	30%
Roundtable [RT] (group presentations)	15%
Total	100%

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.

6.1 A Map Quiz (MQ) [5%]

Only one map quiz will be administered. This will take place in the 3rd week (@1/28). This quiz is intended to encourage you to put as much effort as possible from early on in the course in understanding **important physical features** and **political setting of the African continent**. A blank map of Africa with country boundaries drawn in will be provided, as well as main rivers, lakes, and islands. We will look at these maps and do some practice (1/21).

6.2 Class attendance (CA) [5%]

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

6.3 Class Participation (CP) [10%]

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**), up to 4 students will be selected to be **lead discussants**, and you will be graded accordingly.

6.4 Reading Quizzes (RQ) [20%]

A total of four (4) 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.

6.5 My African country Journal - (myAFRICountry Journal)- (J) [15%]

You will keep a journal on your **adopted African country** (to be assigned on **Feb 2**) pertaining to current events for one month – February. A minimum of two events every week (starting **February 7 to 28**). **Minimum entries: 6**. For each entry you will write a brief summary, indicate a source, and dates (when first published), and write your comments why you find the event interesting. You may relate the events you choose to issues discussed in class or the readings. **DUE March 5.**

Although you are not restricted as to the source of the events, the following sources would be useful:

The New York Times: www.nytimes.com (look in international news, Africa section)
CNN: www.cnn.com (look in international news, Africa section)
BBC: www.bbc.com (look in international news, Africa section)
All Africa <http://allafrica.com>
Country's official websites (if any exists)

6.6 Short Discussion Papers (SDP) (three) [30%]

You will write three (3) short discussion papers (minimum: 2 pages and max: 3 pages, typed double space, font 12 pts), each discussing a specific course theme. 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 as follow: SDP-1: 2/19, SDP-2: 3/26 & SDP-3: 4/16.**

6.7 'Roundtable' discussion on Africa (RT) (group assignment) [15%],

Preparation group mandatory meetings: **March, 18, 25 & April 1.**

Presentation sessions: **April 8, 13, 15 & 20**

Members in each region (west, central, eastern, southern Africa, & the Horn of Africa) will select any topic they want, explore it and design their own way of presenting it. 15-20 minutes will be allocated for presentation and 10 minutes for Q&A. Each group in the audience (groups that are not presenting) will have up to 5 minutes to reflect on the presentation and ask at least one question or make a constructive remark, all of which will be graded. A detailed guideline for this assignment will be provided (**@ March 4**).

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

Proposed Schedule and Assignments

Week	Dates	Topic/Theme	Assignment	Remarks
1	1/12 & 14	Introductions & Review of syllabus 'Africa – A Geographic Frame'- 1	Read: read the syllabus thoroughly (course objectives, instructional approaches, your rights & responsibilities, etc). Read: A Geographic Frame (Delehanty) (1/12)	THIS FIRST WEEK, THE CLASS WILL ENTIRELY MEET ON-LINE
2	1/19 & 21	'Africa – A Geographic Frame'- 2	- Read: A Geographic Frame (Delehanty) (1/19) - Explore: A Geographic Frame - In-class practices @Map Quiz (1/21)	
3	1/26 & 28	The Impact of Colonialism	- Read: African Politics- the impact of Colonialism (Gordon) - in-class screening & conversation-1: Extra Bitter (1/26) - a Map Quiz (1/28]	
4	2/2 & 4	<i>MyAfricountry Journal</i>	-A guideline to the Journal assignment & assigning countries (2/2) - 1 st draft Countries' profiles (2/4)	Keep the journal for the whole month of Feb
5	2/9 & 11	Starting off on the wrong foot?	- Read: African Politics – 'Beyond Autocracy' (Gordon) - In-class screening & conversation @ Zimbabwe Countdown (Michael Raeburn) -RQ-1 (2/9)	
6	2/16 & 18	Prospects for Democracy in Africa?	- Read: Prospects for Democracy in Africa (Gordon)	

			- Reading Quiz -4 (3/30) - In-class screening & conversation @ <i>Man, God, and Africa</i> - Roundtable planning meeting-3 & final (4/1)	
13	4/6	African spiritual landscape -2	- Read: Religions in Africa – Islam - In-class screening & conversation @ <i>Wonders of the African World – the Swahili Coast</i>	
	4/8	RT Presentation -1	- RT Session -1 (4/8) 1 group	
14	4/13 & 15	RT Presentations -2	-RT Session -2 (4/13) 2 groups - RT Session - (4/15) 1 group	
15	4/20	Evaluation & Conclusion	Conclusion ☺ SDP-3 DUE (4/21)	