

AFRI 1001A
Introduction to African Studies I
Fall 2013

Lecture: Friday 11:35-1:25

Room: Azrieli Theatre 301

Instructor: Christine Duff

Discussion Groups: Friday 10:33-11:25 (A01, A03, A07)

Friday 1:35-2:25 (A02, A04, A08)

Thursday 2:35-3:25 (A06)

Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 11:00-1:00 or by appointment

E-mail: cuLearn

Office: 1606 Dunton Tower (Dept. of French)

Tel: (613) 520-2600 ext. 2170 (during office hours only)

Teaching Assistants: TBA

TA office hours: by appointment

*Please note that e-mail is the preferred means of communication for this course. Please allow 24hrs for a reply (48 hours on weekends).

Welcome to Introduction to African Studies I!

Course Description

The 2013-2014 Undergraduate Calendar describes this course as “Introduction to African studies, including history, geography, literature, and the arts.” Cultural production, with special emphasis on the literary imagination, will be our focus in AFRI 1001A. Popular representations of Africa in North America and Europe are marked by a reductionist and stereotyped image of African creativity, if not by the absence of creative expression altogether. Our first task, then, will be to critically assess the all-too-common framing of Africa as continent solely of conflict, disasters and poverty. How do African writers represent themselves, their continent -- its beauty and its challenges -- and their experience? This course seeks to provide students with points of entry for answering this important question by examining some of the forces at play in the various ways Africa has been constructed by “the West”. Literary works and essays from Nigeria, Ghana, and Senegal will be featured, while visual art, film and popular culture will also be considered. Some historical and sociological texts will be essential background reading. We will also look, in broad terms, at the evolution of the field of African Studies.

Required texts

1. Pius Adesanmi, *You're Not a Country, Africa*. (approx. \$14.00)
2. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*. (approx. \$14.00)
4. Ousmane Sembène, *Xala*. (approx. \$12.00)

All titles are available at **Haven Books**, 43 Seneca St. at Sunnyside (613-730-9888). There are also a limited number of used copies of each title available. Haven Books cannot guarantee that any copies of required texts, new or used, will be available after **October 1**. All titles are also on Reserve at the MacOdrum Library.

Other mandatory readings (articles, book chapters) will be available on Reserve in electronic format or hard copy. Electronic Reserves may be accessed through the course in cuLearn. Please see the Tentative Schedule & Readings, which will be posted in cuLearn the first week of classes, for items marked with **(R)**.

Course Objectives

- For students to acquire basic knowledge of the physical and cultural geography of the continent.
- To familiarize students with theoretical constructions of the African continent and their impact.
- To introduce students to some of the many literatures of the continent.
- To exercise and develop students' skills of critical inquiry and written expression.
- For students to gain a basic understanding of how the field of African Studies has developed.

Course Format

This class meets once a week for a two-hour lecture. The lecture is complemented by a mandatory one-hour discussion group, which meets weekly.

To successfully complete this course, you must:

1. Have access to cuLearn. This requires a university e-mail account. Access to e-Reserves for required readings is obtained through cuLearn. All online communication for the course will be done via cuLearn.
2. Attend lectures **regularly and on time** to avoid disrupting the instructor and fellow students. Attendance is vital for fostering your understanding of course material.
Lectures complement the readings; they do not replace them.
3. Complete all assigned readings.
4. Attend all discussion groups and participate actively.
5. Dedicate between 6-8 hours per week outside of class to meet the workload -- reading, writing, research and analysis.
6. Submit all assignments and complete all evaluations.

Class Conduct

1. Arrive on time. Late arrivals are extremely disruptive! If you do arrive late, enter **only by the back doors** and sit in the one of the back two rows.
2. Please turn cell phone ringers **OFF** during the lecture and discussion groups.
3. Limit laptop use to course related activity. Students engaged in other activities with their laptops will be asked to leave the class to minimize distractions for their classmates.
4. Any behavior considered disruptive to the professor, the teaching assistants or other students is not acceptable. Students engaging in such behavior will be dealt with according to university regulations.

Evaluation:

Fact quiz	15%	(in discussion groups the week of Sept.23)
Midterm	25%	(Oct.25)
Final exam	40%	(during exam period Dec. 6-19)

Discussion group 20% (News assignment 10% + Participation 5% + Pop quizzes best 3/4 5%)

Fact Quiz

This quiz, worth 15% of your final grade, will be held in discussion group the week of Sept. 23. In order to do well, you are expected to have researched and mastered the following:

- the location of all countries on a map
- the name of the capital city of each country
- the year that formerly colonized countries gained independence
- **official** languages of all African countries (except South Africa; you must know four of the eleven. This will be addressed in discussion groups.)

Midterm

On **Oct.25** there will be a two-hour midterm examination in class, worth **25%** of your final grade.

Final exam

A three-hour final exam, worth **40%** of the final grade, will be scheduled during the December exam period.

Discussion group

Discussion groups will meet ten times over the term, starting the week of **Sept.16** (to be confirmed). The discussion group accounts for **20%** of your final grade and the breakdown of the evaluation is as follows:

News assignment	10% (critique of a news item) due date TBA
Participation	5%
Pop quizzes best 3/4	5%

Four times during the term, there will be an unannounced pop quiz during your discussion group. The three best marks will be counted.

Policy on late assignments

The penalty for submitting assignments late is **10% per calendar day, including weekends**, unless prior special permission has been granted. Extensions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Having several deadlines fall at the same time is not an exceptional circumstance. Time management is key! Similarly, showing up to class on the due date with a request for an extension is not acceptable. Be sure to address any problem meeting a deadline with your TA or with me earlier, at least by e-mail, if not in person. Timely, clear, and open communication is critical.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE & READINGS

Sept. 6 COURSE INTRODUCTION: AFRICA AND “THE SINGLE STORY”

Week 1 (Sept. 9-13)

Sept. 13 REPRESENTATIONS IN MEDIA & POP CULTURE

Required Reading:

- Pius Adesanmi, "Africa, *Vanity Fair* and the Vanity of a Cover." *You're Not a Country, Africa*. 94-7. (R)
- Afua Hirsch, "The west's lazy reporting of Africa", *The Guardian*, 15 April 2012. <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/apr/15/west-lazy-reporting-africa>
- Graham Harrison, "The Africanization of Poverty: A Retrospective on 'Make Poverty History'," *African Affairs* 109/436 (2010): 391-408. (R)

Week 2 (Sept. 16-20)

****DISCUSSION GROUPS START THIS WEEK****

Sept. 20 AFRICA AS IDEA

Required Reading:

- Binyavanga Wainana, "How to Write about Africa," *Granta* 92 (Winter 2005): 91-97. <http://www.granta.com/Magazine/92/How-to-Write-About-Africa/Page-1>
- Jean and John Comaroff, "Africa Observed: Discourses of the Imperial Imagination," *Perspectives on Africa*. 31-43. (R)
- John Parker, "The Idea of Africa," *African History: A Very Short Introduction*. 1-24. (ebook) <http://catalogue.library.carleton.ca/record=b2532452~S3>

Week 3 (Sept. 23-27)

FACT QUIZ IN DISCUSSION GROUPS

Sept. 27 WHAT? WHERE? WHEN? GETTING OUR HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BEARINGS

For reference:

- Thomas O'Toole, "The Historical Context," *Understanding Contemporary Africa*. 23-56. (R)

Week 4 (Sept. 30-Oct. 4)

Oct. 4 COLONIALISM AND ITS LEGACIES

Required Reading:

- A. Adu Boahen, "The Colonial Impact," *African Perspectives on Colonialism*. 94-112. (R)
- Ama Ata Aidoo, "Everything Counts" (short story) (R)
- Walter Rodney, "How Europe Underdeveloped Africa," *Perspectives on Africa*. 439-49. (R)

Week 5 (Oct. 7-11)

Oct. 11 Guest lecture (hour 1) by Will Tait, Ph.D. candidate in History
Missionaries in Africa

Guest lecture (hour 2) by Matt Rushton, Ph.D. candidate in Cultural
Mediations

Michel Leiris and L'Afrique fantôme: The Case of the "Cochon de lait"

Required Reading: TBA

Week 6 (Oct. 14-18)

Oct. 18 WRITING AFRICAN EXPERIENCE: *XALA*

Required Reading:

- Ousmane Sembène, *Xala* (**R**)

Week 7 (Oct. 21-25)

****NO DISCUSSION GROUPS THIS WEEK****

Oct. 25 MIDTERM IN CLASS

*****FALL BREAK OCT. 28-NOV.1*****

Week 8 (Nov. 4-8)

Nov. 8 WRITING AFRICAN EXPERIENCE: *PURPLE HIBISCUS*

Required Reading:

- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus* (**R**)

Week 9 (Nov. 11-15)

Nov. 15 AFRICAN FILM: VIEWS FROM THE CONTINENT
Guest lecture by Dr. Aboubakar Sanogo, Film Studies

Required Reading:

- "Ousmane Sembène" in David Murphy, *Ten African Directors* (**R**)

Week 10 (Nov. 18-22)

Nov. 22 WRITING AFRICAN EXPERIENCE: *YOU'RE NOT A COUNTRY,*
AFRICA

Required Reading: (**R**)

- ch.1 "Oota" (p.
- ch.6 "*Makwerekwere*"
- ch.12 "*Oju L'Oro wa!*"
- ch.14 "Letter to an Old Flame"
- ch.15 "An Ex-African Writes to President Sarkozy"
- ch.19 "Religious Intolerance in Africa: Lessons from Yoruba 'Paganism'"

- ch.23 “The American South as Warning to the Nigerian North”
- ch.24 “Britain, Hiss-Hiss-History, and the Ni-Ni-Niger Delta”

Week 11 (Nov. 25-29)

Nov. 29 **TBA**

Required Reading: TBA

Week 12 (Dec. 2-6)

Dec. 6 **WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? CONCLUSION AND REVIEW**

(R) Articles and book chapters on Reserve.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

It is very important to work with integrity and to never pass off someone else’s ideas as your own. Plagiarism is a serious offence at Carleton University. In the University Calendar, regulations concerning plagiarism are outlined and it is a good idea to read them. Note in particular the following passage :

“**Plagiarism:** to pass off as one’s own idea or product, work of another without expressly giving credit to another. **Please note** that any student who is found to be plagiarizing may be:

1. expelled
- 2- suspended from all studies at the University
- 3- suspended from full-time studies
- 4- awarded a reprimand
- 5- refused permission to continue or to register in a specific degree program but subject to having met all academic requirements shall be permitted to register and continue in some other program
- 6- placed on Academic Warning
- 7- awarded an F or ABS in a course or examination”

STUDENT SERVICES

- Student Academic Success Centre (302 Tory)
<http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/>
- Learning Support Services (4th floor of the MacOdrum Library)
<http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/learning-support-services/>
Offer very useful study skills workshops

ACCOMODATIONS

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For

an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website

<http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/>

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website

<http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/>

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your ***Letter of Accommodation*** at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation. After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam.