

AFRI 1001: Introduction to African Studies

Summer 2016

Time: 11:35 a.m. – 2:25 p.m., Mondays and Wednesdays

Class Location: Paterson Hall 133

Instructor: Ebere Ahanihu

Office: Room 457, Paterson Hall

Office Hours: 10:00 – 11:00 on Tuesdays or by appointment

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Course description

Entrenched views in the West have created and continue to reinforce certain stereotypes that tend to portray Africa as a veritable underdeveloped subjectivity, endowed with features such as powerlessness, passivity, poverty, and ignorance. This course seeks to explore a general view of how this representation became dominant and contribute in shaping the ways in which reality in Africa came to be imagined and acted upon. This representation will be challenged during the course and, in the process, students will be provided with alternative ways of conceiving the continent and its people.

Expected outcomes

- Enable students to acquire better knowledge of the physical and cultural geography of Africa
- Enable students to rethink the dominant image of Africans as powerless, passive, poor and ignorant
- Provide students the basic understanding of the scope of the field of African Studies as one that is related to their contemporary experience
- Foster students' critical reading, thinking and writing skills

Assessment and evaluation

Facts quiz: 10%

Midterm examination: 20%

Book review: 10%

Participation: 20% (10% for attendance, and 10% for discussion)

Group presentation: 10%

Final examination: 30%

Fact quiz: The quiz (10% of final grade) will be held in the class on 18 May 2016. It is designed to test students' knowledge of official languages, and names of capital cities and heads of state/presidents of African countries.

To do well in this test, students are expected to have researched and mastered the following

- (a) Names of countries and their capital cities in Africa
- (b) Official language of each of the countries
- (c) Names of heads of state/presidents of each of the countries
- (d) Years formerly colonized countries gained independence

Midterm examination: There will be a 90-minute in-class midterm examination on 30 May 2016, worth 20% of final grade.

Book review: Worth 10% of final grade, this is a four to five-page critical analysis of the two books listed below. Detailed guidelines will be discussed in the class. Students will submit the assignment in hard copies not later than May 30.

1. Conrad, Joseph (1998) *The heart of darkness*, New York, Columbia University Press.
2. Achebe, Chinua (1992) *Things fall apart*, New York: Knopf: Distributed by Random House.

Students will find copies of these books on Reserve at the Carleton library or may decide to purchase their own copies.

Participation: The class consists of lectures and discussions. The discussions examine and debate ideas and interpretations of assigned weekly readings. Students' participation in the discussions is worth 20% of the final grade (10% for attendance, and 10% for participation). Students are expected to have read the assigned texts and prepare to discuss them before coming to the class. The grade will be based on the quality (not quantity) of students' contribution to the discussions.

Group presentation: Students working in groups will make presentation on one of the assigned themes between June 1 and 15, worth 10% of the final grade. In consultation with the instructor, each group will make a 30-minute presentation and develop a minimum of five discussion questions. The grade will be based on the presentation and questions.

Final examination: The two-hour final examination is worth 30% of the final grade. The format will be a combination of short responses and essay questions drawn from all materials covered in lectures, readings and discussions. Students will be notified of the date and location for the final examination by the Registrar's office.

The letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69	D+ = 57-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66	D = 53-56
A- = 80-84	B- = 70-72	C- = 60-62	D- = 50-52
F = Below 50			

Other administrative matters

Grade dispute: The instructor will not discuss grade problems during classes. The student is encouraged to see the instructor by appointment on such issue, after indicating in writing where and why s/he believes the work deserved a higher mark. The written submission on a grade problem should be between 250 (minimum) and 500 (maximum).

Respect one another and avoid harassment: Students are expected to respect one another and the instructor in and outside the classroom environment. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. For further descriptions of harassment, please see Equity Services website, at http://carleton.ca/equity/discrimination_and_harassment.htm

Students are expected to avoid working on anything unrelated to the lecture/discussion during classes. Students are expected to refrain from text messaging, surfing the Internet or social networking sites, talking on the phone, or talking out of turn during classes. The instructor reserves the right to deduct 5 points from a student's grade for every instance of disruptive behaviour exhibited in the class. A student may also be asked to leave the class if disruptive behaviour continued.

Plagiarism: Carleton University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own.” They can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgement in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works and/or failing to use quotation marks; and
- handing in “substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.”

Plagiarism is a serious offence, which cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of 'F' for the course.

Academic accommodation for students

Persons with disabilities: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodation must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities for a formal evaluation of disabilities-related needs (613-520-6608). It is students' responsibility to ensure that the instructor received the letter of accommodation from the PMC no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodation.

For religious observance: Accommodation must be worked out with me on individual basis. Students requiring accommodation should consult Equity Services Website or Enquiry Advisor (Ext. 5622) for Policy and list of Holy Days (www.carleton.ca/equity).

For pregnancy: Pregnant students requiring accommodation should contact Equity Services to obtain a letter of accommodation (Ext. 5622). The students must then make appointment to discuss her needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

Weekly schedule and assigned readings

(NOTE: If need be, modifications might be made to the schedule and assigned readings).

The assigned readings (articles, book chapters, etc.) will be made available in electronic format on Ares, accessed through the course in cuLearn. Documentary films will be shown in the class from time to time as the need arises.

May 2:

- Introduction and overview

May 4:

Assigned readings

- Binyavanga Wainaina, 'How to write about Africa,' Granta 92, at <http://www.granta.com/Archive/92/How-to-Write-about-Africa/Page-1>
- Wole Soyinka, 'The dark continent? Or beholder's cataract?' at http://bookcraftafrica.com/samplechapter/6872_Harmattan%20Haze%20chpt%201%20pdf.pdf.

May 9:

Assigned readings

Crowder, Michael (1968) *West Africa under colonial rule*, London, Hutchinson

- – Pre-colonial Africa: the myth and the reality (pages 10-17)
- – The origins of European interest in West Africa hinterland, 1800-50 (pages 23-31).

May 11

Assigned readings

Crowder, Michael (1968) *West Africa under colonial rule*, London, Hutchinson

- – The beginnings of the Scramble [for Africa], 1880-5
- – The Berlin Conference (pages 55-64).

May 16

- Patrick Brantlinger (1985) 'Victorians and Africans: The genealogy of the myth of the Dark Continent,' *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 12, No. 1.
- Chinua Achebe (1978) 'An image of Africa,' In *Research in African Literatures*, Vol. 9, No. 1, Special Issue on Literary Criticism, 1-15, at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3818468>

May 18:

- J.L. Sadie (1960) 'The social anthropology of economic underdevelopment' *The Economic Journal*, Vol. 70, No. 278, pp. 294-303.
- Zaoual, Hassan (1997) 'The economic and symbolic sites of Africa' In *The post-development reader*, (eds.) Majid Rahnema with Victoria Bawtree, London; Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Zed Books; Dhaka: University Press; Halifax, N.S.: Fernwood Pub.; Cape Town: David Philip.

In-class test: Facts about Africa.

May 23: Statutory holiday, University closed.

May 25

Assigned readings

- Etounga-Manguelle, Daniel (2000) 'Does Africa need a cultural adjustment program?' In *Culture matters: How values shape human progress*, (eds.) Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel P. Huntington, New York: Basic Books.
- Mathews, Sally (2004) 'Post-development theory and the question of alternatives: A view from Africa,' *Third World Quarterly*, 25 (2), 373-384.

May 30:

Assigned readings

- Dossa, Shiraz (2007) 'Slicing up 'Development': Colonialism, political theory, ethics,' *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 28, No. 5, 887-899.
- Fahnbulleh, Miatta (2006) 'In search of economic development in Kenya: Colonial legacies and post-independence realities,' *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 107, 33-47.

June 1

Assigned reading

- Martin, William G. (2008) 'Africa's futures: From North-South to East-South?' *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 2, 339-356.

Mid-term examination.

June 6

Assigned readings

- Pineau, Carol (2005) 'The Africa you never see,' *The Washington Post*, April 17: pg B02, at <http://www.africaopenforbusiness.com/WashPost.pdf>
- York, Geoffrey (2010) 'Africa: An economic giant that's ready to wake up,' *The Globe and Mail*, May 10, at <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/g8-g20/africa/africa-an-economic-giant-thats-ready-to-wake-up/article1562359/>

June 8: Revision and meeting with the instructor.