AFRICA IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

According to the Congolese scholar, Valentine Mudimbe, what we understand today, as ‘Africa’ is in fact an, ‘invention’ of the modern European enlightenment project! Mudimbe’s metaphor places the African continent at the center of global relations in intricate and provocative ways.

Using a number of learning materials, including books and movies, MC324b provides students of international relations with an in depth analysis of the African continent’s agency and ‘play’ in global politics. Despite the apparent recentness of the globalization project, in taking a historical and structural perspective in the presentation of African affairs, the course’s content will begin its examination of Africa’s international relations by tracing the Continent’s initial European contact, setting off global events such as the ‘triangular trade’, colonialism, de-colonization, the establishment of modern independent African statehood during the post World War II era, and the Continent’s post-colonial ‘age of development’. The course will present these historical formations as the bases for the important current transformations in African affairs, including the continent’s economic challenges, its health crisis, neo-liberalism, 1990s conflict and resolution, democratization and regional integration.

Moreover, by asking students to conduct research on individual countries of their choice, the course content will cover ‘Africa’ as a dynamic region constituting fifty-three diverse and sovereign independent nations with distinctive foreign policies that present challenges to a single continental policy. Following the ‘Africa’ public affairs desks of international organizations, the course will address the Continent’s political diversity by examining sub-regional and country case studies as diverse as the small-state post-conflict transitions of Liberia, transformations from conflict to peace in the Great Lakes Region (the DRC and Rwanda), change and hegemony in Africa’s large states: Nigeria and South Africa, foreign policy transformation in Francophone Africa (Cote D’ivoire, Senegal), and the politics of ethno-religion, Islam and anti-terrorism in the Sudan and Somalia.
TEACHING/LEARNING FORMAT

MC324b will be delivered in a non-traditional teaching format. Rather than viewing this course as merely a series of professor lectures through which you will gain information, approach the course as a semester long workshop in which you are a central facilitator-agent. This instructional style combines instructor-led lectures with collaborative learning methods such as student-led seminars and other colloquial sessions that promote active-student learning. There will be individualized assignments as well as group assignments; and formal classroom instruction will be conducted utilizing effective learning technologies, including instructional audio-visual props and Angel online resources. In addition to exposing you to and delivering to you complex, deep, broad and interdisciplinary knowledge of a complex continent, my course delivery method seeks to develop the skills and talents that require your success in the social science careers. The course is reading-intensive with the goal of fostering the development of your multiple research skills, including analytical and critical thinking and various types of written as well as oral communication delivery. Also, remember that this course is designated as a Tier 2 cluster writing requirement courses. This means that you and I must work together on ‘developing’ your research papers.

REQUIRED BOOKS


ASSIGNMENT REQUIREMENTS

1. Class Participation and Attendance (based on rate and quality of participation and pattern of attendance) 10 points
2. Book Review Essays (3 pages) 5 points each for a total of 35 points.
3. Lead Book Review Discussant Group Presentations (group seminar agenda, including multimedia presentation) 15 points
4. Movie Report 5 points
5. Final Research Take Home Exam Essay (15 pages) (35 points)

GRADING SCALE: (You earn your points up!)

1. at least 95 - 4.0  
2. at least 90 - 3.5  
3. at least 85 – 3.0  
4. at least 80 – 2.5  
5. at least 75 – 2.0  
6. at least 70 – 1.5  
7. at least 65 – 1.0  
8. 64 and below - 0

CODE OF CONDUCT

** See me for Honors Credit Assignment for this course (participate in every lead discussant group; and final research paper length should be 25 pages)
** Refer to Student Handbook for Academic Honesty Policy
** Remember that this is a 4 credit course based on JMC’s distinctive office hours model (this means that office hours and other professor-student sessions are highly encouraged. My office is open and I am happy to assist you in any way that I can)
** Remember that this course is designated as a Tier 2 Writing Cluster course
**Office hours MW- 3:00-4:30; Tuesdays by appointment
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

TOPIC ONE:

Representing Africa in Global Affairs: Geographical, Discourse and Historical orientations

Session Schedule

8/25:
Lecture
Introduction to the Course

Readings
Get your books!

8/27:
Lecture
Who/What is African Affairs: Geo-Historical Navigation and Intro to African Politics

Movie
Intro to African Affairs:

Readings

Topic Assignment
Read background info and prepare for this course
Session Schedule
9/3
Lecture
Africa and “Representation”

Readings
Wimaina Binyavanga, “How to Write About Africa” Granta 92: The View from Africa, Jan 15, 2006

9/8
Roundtable Discussion

Mistaking Africa and Representation

Readings

Topic Assignment
Book report – instructions TBA in Angel

TOPIC TWO:

Africa in Global History: the Triangular Trade, Colonialism and Modern State Formation

Session Schedule
9/10
Lecture
Africa, the Black Atlantic, and “the Triangular Trade”

Readings
9/15
Roundtable Discussion
Africa and the Diaspora

Readings

**Topic Assignment**
Book Report – instructions TBA in Angel

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**Session Schedule**

9/17
Lecture
Africa's Legacy with Colonialism

Readings

Recommended Readings

9/22
Roundtable Discussion
The Human Impact of Colonialism

Readings

**Topic Assignment**
Book Report – Instructions TBA in Angel
Session Schedule

9/24
Lecture

De-Colonization, Postcolonialism and Neo-Colonialism

Readings


9/29
Movie

Lumumba and the DRC

Readings

10/1
Roundtable Discussion

Postcolonialism, Neocolonialism and the DRC as Case Study

Topic Assignment
Movie Report – Instructions TBA in Angel
TOPIC THREE

Issues in African Affairs:
Development and Democracy

See revisions posted 10/1/08

Session Schedule

10/6
Lecture

Development, Underdevelopment and Uneven Development

Readings

Recommended Reading

10/8
Lecture

Globalization, Neoliberalism and Structural Adjustment

Readings


10/13
Movie

T-Shirt Travels
Readings

10/15
Reading Roundtable

Economic development and Africa

Readings

Topic Assignment
Book Report – Instructions TBA

Session Schedule

10/20
Lecture

Political Development -Democracy

Readings

10/22
Movie

Hopes on the Horizon: Democracy in Benin, Nigeria, Rwanda, and South Africa

Readings

10/27
Roundtable Discussion
The Contemporary Political-Economy of Africa: Democracy and Development

Readings

**Topic Assignment**
Book Report – Instructions TBA

**TOPIC FOUR:**

Issues in African Affairs - Conflict and Cooperation

**Session Schedule**

10/29
Lecture
Conflict in Africa, profiling Rwanda and Sudan

**Readings**


11/3
Movie
Rwanda - Sometimes in April

**Readings**
Michael Kavanagh, ‘Rwanda’s Latest Ethnic Cleansing’ in *Slate.Com* (COURSE READER)
Movie

Sudan -- All About Darfur

Readings

Roundtable Discussion

Rwanda and Darfur

Topic Assignment
Movie Report – Instructions TBA

Session Schedule

Lecture

Cooperating on Conflict

Readings

African Union: So Far; So Good Pusch Commey New African London, July 2004
http://proquest.umi.com/pqddweb?index=37&did=688653621&SrchMode=1&sid=1&Fmt=4&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1131647663&clientId=3552

http://proquest.umi.com/pqddweb?index=3&did=855310791&SrchMode=1&sid=1&Fmt=4&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1131647317&clientId=3552

Asian and African Studies, (COURSE READER)
11/17
Roundtable Discussion

Peace through Cooperation: the African Union

Readings

Topic Assignment
Book Report – Instructions TBA in Angel

**TOPIC FIVE**

Profile Country Cases- Nigeria and South Africa

**Session Schedule**

11/19
Lecture

Nigeria and South Africa: regional hegemons

Readings
Rita Kiki Edozie, ‘Centralization Trends in African Democratic Politics: Why Institutions like the PDP and the Obasanjo Presidency are Inclined to Dominate Third Wave Democratic Politics in Africa- and How They can be Reigned In’ *Ethnicity and Sociopolitical Change* (COURSE READER)

11/24
Movie

Remembering the Past: Shaping the Future: Saro Wiwa

Readings
11/26
Movie:

In My Country (movie on TRC)

Readings


12/1
Roundtable Discussion

Nigeria and South Africa

Readings

Topic Assignment
Book Report - Instructions TBA

12/3
Conclusions