

AFRI 1001: Introduction to African Studies 1

Spring/Summer 2011

Time: 11:35am – 2:25 pm, Mondays & Wednesdays,
Class Location: 240 Tory Building

Instructor: Dr. Tokunbo B. Ojo

Office: Room 337, St. Patrick's Building

Office Hours: 2:30 pm to 4:30pm on Fridays or by Appointment

E-mail: tokunbo_ojo@carleton.ca

Course Descriptions

This course provides entry-points to diverse facets of African studies. It covers historical and contemporary issues that define 21st century African realities. In doing these, socio-cultural and political functions of literature, sports, theaters and media in the day-to-day struggles and realities of the continent are examined, especially in the contexts of nation building, cultural identities, traditions and moral obligations.

The first part examines the image, myth and stereotypes of Africa in the western media and popular culture in general. Given the fact that Africa is more or less synonymous with political instability, poverty, diseases, famines and wars in the global media discourse, this part of the course is aimed to do some 'peeling away' by showing the rich, vibrant and bustling aspects of Africa that are often missing in the global media.

To facilitate students' awareness and understanding of why the continent is as it is today, the second part of the course briefly examines the historical, economic and political backgrounds of the continent. Then the third part of the course familiarizes students with the daily realities and challenges of the continent of Africa in the present dispensation. In this section, the course also touches on 'concept of African renaissance,' impacts and effects of the multi-dimensional globalization on the continent in the 21st century.

Format of the Course

This class will operate as a combination of lectures and seminars. Each week will begin with a lecture by the lecturer and will be followed by seminar discussion in which each student is expected to participate fully in an informed way. In the seminars, the assigned readings for the week will be critically discussed as a way to foster students' understanding of the subject/theme of the week. It will be another means of encouraging and developing the critical thinking skills of the students. To make the seminars more interactive and engaging, students must have read the assigned readings before coming to class. They are also encouraged to come to the seminars with questions for the seminar discussions. To also enhance learning, videos and multimedia presentations might also be used as part of teaching materials in both lectures and seminars.

NOTE: In order to successfully complete this course, students must dedicate between 6-8 hours per week outside of class to meet the workload – reading, writing, research and analysis.

Required Textbook/Readings

- *Perspectives on Africa: A Reader in Culture, History, and Representation* 2nd Edition edited by Roy Richard Grinker, Stephen C. Lubkemann and Christopher B. Steiner (**Available at Carleton University Bookstore**)
- Links to other assigned readings (not taken from the textbook) are available on WebCT.

Assessment & Evaluations

- **Mid-term Exam – 25 % of the final grade**

It will be held in class on **June 01, 2011**. The format of the examination will be a combination of short response, fill in the blank and short essay questions. The examination questions will focus on the readings and the class lectures cover from lecture 1 till lecture 7. Students will not be allowed to bring in textbooks, notes, and other course materials to the exam room. **Please note, there will no supplemental mid-term examination if you miss the exam on June 01, 2011.**

- **Pop-up Quizzes (2 best out of 3) – 10% of the final grade**

The pop-up quizzes will be held in class unannounced. It is extremely important for you to be in class and stay till end of all lectures and discussion sessions because these pop-up quizzes will be done anytime during the normal class hours. If you miss any (or all) of the quizzes, there is no opportunity for “second chance.” For each quiz, the questions will be drawn from the assigned readings of the week (and probably from the lectures as well).

Hence, it is your responsibilities to:

- have completed the assigned readings for each class session before attending the lecture;
- be prepared for quiz each week, and
- be actively engaged in the class discussions and lecture on a regular basis.

Rest assured, you will do well on these quizzes if you stay on top of “the business.” Of the three pop-up quizzes that will be done, the best two will count towards your grade. Each quiz = 5% of the final grade.

- **Profile/Assessment Review of an Ottawa-based African Restaurant/African Grocery Store/African Store – 20% of the final grade**

- Details will be made available to you on May 11, 2011
- Assignment due date: May 18, 2011

- **Nation’s Profile/Basic Fact Quiz (10% of the final grade):** You will have a ‘basic fact’ quiz in **lecture 6 (May 25, 2011)**. This quiz will be strictly on the official languages, and names of capital cities and heads of state/presidents of African countries. *In order to do extremely well in the quiz, you are expected to have researched and mastered the following facts before the quiz:*

- *(a) names of all African countries and their capital cities,*
 - *(b) official languages of all African countries,*
 - *(c) names of the presidents/ heads of state of all the African countries, and*
 - *(d) years when all the formerly colonialized African countries got independence.*
- **Final Exam – 35% of the final grade**
The format of the examination will be a combination of short response and essay questions. The examination questions will be drawn from all materials covered in lectures, readings and discussion sessions throughout the semester. You will not be allowed to bring in textbooks, notes, and other course materials to the exam room.

Other course administrative stuff

- All written assignments must be typewritten and double-spaced (Font and font size: Times New Roman, 12 points).
- You must strictly adhere to the page limit/font size/margins specified for the written submissions/assignments. Failure to follow the given instructions on the assignment means an automatic 10% deduction on the total mark for the assignment in question.
- For your own protection, you should always keep a copy of the written assignments. In case of loss, theft or any “unexpected incident”, it will be your responsibility to provide a copy of the written assignment.
- E-mail submission of assignment is not allowed. It is your responsibility to submit only a hard copy of the assignment at the start of your discussion group.
- Late assignments will not be accepted, **except there is death in the family or sickness. In such a case, official notes from the doctor[s] or official death certificate must be submitted to the instructor.**
- With regards to grade problems or dispute, please do note that I will not discuss these during class time. You are encouraged to see me by appointment on such issue. Before coming to see me about a grade dispute or problem, you must indicate in writing where and why you believe your work should get a higher or lower grade. **Your written submission on a grade dispute or problem should be between 250 words (minimum) and 500 words (maximum).**

Respect One Another and Avoid Harassment

- Please be respectful of other students and I in and outside the classroom environment. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. Please see the Equity Services website at http://carleton.ca/equity/discrimination_and_harassment/harassment.htm for further descriptions of harassment.

- Please avoid working on things unrelated to the class during class time. Refrain from text messaging, surfing the Internet or social networking sites, talking on your cell phone, or talking out of turn in class. **I reserve the right to deduct 5 points from your grade for every instance of disruptive behavior exhibited by you in class. You may also be asked to leave the class, if disruptive behavior continues.**

Attendance and Participation

- While I will provide some limited materials via WebCT, it is up to you to be class in person to fully understand the materials covered. If you cannot attend class, I strongly encourage you to get the notes from a classmate. **Please do not ask me to provide you with class notes.**
- If you come in late or leave during class time, please sit near a door and be respectful of other students. **If tardiness, early exit, and other disruptive behaviors during class become a problem, you may be asked to withdraw from the course.**

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This 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 acknowledgment 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;
- 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.

Weekly Schedule & Assigned Readings*

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

Part 1: Africa and 'Us'

Lecture 1, May 09: Introduction & Overview

Lecture 2, May 11: Africa in the Popular Culture and Imagination

Readings:

- Wainaina, Binyavanga (2005) "How to Write about Africa..." *Granta* (Winter), 92: 91-97.
- Ojo, Tokunbo (2003) "Tears of the Sun and Nigeria: A Film Without Context" *Montreal Community Contact*, March 2003.
- Chapter 1 of *Perspectives on Africa* (pp 31-43)

Lecture 3 - May 16: Saving Africa: Foreign Aids, Missionary Zeal of NGOs and Celebrities

Readings:

- Dieter, Heribert & Kumar, Rajiv (2008) "The Downside of Celebrity Diplomacy: The Neglected Complexity of Development" *Global Governance* : 259-264
- Dogra, Nandita (2007) "Reading NGOs Visually: Implications of visual image for NGO management" *Journal of International Development* 19: 161-171.

Lecture 4, May 18: Beauty of Africa We Hardly See

Readings:

- Pineau, Carol (2005). "The Africa You Never See" *The Washington Post*, April 17: pg B02.
Available here: <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:
Available here: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/g8-g20/africa/africa-an-economic-giant-thats-ready-to-wake-up/article1562359/>

Lecture 5, May 23: NO CLASS....Happy Victoria Day!!

Part 2: Africa's Past and Present-The Colonial Legacies and Burden of Postcolonial Era

Lecture 6, May 25: Colonial Legacies and Africa Today

Readings:

- Chapter 27 of *Perspectives on Africa* (pp 399-410)
- Chapter 29 of *Perspectives on Africa* (pp 431-438)
- Chapter 30 of *Perspectives on Africa* (pp 439-449)

Lecture 7, May 30: Burden of Postcolonial Era: The Political Economy of Conflicts & Wars

Readings:

- Howe, Herbert (1998) "Private security forces and African stability: the case of Executive Outcomes" *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 36 (2): 307 – 331.
- Chapter 39 of *Perspectives on Africa* (pp 555-568)
- Chapter 42 of *Perspectives on Africa* (pp 609-615)

Lecture 8, June 1: Mid-term exams

Part 3: African Canonic Spaces of Cultural Expressions, Politics & Identities

Lecture 9 (June 6): Contemporary African Literature

Readings:

- Ojaide, Tanure(2009) "Canonization and Modern African Literature," *Asiatic*, June: 1-20
Available here: http://asiatic.iium.edu.my/v3n1/article/Tanure_Ojaide/Tanure_Ojaide.pdf
- Chapter 32 of *Perspectives on Africa* (pp 462-470)

Lecture 10 (June 8): African theater, movies and social messages

Readings:

- Ukpokodu , Peter (1992) "Plays, Possession, and Rock & Roll: Political Theatre in Africa" *The Drama Review* 36(4): 28-53.
- Goldstein, Susan; Usdin, Shereen; Scheepers, Esca & Japhet, Garth (2005) "Communicating HIV and AIDS, What Works? A Report on the Impact Evaluation of Soul City's Fourth Series" *Journal of Health Communication* 10:465-483

Lecture 11 (June 13): Football (Soccer): Socio-cultural dimensions & transnationalism

Readings:

- Ojo, Tokunbo (2008) “African Football’s Dark Side” *Inside Soccer Magazine* Nov-Dec: 45-46.
- Armstrong, Gary (2002) ‘Talking up the game: football and the reconstruction of Liberia, West Africa’ *Identities* 11: 471–94.

Optional readings:

- Armstrong, Gary (2005) ‘The lords of misrule: football and the rights of the child in Liberia, West Africa’ *Sports and Society* 7: 472–501.

Lecture 12 (June 15): Renaissance and Africa in the 21st century

Readings:

- Zeleza, Paul Tiyambe (2009) “What Happened to the African Renaissance? The Challenges of Development in the Twenty-First Century” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 29(2): 155-170.
- TBA

Lecture 13 (June 20): Review and Wrap up