

INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES
AFRI 5000 WINTER 2018

Disciplining Africa: Historical and Current Perspectives on the Study of Africa

Instructor: Paul Mkandawire

Time: Tuesday 11:35 to 14:25

Location: Residence Commons 209

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Office Hours: Monday 1.30pm -2:30pm or by appointment

This course examines the evolution of African Studies as a discipline, including the historical and ongoing debates over its boundaries and genealogies and its changing research paradigms. Because intellectual engagements in African Studies take place in multiple disciplines and through paradigms that transcend specific disciplines, the course will interrogate how different fields of study have contributed to the understanding of Africa, Africans and people of African descent. Intellectual, institutional and ideological contexts shaping production and dissemination of knowledge about Africa, Africans and people of African heritage will receive particular attention in this course. For students without prior background in African history, I recommend reading Reid, Richard J. *A history of modern Africa: 1800 to the present*. Vol. 7. John Wiley & Sons (2011).

By the end of the course, students will demonstrate ability to explain African Studies as a coherent discipline, its key analytical and methodological approaches coming from different disciplinary perspectives within African Studies, and possible future directions in the discipline.

Evaluation

Seminar participation: 15%

Seminar presentation: 15%

Essay proposal: 15%

Group presentation: 15%

Final Presentation: 10%

Final Essay: 30%

Participation

Weekly seminars will consist of discussion. A seminar is a forum within which to examine and discuss ideas and interpretations of assigned weekly readings. The success of a seminar depends entirely on student preparation and participation. Students should arrive to class having read all assigned texts and prepared to discuss them. Your class attendance and the quality (not quantity) of your contribution to class discussion will form the basis of your participation grade. Note that active listening is a crucial aspect of effective participation.

Seminar Presentation

There are eight seminars devoted to a major discipline. In the first half of each seminar, a visiting scholar or myself will give a lecture on a discipline from an Africanist perspective and answer questions from students. In the second half of each seminar, students, working in small groups of four or five, will identify, reflect and debate on major themes in the assigned readings and pose discussion questions developed beforehand to the class. On certain occasions the second half of the seminar will be dedicated to research proposal development and research essay.

Essay Proposal

On February 15, each student will have 12 minutes (including feedback time) to present their research topic to the class. Presentations should include the topic, a proposed thesis statement, the major question(s) to be addressed, and sources to be utilized. The objective of the presentation is to elicit useful critical comments and questions from your peers and the instructor before completing the essay. The written proposal of 5-7 pages Times New Roman font size 12 single spaced not including bibliography is due on March 13.

Group Presentations

On the last day of class, April 3, three groups of students will each make a 40-minute presentation (includes question time) on one theme related to African Studies that was not the focus of class discussion during class. Each group will choose the topic, two readings, make a short presentation and facilitate discussion. The grade will be based on presentation, readings and facilitation of questions/discussion.

Research Essay

The major assignment should be a critical examination of a topic that is part of current conversations in the discipline of African Studies. The essay must be between 20-23 pages, demonstrate substantial research, critically assess research sources in a coherent analysis, and be well written and formally referenced. The essay is due date is 3 days after the Institute of African Studies' annual general meeting, which typically takes place in the second week of April.

Final Presentation

In partial fulfilment of the course, students are required to individually showcase their final research proposal/research essay before a wider audience of Africanist faculty at a special session organized by the Institute of African Studies. You will have the rare opportunity of receive valuable feedback and encouragement from a broad range of faculty with vested interest in various sub-disciplines of African studies. Normally, this session takes place on the same day as the Institute's annual general meeting, which all AFRI 5000 students are encouraged to plan ahead of time to attend. The date for this year's presentations will be announced by end of January 2018.

Note: Deadlines are firm except in extraordinary circumstances. An assignment submitted after the due date must be accompanied by official documentation of such circumstances to avoid penalties. All written work handed in late will be marked down one grade point per day, i.e. a B+ paper submitted late becomes a B.

Class conduct

Carleton University's Senate and Board of Governors enacted Carleton University Human Rights Policies and Procedures in May of 2001. The establishment of these policies and procedures was the culmination of the efforts of the Presidential Advisory Committee on Human Rights and a Human Rights Implementation Committee. The Carleton University Human Rights Policies and Procedures affirm that all members of the University community share a responsibility to:

- * promote equity and fairness,
- * respect and value diversity,
- * prevent discrimination and harassment, and
- * preserve the freedom of its members to carry out responsibly their scholarly work without threat of interference.

Carleton University Equity Services states that "every member of the University community has a right to study, work and live in a safe environment free of discrimination or harassment." It follows, therefore, that students are expected to behave in a civil manner. Within seminar groups, vigorous discussion and conflicting opinions are welcome and encouraged, but personal attacks, disrespectful comments, and gender or racial slurs WILL NOT be tolerated and students can be expelled from seminar groups if their behaviour is deemed to be disruptive.

Academic Accommodation

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://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student_guide.htm

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://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student_guide.htm

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but are not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that I receive your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your

request for accommodations to PMC by the deadlines published on the PMC website:
<http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/>

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation>

Note: Students must always retain copies of all work that is submitted. All final grades are subject to the Dean's approval.

Tentative Schedule

January 9

Introduction to Course

This class serves as an introduction to the course. We will discuss objectives, readings, evaluation and organization of the course. Also, Aleksandra Blake, subject specialist for African Studies from MacOdrum Library, who will take us through the kinds of resources pertaining to the field of African studies that are available in our library system and how to access them.

January 16 Anthropology

Professor Blair Rutherford

Readings

1. Ferguson, James. 2006. *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neo-Liberal World Order*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press; Chapters 1 & 7, pp. 25-49, 174-193.
2. Hlabangane, Nokuthula. 2014. "From object to subject: Deconstructing anthropology and HIV/AIDS in South Africa." *Critique of Anthropology* 34(2): 174-203
3. Leach, Melissa and James Fairhead. 2000. "Fashioned forest pasts, occluded histories? International environmental analysis in West African locales." *Development and Change* 31(1): 35-59

January 23 History

Professor Susan Klausen

Readings

1. Chinua Achebe, "An Image of Africa," in *Research in African Literatures*, Vol. 9, No. 1 Special Issue on Literary Criticism (Spring, 1978), 1-15 Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3818468>
2. E. Brizuela-Garcia, "The History of Africanization and the Africanization of History," *History in Africa*, 33 (2006): 85-100
3. Frederick Cooper, "Postcolonial Studies and the Study of History," in Ania Loomba, Suvir Kaul, Matti Bunzl, Antoinette Burton and Jed Esty, eds., *Postcolonial Studies and Beyond* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2005), 401-422. On reserve.

4. Toyin Falola, "Writing and Teaching National History in Africa in an Era of Global History," in Paul Zeleza Ed. *The Study of Africa* Volume 1.

January 30 The Disciplining of Africa

Professor Paul Mkandawire

Readings

1. Wole Soyinka, "The Dark Continent? Or Beholder's Cataract?" *Of Africa* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 3-26. On reserve.
2. Mario Azevedo, "African studies and the state of the Art" *Africana Studies* (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2005), 5-32. On reserve
3. Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, "Introduction: The Disciplining of Africa," in Paul Zeleza, ed., *The Study of Africa, Volume 1* (Dakar: Council for the Development of Social Science in Africa). On reserve.

February 6 African literatures

Professor Nduka Otiono

Readings

1. Chinua Achebe, "An Image of Africa," in *Research in African Literatures*, Vol. 9, No. 1, Special Issue on Literary Criticism (Spring, 1978), 1-15
Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3818468>
2. Anthony Kwame Appiah, "Ethnophilosophy and its Critics," in *The African Philosophy Reader*, eds. Peter H. Coetzee and A. P. J. Roux (London: Routledge, 1998), 109-133. Electronic resource.
3. Karin Barber, "Introduction," in *Readings in Popular African Culture*, ed. Karin Barber (Oxford and London: The International African Institute, 1997), 1-12. On reserve.
4. Esiaba Irobi, "The Problem with Postcolonial Theory: Re-Theorizing African Performance, Orature and Literature in the Age of Globalization and Diaspora Studies," *Sentinel Literary Quarterly*, Vol. 2, No.1, October 2008. www.sentinelquarterly.com
Web. Nov 7, 2008. Available at:
https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/usaafricadialogue/eLTo_H2UVsA

February 13

Research Proposal

February 19-23

Winter break

February 27

Research Proposal

March 6 Contemporary Diaspora and the Future

Professor Paul Mkandawire

Readings

1. Film: Film: Bamako, by Abderrahmane Sissako (to be watched prior to class). Available Audiovisual Resource Center (AVRC) of Film Studies 460 St Patrick's Building. The AVRC is open Monday to Friday from 8am-4pm
2. Sanogo, Aboubakar. "IN FOCUS: Studying African Cinema and Media Today Introduction." (2015): 114-119.
3. Adesokan, Akin. "Abderrahmane Sissako and the poetics of engaged expatriation." Screen 51, no. 2 (2010): 143-160.
4. Sanogo, Aboubakar, Reconsidering the Sembienian Project: Towards an Aesthetics of Change. In Ukadike, Nwachukwu Frank, ed. Critical Approaches to African cinema discourse. 2014.

March 13 Popular culture in Africa

Professor Pius Adesanmi

Readings

1. <http://xokigbo.com/2012/04/22/guest-blog-professor-pius-adesanmi-face-me-i-book-you-writing-africas-agency-in-the-age-of-the-netizen/>
2. <http://xokigbo.com/2014/10/21/pius-adesanmi-guest-blogpost-for-whom-is-africa-rising/>
3. <http://newswirengr.com/2014/08/04/pius-adesanmi-who-owns-the-problem/>
4. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofrxl7zDh_Q

Note: Research Proposals due

March 20 Conceptualizing Gender in African Studies

Professor Amina Mire

Readings

2. Mire, Amina "In/through the bodies of women: rethinking gender in African politics." *Polis* 6, no. 2 (2000).
3. Mire, Amina "The Genealogy of Witchcraft: Colonialism and Modern Science. *In* Postmodernism, Postcoloniality and the Study of Africa (Edited by Zine Magubane) (2003)

March 27 Economics

Dr. Chris Lannon

Readings

1. The World Bank, *Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda for Action* (Washington D.C.: The World Bank, 1981), 1-16, 121-134. Online at: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/1981/01/438047/accelerated-development-sub-saharan-africa-agenda-action>
2. Emmanuel Nnadozie, "Economics and African Studies," in Paul Zeleza Ed. *The Study of Africa Volume 1* (Dakar: Council for the Development of Social Science in Africa, 2006), 203-232. On reserve.
3. Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson (2010) "Why is Africa Poor?" *Economic History of Developing Regions* 25(1): 21-50. Electronic resource.

April 3 Group Presentations

Groups 1, 2 & 3

Research Essay due date TBA