

The African Experience
AFS 2002 / ANT 3930
University of Florida
Center for African Studies
Department of Anthropology
Fall 2012

Tuesdays: Period 10 (5:10 – 6:00) in CSE E222
Thursdays: Periods 9 – 10 (4:05 – 6:00) in RNK 110

Instructor: Meredith Marten

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Office: 425 Grinter Hall

Office Hours: Wednesdays 11:00 – 1:00

Course Description and Objectives

This class is an introduction to contemporary Africa and its modern history, cultural diversity, politics, economies, arts and literature, its roles in globalization and its relationships with international communities. Africa is a very large and diverse continent, and this class will function as an overview and springboard for interested students to learn more about particular peoples, cultures, subjects and issues. By the end of the course students will have a working knowledge of the contemporary African experience, as well as experience in thinking critically about current issues and the place of Africa in the global community.

Course Texts

Achebe, Chinua

1987 *Anthills of the Savannah*. Anchor Books, New York.

Birmingham, David

1995 *The Decolonization of Africa*. Ohio University Press, Athens, Ohio.

Ferguson, James

2006 *Africa in the Neoliberal World Order*. Duke University Press, Durham, North Carolina.

Gordon, April A. and Donald L. Gordon

2007 *Understanding Contemporary Africa*. 4th Edition. Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., London.

Course Format

This course is primarily lecture-based, with some classes set aside for small group discussions. Relevant questions, discussions and participation among students are always encouraged. Lectures will include information from the books and readings, as well as outside sources, including online materials and films. All readings and assignments are

required and are to be completed before class to best understand lectures and to be able to participate meaningfully.

Attendance & Participation

Students are required to attend class and participate in class discussions. Though attendance is not taken, 10 pop-quizzes will serve as its proxy and cannot be made up except in exceptional circumstances. Additionally, all material from lectures, readings, assignments, class discussions, films and other classroom activities are fair game for tests and quizzes, so students are strongly advised to come to every class and take careful notes to best succeed in the course.

ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are announced well in advance, and cannot be made up for any reason unless in the most exceptional circumstances, such as illness or a family emergency. Students must provide a doctor's note or note from the proper University authorities, and alert the instructor **prior** to missing an assignment's due date. Additionally, University policy states that individual students may not be offered extra credit opportunities that are not offered to all students, so please do not ask for individual opportunities for bonus points.

10 In-class Quizzes (unannounced, 10 points each)

We will have 10 unannounced pop-quizzes throughout the semester to assess students' comprehension of class materials and discussions. These quizzes will also serve as proof of attendance. Students will not be allowed to make-up missed quizzes or exams without a doctor's note and must notify the instructor before the missed class.

Midterm Exam (Tuesday, Oct. 9; 100 points)

The midterm will cover material from the first half of the course. It will include information from all lectures, class discussions, readings, videos and online materials.

Country Reports and Poster Presentations (November 20 – 29; 75 points),

Each student will pick a country in Africa and will present information on a poster about the country's geography, colonial history, politics, languages, music, education, relationship with international governing bodies, and other information you find relevant and interesting. During one of three class periods, students will present their posters to fellow students and engage in discussions one-on-one or in small groups about their countries. Posters must be turned in to Meredith on the day you are scheduled to present. More information will be posted about these presentations on Sakai.

Students must submit a list of countries they prefer to report on by **Tuesday, September 4**, and on Thursday, September 6, will be assigned a country. Duplicates will only be allowed if class size mandates them. More information will be posted on Sakai and announced in class.

Regional Current Event Reporting/Participation (throughout semester; 25 points)

Students will be arranged into small groups based on the region in which their country is situated, and will work with these groups over the course of the semester for small group discussions. Additionally, each student will be responsible for keeping track of current events in their region, and will periodically report for the class what's going on there during discussions about current events. Participation in these discussions and the quality of news contributions will be rated on a 25-point scale. See Sakai for more information.

Final Exam (Wednesday, December 12, 10 am – 12 pm; 100 points):

The final will cover material from the second half of the course. It will include information from all lectures, class discussions, readings, videos and online materials. More information about the final exam will be added to Sakai toward the end of the semester.

Assignments:

10 pop quizzes: 10 points each, 100 total

Midterm: 100

Country Report: 75

Current Events/Participation: 25

Final: 100

Total: 400

Grading

No grades will be discussed via email. If the student has a problem with or question concerning the grade, please make an appointment to come speak with the instructor or stop by during office hours. Letter grades will be assigned based on the total percent of points according to the following scale:

A = 93% or above	C = 73-75.99%
A- = 90-92.99%	C- = 70-72.99%
B+ = 86-89.99%	D+ = 67-69.99%
B = 83-85.99%	D = 63-66.99%
B- = 80-82.99%	D- = 60-62.99%
C+ = 76-79.99%	E = 59.99% or below

That breaks down to:

A = 372 and up	C = 292 - 303
A- = 360 – 371	C- = 280 - 291
B+ = 344 – 359	D+ = 268 - 279
B = 332 – 343	D = 252 - 267
B- = 320 – 331	D- = 240 - 251
C+ = 304 - 319	E = 239 or below

Please note that the University implemented minus grades beginning in Summer 2009. Under the new system, a grade of **C-** will not qualify for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College

Basic Distribution credit. Please see the following for more information:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

COURSE GUIDELINES

E-Learning

Sakai will be used for posting announcements, readings and links to websites, uploading assignments, and updating grades. All students are required to familiarize themselves with Sakai and check Sakai weekly for class-related announcements. Online tutorials are available for students at <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/sakai-training/index.shtml> and are highly recommended.

Class Announcements

Important information and announcements will be made in class and distributed to students through their UF email and posted on Sakai. All students are expected to read and be aware of all emails and class announcements as they are given out. There are no allowances made for students who fail to stay abreast of class announcements for any reason, including absences, full email in-boxes or forgetfulness.

Use of Electronics

Cell phones, iPods, MP3 players etc. are not be permitted during class time, and all students must turn off or silence their phones prior to class. A student caught talking on their phone or texting will be asked to leave class. Laptops are permitted for note taking purposes only.

University Academic Honesty Policy

Students will be responsible for the completion of their own academic work. Unless noted for specific assignments, all work should be completed individually, and evidence of cheating, collusion (working with someone not connected to the class or assignment), plagiarism (use of someone else's published or unpublished words or design without acknowledgment), multiple submissions (submitting the same assignment multiple times to different classes), and/or other acts of academic dishonesty will be handled by the Department's and the University's procedures for dealing with academic dishonesty. All students are expected to honor their commitment to the [University's Honor Code](#) and the student conduct code. If you are unsure whether your activities are legitimate regarding paper writing and exam taking, please do not hesitate to ask me.

Accommodations for Disabilities:

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Students who wish to find out if they are eligible for services can contact the Disability Resource Center at www.dso.ufl.edu/drc. **Please make any requests by the second week of class.**

University Counseling Services

The Counseling Center at the University of Florida has a variety of services that may be of use to students during the semester. This includes individual, group and couples counseling, as well as workshops for stress management and time management. For more information, students may visit <http://www.counsel.ufl.edu> for the University Counseling and Wellness Center, at 3190 Radio Road, 392-1575. Also, additional resources are available on-campus that may be of help:

1. [Sexual Assault Recovery Services](#) (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling
2. [Career Resource Center](#), Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling
3. [Reading & Writing Center](#), Broward Hall, 392-0791, writing assistance, study skills, test preparation

COURSE SCHEDULE

All readings are required, and students are expected to read the assigned material **prior** to the class date designated on the syllabus.

Date	Topics and Readings	Class Activities
Week 1 Aug 23	Introduction	Th: Review of syllabus, class expectations, overview of course
Week 2 Aug 28, 30	Human Origins, Historical Context T: GG, Chs. 1 and 2; Wong (2012); National Geographic Human Origins Project (browse online) Th: GG, Ch. 3	T: African Geography; Human Origins in Africa Th: Historical Context
Week 3 Sept. 4, 6	Anthropological Context, Decolonization T: Ferguson, Introduction; About Anthropology (UF Anthropology) Th: Birmingham, Introduction, Chs. 1 & 2	T: Anthropology of Africa Turn in Country Report picks Th: Overview, Decolonization in North and West Africa Assign countries, arrange small 'regional' groups

<p>Week 4 Sept. 11, 13</p>	<p>Decolonization</p> <p>T: Birmingham, Chs. 3 & 4</p> <p>Th: Birmingham, Chs. 5 & Conclusion</p>	<p>T: Decolonization: East and Central Africa</p> <p>Th: Decolonization: Southern Africa, Discussion</p>
<p>Week 5 Sept. 18, 20</p>	<p>Current African Politics, Revolution and Conflict</p> <p>T: GG, Ch. 4</p> <p>Th: <u>Required</u>: Abu-Lughod (2012); Hamdy (2012); <u>Recommended</u>: Nordstrom (1998)</p>	<p>T: African Politics</p> <p>Th: Arab Spring; Politics and Conflict</p>
<p>Week 6 Sept. 25, 27</p>	<p>Women & Kinship</p> <p>T: GG, Ch. 9</p> <p>Th: GG. Ch. 10; Abu-Lughod (2002)</p>	<p>T: Kinship and Family</p> <p>Th: Gender</p>
<p>Week 7 Oct. 2, 4</p>	<p>Environment & Production</p> <p>T: GG, Ch. 8</p> <p>Religion</p> <p>Th: GG, Ch. 11</p>	<p>T: Climate Change and the Environment</p> <p>Th: Religion</p>
<p>Week 8 Oct. 9, 11</p>	<p>African Art & Literature</p> <p>T: No readings, midterm</p> <p>Th: Achebe, Chs. 1 – 4</p>	<p>T: Midterm</p> <p>Th: African Literature, brief introduction; African Cinema (film)</p>
<p>Week 9 Oct. 16, 18</p>	<p>Art & Literature, cont.</p> <p>T: Achebe, Chs. 5 - 10</p> <p>Th: Achebe, Chs. 11 - 18</p>	<p>T: Guest Speaker: Erik Timmons, East African Hip-Hop</p> <p>Th: Small group discussions, Achebe</p>

<p>Week 10 Oct. 23, 25</p>	<p>Trade & Economies</p> <p>T: <u>Required:</u> GG, Ch. 5; <u>Recommended:</u> Ferguson, Ch. 2</p> <p>Th: <u>Required:</u> GG, Ch. 6; <u>Recommended:</u> Ferguson, Ch. 3</p>	<p>T: African (and Global) Economies</p> <p>Th: International Trade and Relations</p>
<p>Week 11 Oct. 30, Nov. 1</p>	<p>Globalization & Neoliberalism</p> <p>T: George (1999)</p> <p>Th: <u>Required:</u> Ferguson, Ch. 1; <u>Recommended:</u> Ferguson, Ch. 8</p>	<p>T: Neoliberalism, Political Economy</p> <p>Th: Small group discussions</p>
<p>Week 12 Nov. 6, 8</p>	<p>Health & Development</p> <p>T: UNAIDS (2011) skim; Robins (2006); Clemens (2012); Economist (2012)</p> <p>Th: Richey & Ponte (2008); Fischer (2012)</p>	<p>T: HIV/AIDS, Maternal & Child Health</p> <p>Th: Pop Culture, Media and Development</p>
<p>Week 13 Nov. 13, 15</p>	<p>Development, cont.</p> <p>T: Schlesinger (2007); Zachary (2012)</p>	<p>T: Foreign Aid and Development</p> <p>Th: No class, AAA meetings in San Francisco.</p>
<p>Week 14 Nov. 20, 22</p>	<p>Country Reports</p> <p>T: No readings, prepare for presentations</p>	<p>T: Country Reports</p> <p>Th: No class, Thanksgiving</p>

Week 15 Nov. 27, 29	Country Reports T: No readings, prepare for presentations Th: No readings, prepare for presentations	T: Country Reports Th: Country Reports
Week 16 Dec. 4	Review T: GG, Ch. 13	T: Final Thoughts/Review
Week 17	Finals	Final Exam – Wednesday, Dec. 12, 10 am – 12pm

Readings

All readings and websites (except books) are available on Sakai unless noted otherwise.

Abu-Lughod, Lila

2002 Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others. *American Anthropologist* 104(3):783-790.

Abu-Lughod, Lila

2012 Living the “Revolution” in an Egyptian Village: Moral Action in a National Space. *American Ethnologist* 36 (1): 21-25.

Clemens, Michael

2012 Africa’s Child Health Miracle: The Biggest, Best Story in Development. *Global Development: Views from The Center*; Center for Global Development. Available online at <http://blogs.cgdev.org/globaldevelopment/2012/05/africas-child-health-miracle-the-biggest-best-story-in-development.php>, accessed 12 June 2012.

The Economist

2012 African Child Mortality: The Best Story in Development. *The Economist*, available at <http://www.economist.com/node/21555571>, accessed 12 June 2012.

Fischer, Max

2012 The Soft Bigotry of Kony 2012. *The Atlantic*. Available online at <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/03/the-soft-bigotry-of-kony-2012/254194/> , accessed 10 April 2012.

George, Susan

1999 A Short History of Neoliberalism. Presented at the Conference on Economic Sovereignty in a Globalising World, Bangkok, 24-26 March 1999. Available online at <http://www.tni.org/article/short-history-neoliberalism>, accessed 8 April 2012

Hamdy, Sherine

2012 Strength and Vulnerability After Egypt's Arab Spring Uprisings. *American Ethnologist* 39(1): 43-48.

Nordstrom, Carolyn

1998 Terror Warfare and the Medicine of Peace. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 12(1):103-121.

Richey, L. and S. Ponte

2008 Better (Red) than Dead? Celebrities, Consumption, and International Aid. *Third World Quarterly*, 29(4): 711-729.

Robins, Steven

2006 From "Rights" to "Ritual": AIDS Activism in South Africa. *American Anthropologist* 108(2):312-323.

Schlesinger, Victoria

2007 The Continuation of Poverty: Rebranding Foreign Aid in Kenya. *Harper's Magazine*, May:58-66.

UNAIDS

2011 UN World AIDS Day Report, 2011. Available online at http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/unaidspublication/2011/JC2216_WorldAIDSday_report_2011_en.pdf. Accessed 16 April 2012.

Wong, Kate

2012 First of Our Kind: Could Australopithecus sebida Be Our Long Lost Ancestor? *Scientific America*, March 20, 2012, accessed online at <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=first-of-our-kind>, accessed 16 April 2012.

Zachary, G. Pascal

2012 Africa's Amazing Rise and What it Can Teach the World. *The Atlantic*, available online at <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/02/africas-amazing-rise-and-what-itcan-teach-the-world/253587/>, accessed 30 May, 2012.

Websites:

National Geographic Human Origins Project,
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/explorers/projects/human-origins/>

