

# Introduction to Contemporary Africa

AFST 101 03

Fall 2016: Monday, Wednesday, & Friday 11:10-12:00PM  
Douglass Hall 216

Instructor: Dr. Msia Kibona Clark

Office location: Department of African Studies, Howard Center, Room 422 (Above the bookstore)

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 12:30pm-4:00pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00pm-4:00pm

**Course Description:** This course will examine major themes in contemporary Africa, covering the past 50 years. The course will briefly cover the colonial experience in Africa, Africa's independence and the contemporary struggles of the modern state. This course will also examine the African continent's rich cultures and peoples, paying special attention to African social structures and artistic expression.

**Course Goals:** The goal of the course is to introduce students to contemporary African history and cultures. The course will diversify and broaden students' understandings of the African experience. The goal is to have students come away from the course with an enhanced ability to intellectually reflect on and discuss the major themes in Africa's history as well as the diverse cultures and people that make up Africa today. Students will understand Africa's struggles for independence and development and the diversity of cultures that make up the continent. Students will also be able to understand many of the myths and images that surround Africa's past and present.

## Required Reading Materials:

Azevedo, Mario (Ed.). 2005. *Africana Studies: A Survey of Africa and the African Diaspora*. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.

BBC Africa Today Podcast (Subscribe via your podcast app & link can be found on Blackboard)

\* Additional readings provided on Blackboard

**Assessment:** Successful completion of this class will consist of a student's active participation in the course and their ability to effectively convey their understanding of the material through regular assessments.

| Grading Scale |            |       |            |
|---------------|------------|-------|------------|
| Grade         | Percentage | Grade | Percentage |
| A             | 90-100%    | C     | 70-79%     |
| B             | 80-89%     | D     | 60-69%     |
| F             | 0-59%      |       |            |

| Gradebook          |             |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Exams              | 35%         |
| Research Project   | 35%         |
| Quizzes & Homework | 15%         |
| Event Essays       | 15%         |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>100%</b> |

## Exams

Students will complete a total of two exams during the quarter (please see schedule for exam dates). The exams will be given online via Blackboard. There will be no make-up examinations. In case of an emergency, or computer malfunction, students will need to contact me ASAP.

**Final Exam:** The final exam is optional, and can be taken to replace one of the two exam grades. The exam will be comprehensive, meaning it will cover all of the material we covered during the entire quarter. The exam will be online and will be due Monday, December 5<sup>th</sup>. December graduates need to see me to make arrangements for taking the exam.

## **Research Project**

Students will have the option of doing a research project or working on an African hip hop research project. Students need to go on Blackboard to select their research project by Monday, August 29.

Students will be grouped according to chosen research topic. Groups will consist of 5 students (4 researchers and one editor). The group will select someone in their group to be the editor, who will be responsible for reading & synthesizing the papers and citations, as well writing the introduction and conclusion. The group will submit a 15-page research paper.

As a group, students will select an editor and decide on how to narrow their broad research topic and format their research project. The group will then prepare a research paper and present their research to the class.

Group members will receive a grade based on both an individual and group assessment:

1. Individual grade (60 points): a. individual contribution (25 points), b. citations & references/works cited (20 points), c. peer assessment (15 points).
2. Group grade (40 points): a. organization & creativity of presentation (20 points) and b. knowledge of topic during the presentation (20 points).

Students will turn in a peer review form, which will evaluate the performance of themselves as well as the other members of their group. This evaluation will remain confidential.

Groups will present their research during an in-class presentation. Each group will have 20 minutes to present their research to the class. Points will be taken off for excessive reading from the paper or PowerPoint slides.

## **Group Topics:**

|                    |                                       |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Women's movements  | African leaders                       |
| Gender in Africa   | African revolutionary movements       |
| African music      | Contemporary African social movements |
| African art        | Conflict resolution in Africa         |
| African literature | Pan Africanism                        |
| African films      | Health in Africa                      |

The final paper is due the day of the presentation. For every day late, 5 points will be deducted from the grade.

Each group editor will hand in an electronic copy of their paper using the online plagiarism-detection resource on Blackboard.

All research papers are to follow the APA style guide. A helpful guide can be found at: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl>. Papers are to be typed in a traditional sized font (ex. Times New Roman, 12pt) using the default margins provided by word processing software. Students must use the APA citation style and properly cite their papers.

At least 10 of the paper's resources must be academic journals and scholarly publications.

### **Alternative Research option**

Students have the option to participate in a project on African hip hop, instead of doing the group research project. Students choosing this option will select artists from a list and listen to their music (links or songs will be provided). Students will write summaries of the artists and categorize each song into select categories based on the topics discussed in the song.

The project seeks to examine the topics addressed by female hip hop artists in Africa, specifically how they address topics like motherhood, relationships, sex, sexuality, and violence against women.

Student grades for the African hip hop project will be assessed based on: a. 600-word summary of all of the artists studied (50 points) and b. categorization of 25 songs (50 points/2 points each song).

\*All assignments are due **November 30**.

## **Quizzes & Homework**

Students will have in-class map quizzes throughout the semester. Students will also submit a creative writing essay, typed, in class. Lastly, students will be expected to submit a "News Roundup" every Friday. The news roundup summarizes the major news stories out of Africa discussed any edition of that week's BBC Africa Today podcast.

## **Event Essays**

Students will be required to attend 2 community and/or campus events during the quarter. These events can include film showings, symposiums, & lectures on topics related to Africa. Students must get the event approved before they attend an event if they want credit for it.

Students may also go to an African restaurant and write about their experience for the event essay. Students going to an African restaurant must attach an image of the receipt with their paper, and they cannot do the same type of cuisine for both event essays.

Students will be required to do a 700-word write-up on the event giving their impressions of the topic/s presented and their relevance. All essays are to be handed in via Blackboard. Please see schedule for essay due dates. Essays that are less than 700 words will be penalized 5 points. Essays on restaurants that have no receipt will be penalized 5 points.

## **Class Policies**

**Attendance:** Students are expected to attend all class sessions, on time. Students will also be expected to participate in the class via Blackboard. This means accessing Blackboard regularly to complete assignments follow changes and announcements. More than 5 absences will lower your total grade by 1 percentage point for each class missed over and above the first three. Because you are given a leeway of five classes, doctor's notes and other excuses are not accepted for absences.

Arriving late MAY count as ½ of a missed class, unless prior arrangements have been made.

**STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO USE CELL PHONES OR LAPTOPS IN CLASS UNLESS PRIOR PERMISSION IS GIVEN.**

**Lateness:** Late assignments will not be accepted. If a student has a valid excuse for turning an assignment in late, they will be subject to a deduction of 2 points per day for event essays and homework; and 5 points per day for exams and research papers. In class assignments and quizzes cannot be made up. Students that experience computer-related problems students must IMMEDIATELY e-mail or call me and either attach the assignment or inform me of their problem. It is advisable that students double check their submissions to confirm that the files can be opened.

Assignments that cannot be opened will not be accepted, and students will receive a 0.

**Extra Credit, Additional Points, & Grade Changes:** In the rare cases that extra credit opportunities are given, they will be given to the entire class. Students will not be able to do extra credit assignments, and are advised to monitor their grade on Blackboard to and assess what they need to score on upcoming assignments to improve their grade.

My policy on re-examining a grade on an assignment: Students will need to write a short letter outlining why they believe they have been graded harshly and make their case for a higher grade. Students' cases will be strengthened by addressing any comments I made on the assignment, and incorporating that into the response.

**Academic Dishonesty Policy:** Academic dishonesty is defined to include any form of cheating and/or plagiarism. Cheating includes, but is not limited to such acts as stealing and altering information for academic purposes; offering, giving or receiving unauthorized assistance on an examination or other written material in a course. Plagiarism includes taking and passing off intentionally as one's own the ideas, writings, work of another individual without crediting the author.

The minimum disciplinary penalty imposed upon a student found to have committed an infraction will be receiving an 'F' for the assignment or the course, depending on the severity of the case.

**ADA Policies and Procedures:** Howard University is committed to providing an educational environment that is accessible to all students. In accordance with this policy, students in need of accommodations due to a disability should contact the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and Records, (202) 806-8006, for verification and determination of reasonable accommodations as soon as possible after admission to the Law School, or at the beginning of each semester. The Office of Special Student Services is located in Suite 725 of the Howard Center and may be reached at (202) 238-2420.

**Statement on Interpersonal Violence:** Howard University takes sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking and sexual harassment seriously. If a student reveals that he or she needs assistance with any of these issues, all Responsible Employees, which includes faculty, are required to share this information with the University Title IX Office (202 806-2550) or a student can be referred for confidential services to the Interpersonal Violence Prevention Program (IVPP) (202 238-2382) or University Counseling Services (202 806-6870).

For more information about these services, please go to [www.CampusSafetyFirst.Howard.Edu](http://www.CampusSafetyFirst.Howard.Edu)

## Schedule

| Date           | Topics & Readings   |
|----------------|---|
| Monday 8/22    | Course Introduction   |
| Wednesday 8/24 | Geography of Africa   |
| Friday 8/26    | Geography of Africa   |
| Monday 8/29    | Colonialism & Independence in Africa<br>Read: Ch6 European Exploration & Conquest of Africa<br>*Select your group topic on Blackboard |
| Wednesday 8/31 | Colonialism & Independence in Africa<br>Watch: "Africa: States of independence - the scramble for Africa"                             |
| Friday 9/2     | Colonialism & Independence in Africa<br>Read: Ch9 Africa's Road to Independence<br>Due: News Roundup                                  |
| Monday 9/5     | NO CLASS – Labor Day  |
| Wednesday 9/7  | Post-Independence Era in Africa<br>Read: I Speak of Freedom by Kwame Nkrumah<br>Watch: "Faces of Africa – Kwame Nkrumah"              |
| Friday 9/9     | Groups Meet<br>Due: News Roundup  |
| Monday 9/12    | Pan Africanism<br>"The struggle to convert nationalism to Pan-Africanism" by Issa Shivji  |
| Wednesday 9/14 | Pan Africanism  |

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Friday 9/16    | <p>Contemporary Africa</p> <p>Read: Ch11 The Contemporary African World</p> <p>Due: News Roundup</p>  |
| Monday 9/19    | <p>Contemporary Africa</p> <p>Watch: “The Danger of a Single Story” and “SAPEURS by Guinness”, “Mobile phone usage explodes in Africa, spurring innovation,” and “Africa's film industry sees growth at this year’s African Film Festival”.</p> |
| Wednesday 9/21 | <p>Contemporary Africa</p> <p>In-Class film: “Boys of Bukom”</p>  |
| Friday 9/23    | No Class - Classes suspend from 10:00 A.M.- 1:00 P.M.   |
| Monday 9/26    | <p>Research project preparation</p> <p>Exam 1 due</p>   |
| Wednesday 9/28 | <p>The African Family</p> <p>Read: Ch20 The African Family</p>  |
| Friday 9/30    | <p>The African Family</p> <p>Due: News Roundup</p> <p>Read: “Youth in Kenya Feel Few Tribal Ties” and “Families' Ties Can Get Knotty”</p> <p>Watch: “African Women Who Marry Other Women To Bear Children For Them”</p>                         |
| Monday 10/3    | <p>Religion in Africa</p> <p>Read: Ch22 Religion in Africa</p>  |
| Wednesday 10/5 | <p>Religion in Africa</p> <p>Read: The Yoruba Creation Narrative</p>  |
| Friday 10/7    | NO CLASS  |



|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Monday 10/10    | Gender in Africa<br>Ch24 African Women<br>Event Essay 1 due   |
| Wednesday 10/12 | Gender in Africa<br>In Class Film: “Twiga Stars: Tanzania's Soccer Sisters”   |
| Friday 10/14    | Social and Political Change in Africa<br>Due: News Roundup<br>Read: “African awakenings: the courage to invent the future” & “The never-ending revolution: perspectives from the African blogosphere” |
| Monday 10/17    | NO CLASS  |
| Wednesday 10/19 | Social and Political Change in Africa<br>Read: “From Marikana to #feesmustfall: The Praxis of Popular Politics in South Africa”<br>Watch: “Shutting Down the Rainbow Nation: #FeesMustFall”           |
| Friday 10/21    | African Migration<br>Due: News Roundup<br>Read: African Immigrants in the United States   |
| Monday 10/24    | African Migration<br>Watch: An African City   |
| Wednesday 10/26 | The Arts<br>Read: Ch16 Art (307-315) & Ch17 Literature (325-332)<br>Due: Creative writing essay due   |
| Friday 10/28    | The Arts<br>Due: News Roundup<br>Film: What's next for Nollywood?   |

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|-----------------|--|
| Monday 10/31    | The Arts<br>Read: Ch14 Music (253-259)   |
| Wednesday 11/2  | Hip Hop & Social Change in Africa<br>Read: “Hip-hop music speaking for Africa’s disenfranchised youth”             |
| Friday 11/4     | Hip Hop & Social Change in Africa<br>Read: “Top Female South African Rappers”<br>Watch: Videos embedded in article |
| Monday 11/7     | Hip Hop & Social Change in Africa  |
| Wednesday 11/9  | Exam 2 due   |
| Friday 11/11    | NO CLASS – Veterans Day  |
| Monday 11/14    | Presentations  |
| Wednesday 11/16 | Presentations  |
| Friday 11/18    | Presentations  |
| Monday 11/21    | Presentations  |
| Wednesday 11/23 | NO CLASS - Classes Suspended at NOON   |
| Friday 11/25    | NO CLASS – Thanksgiving  |
| Monday 11/28    | Presentations  |
| Wednesday 11/30 | Presentations<br>Essay 2 due   |
| Monday 12/5     | Final exam due   |