

**ANT 4930** (sect# 1B44)/**SSA 4930** (sect# 045B)  
**African Business Culture**

SPRING 2014

Tuesday 5-6<sup>th</sup> & Thursday 6<sup>th</sup>  
FAC 0120

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**Course Description:**

This course engages the business cultural landscape of contemporary Africa by addressing such questions as does African business culture matter in the contemporary globalized world? How globalization is being affected by African culture and vice versa? What types of African business (traditional & modern) at what scale? Who does what, why, and how? We will think about these and other questions by reading, screening films/documentaries and discussing examples from selected African countries and, where appropriate, make comparisons with business practices in the USA. Specific aspects to be explored include important African cultural values, social relationships, business communication, gender issues, and strategies for successful working relationships in Africa. This course does not attempt to survey all countries and their specific business cultural practices in modern Africa, but rather to use the selected cases to distill and feature certain themes of especially wide relevance. Students (individually or in groups) will be assigned a country or a business community (within a country) or an economic sector (across the region) to research on, write short essays, and make brief oral presentations throughout the semester. Class size will be strictly limited to allow for seminar-style discussions.

**Course Objectives**

While students will become aware of the great potential that Africa has regarding the globalizing economy, they will have an opportunity to develop their ability to examine critically the dynamics of business culture in the globalizing world, particularly how traditional and modern elements flow into each other: how local cultures influence the way people conduct business, how the process of globalization is affected by such local cultures, and how the same cultures are changing in order to cope with the changing global business landscapes. As the course progresses students are expected to demonstrate evidence that they are able to formulate their own informed views on the complex realities pertaining to contemporary Africa's business cultural landscape – participate in a group dialogue and articulate exactly what is compelling, strange, or even appalling about Africa's business cultural landscape.

**Prerequisites:** There are no prerequisites to take this course.

**Course Materials**

**1. Handouts**

- A. GENERAL OVERVIEW: physical, social, & political setting**
  - i. 'Africa: A Geographic Preface' (Jeffrey Neff in Gordon and

Gordon, 2007, pp 7-22, *Understanding Contemporary Africa*) –

ii. ‘Understanding Africa: myths and facts’ (EAN, chpt. 5)

#### **B. AFRICA’S BUSINESS POTENTIALS: AN OVERVIEW**

i. ‘The Economies of Africa’ (Virginia DeLancey in Gordon & Gordon, 2007, pp. 109-154, *Understanding Contemporary Africa*)

#### **C. AFRICA IN THE WORLD & THE WORLD IN AFRICA: the colonial, post-colonial, & globalizing capitalism**

i. ‘The Economies of Africa’ (Virginia DeLancey in Gordon & Gordon, 2007, pp. 109-154, *Understanding Contemporary Africa*)

#### **D. CHINA IN AFRICA**

ii. ‘Africa, China’s new frontier’ (TIMESONLINE [www.timesonline.co.uk](http://www.timesonline.co.uk))

i. China’s Quest for Resources, Opportunities, and Influence in Africa (Robert Rotberg in R. Rotberg (ed) 2008, pp.1-20, *China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence*)

iii. China’s Renewal Partnership with Africa: Implications for the United States (Chin Hao Huang in R. Rotberg (ed.) 2008, pp. 296-312, *China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence*)

#### **E. AFRICAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP: Theory & Reality**

i. Gender and the range of African entrepreneurship strategies: the ‘typical’ and the ‘new’ women entrepreneurs (Anita Spring in A. Jalloh & T. Falola (eds.), pp.381-401, *Black Business and Economic Power*).

#### **F. CULTURAL CATEGORIES: AN OVERVIEW**

i. Sub-Saharan Africa (Richard Lewis Chapt 67, *When Cultures Collide: Leading Across Cultures*, pp. 563-575).

#### **G. SPECIFIC ASPECTS IN AFRICAN BUSINESS CULTURE**

i. Culture and Business in Africa (Emmanuel Nnadozie chpt. 2 pp. 31-36, *African Culture & American Business in Africa: How to strategically manage cultural differences in African business.*)

ii. African Cultural dimensions (Emmanuel Nnadozie chpt. 3 pp. 37-54, *African Culture & American Business in Africa: How to strategically manage cultural differences in African business.*)

iii. Managing Cultural differences in African business (Emmanuel Nnadozie chpt. 4 pp. 55-72, *African Culture & American Business in Africa: How to strategically manage cultural differences in African business.*)

## 2. Films

*Extra Bitter: the Legacy of the Chocolate Islands* (52 min.) DVD 1490

*Africa: Open for Business* (60 min), 2006, DVD 2477

*When China Met Africa* (60 min), DVD 6075

*Cross-Cultural Communication: How Culture Affects Communication* (23 min), 2005 W62 C951.

*Wonders of the African World* (The Swahili Coast, 60 min.), DVD 1482

*Mama Benz and the Taste of Money* (52 min.), 2001, DVD 1586

## Responsibilities, Assignments, and Evaluation & Grading

Reading assigned articles and close screening of selected films, as well as attending class are of course the keys to the success of this course. Please have the readings done by the day they are assigned; they are the foundation for what goes on in the course. Films will be screened during class time and discussed thereafter alongside relevant readings or experiences. If you are interested to watch the films on your own prior to the class screening, please feel free to do so. Every individual's active participation is expected. The material discussed in this course guides us to explore and re-think the way we think about Africa's business culture.

Please note: occasionally, I will recommend lectures or films/performances outside of class time. Some of you may have schedule conflicts, but do try to attend whenever your schedule allows you.

Course evaluation will be based on a combination of class attendance & participation, reading quizzes, current business news journal, two (2) discussion papers, oral presentations and one business communication project. The breakdown of the grading is as follows:

Class attendance	5%
Participation	5%
Reading quizzes	15%
Oral presentations	15%
Current business news journal	15%
2 discussion papers	30%
Business communication project	15%
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Total	100%
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The authorized grading symbols (A, B, C, D, E) will be used. Scores and letter grades are as follows:

95-100 = A; 90-94 = A-; 86-89 = B+; 80-85 = B; 76-79 = C+; 70-75 = C; 66-69 = D+; 60-65 = D; 50-59 = E.

**Class attendance & participation [5% & 5%]**

Attendance is required, and active participation is expected. The more you read assigned articles thoroughly and think about them seriously, the greater chances are for you not only to participate productively in the class discussions, but also to enjoy the class.

**Reading Quizzes [15%]**

Reading quizzes of four to five questions (multiple choice, fill in the blanks, true/false type) will be administered accordingly as indicated in the schedule below.

**Current business news journal [15%]****Journal (15%)**

Keep a journal on your adopted African country especially of **current business news** throughout the term. A minimum of ten (10) reported events in total, at least one event every week. Write a summary of the business news item, indicate a source, and dates, and write down your comments especially the reason why you find it interesting. You may relate these news items to issues discussed in class, seen on videos or the readings. (Due date indicated in the schedule)

Although you are not restricted as to the source of the material, the following sources would be useful (check the business section):

The New York Times: [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com) (look in international business news, Africa section)

CNN: [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com) (look in international news, Africa section)

BBC: [www.bbc.com](http://www.bbc.com) (look in international news, Africa section)

All Africa <http://allafrica.com>

Africa Business Pages [www.africasia.com/africanbusiness/](http://www.africasia.com/africanbusiness/)

Country's official websites (if any exists) including business cartoons.

**Discussion Papers (two) [30%]**

You will write two (2) discussion papers (minimum: 4 pages and max: 5 pages, typed double space, font 12 pt), each discussing one of the course themes. This will be a chance for you to write about aspects of the readings and films in the context of your new way of looking at African business cultural landscape. Each paper will carry 15%. (For Due date see the schedule below)

**Oral presentations [15%]**

Two oral presentations: one in the mid of the term and the other at the end of the term. The first one will be on China in your African country and the second one will be about your business communication project (you will be required to design a billboard or TV ad for introducing a new product in your African country).

**Business Communication project [15%]**

You will design a commercial advertisement for a new product (of your imagination such as mobile phone service, micro-finance bank services, etc) to be introduced in your adopted African country. The country's cultural landscape will need to be considered for the ad to be effectively persuasive.

**Academic Honesty**

The University of Florida's honor code requires all students to be honest in their academic work. University policies on cheating, plagiarism, and related issues are available at:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/academicguide.html>

### **Students with disabilities**

Students with disabilities will be accommodated accordingly. Those requesting such accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office which will provide them with documentation.

### **Minor in African Studies**

Please note that this course, in combination with others, can count towards a Minor in African studies, an ideal complement to your disciplinary major. Contact Dr. Todd Leedy for more information: [tleedy@africa.ufl.edu](mailto:tleedy@africa.ufl.edu)

## **Proposed Schedule & Assignments**

### **Week 1 - Introductions**

#### **Week 2 (Jan 14 & 16)**

##### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

**Introductions, review of syllabus, and a general overview of Africa's diversity - physical, socio-political, linguistic, and culture.**

- Read: i. 'Africa: A Geographic Preface' (Jeffrey Neff in Gordon and Gordon, 2007, *Understanding Contemporary Africa*) –  
ii. 'The Historical Context' (Thomas O'Toole in Gordon and Gordon, 2007, *Understanding Contemporary Africa*) –  
iii. 'Understanding Africa: myths and facts' (EAN, chp. 5)

#### **Week 3 (Jan 21 & 23)**

##### **AFRICA'S BUSINESS POTENTIALS: AN OVERVIEW**

- i. 'The Economies of Africa' (Virginia DeLancey in Gordon & Gordon, 2007, pp. 109-154, *Understanding Contemporary Africa*)

**Film** (in-class screening) - *Extra Bitter: the legacy of the Chocolate Islands*

**Film** (in-class screening): *Africa: Open for Business*

#### **Week 4 (Jan 28 & 30)**

##### **AFRICA IN THE WORLD & THE WORLD IN AFRICA: the colonial, post-colonial, & globalizing capitalism**

- i. 'The Economies of Africa' (Virginia DeLancey in Gordon & Gordon, 2007, pp. 109-154, *Understanding Contemporary Africa*)

### **Reading Quiz – 1 ('The Economies of Africa' 1/16)**

#### **Week 5 (Feb 4 & 6)**

##### **CHINA IN AFRICA**

- i. 'Africa, China's new frontier' (TIMESONLINE [www.timesonline.co.uk](http://www.timesonline.co.uk))

\*ii. China's Quest for Resources, Opportunities, and Influence in Africa (Robert Rotberg in R. Rotberg (ed) 2008, pp.1-20, *China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence*)

**Week 7 & 8** (Feb 18 – 27)

**Reading Quiz – 2\* (Feb 4)**

**Film** (in-class screening and discussion): *When China Met Africa* (2/21)

**Oral Presentation – 1 (China in Africa, 2/27)**

**Discussion paper – 1 (Due March 1)**

### **CULTURAL CATEGORIES: AN OVERVIEW**

i. [www.cultureactive.com](http://www.cultureactive.com)

ii. Sub-Saharan Africa (Richard Lewis Chapt 67, *When Cultures Collide: Leading Across Cultures*, pp. 563-575).

**Reading Quiz – 3 (Sub-Saharan Africa: 2/18)**

<b>Week 9: SPRING BREAK</b> (March 3-9)
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**Week 10** (March 11 & 13)

**Business News Journal (DUE March 13)**

### **CULTURAL CATEGORIES: ( cont..)**

i. [www.cultureactive.com](http://www.cultureactive.com)

**Reading Quiz – 3 (Sub-Saharan Africa: 2/18)**

**Week 11-16** (March 18 - April 22)

### **SPECIFIC ASPECTS IN AFRICAN BUSINESS CULTURE**

**Wk. 11.** (March 18 & 20)

#### **African Time**

African Cultural dimensions (Emmanuel Nnadozie chpt. 3: pp. 37-54, *African Culture & American Business in Africa: How to strategically manage cultural differences in African business.*)

Harmony vs. conflict, 'African time', bribery & corruption, work ethic, and the like.

**Wk. 12.** (March 25 & 27)

#### **Power: individualism vs collectivism**

Culture and Business in Africa (Emmanuel Nnadozie chpt. 2: pp.

31-36, *African Culture & American Business in Africa: How to strategically manage cultural differences in African business.*)

Hierarchies, titles, age, personal connections, collectivism vs. individualism, masculinity vs. femininity, etc.

**Wk. 13** (April 1 & 3)

**Business Communication**

Verbal & non-verbal communication

**Film** (in-class screening): *Cross-Cultural Communication: How Culture Affects Communication* (23 min), 2005 W62 C951. (A, F)

**Wk 14** (April 8 & 10)

**Commercial ads in African settings**

**Working on commercial ad project**

**Wk 15 & 16** (April 15, 17, & 22)

**OP -2 presentations: commercial ads projects**

**DP-2** (DUE April 22)