

## **GEOGRAPHY 321-500:** **GEOGRAPHY OF AFRICA**

Term: Fall 2008  
Time: M W F 11:30 am – 12:20 pm  
Place: O&M 103

**Professor:** Dr. Tina Mangieri  
**Office:** CSA 203C  
**Office Hours:** Mondays & Wednesdays 2:30-3:30 pm & by appointment  
**Email:** [mangieri@tamu.edu](mailto:mangieri@tamu.edu)  
**Telephone:** 862-8419

### Course Description

Africa is...poverty, illness, war, famine, underdevelopment...powerful, overwhelmingly dire, images that inform Africa's standing in global hierarchies of power and prestige. In this class, we will investigate Africa's places and spaces, with an emphasis on the histories, interrelationships, and complexities that render the continent's current challenges so vexing. Unpacking the stereotypes listed above, we will explore these and other views of Africa, interrogate their perspectives, and consider the assumptions underlying these attributes. How has "Africa" been created? By whom? For what purpose? This class will provide the framework, and encourage you to ask the questions, to generate your own informed conclusions.

### Course Goals

1. *Gain a basic awareness of Africa.* This includes countries, economic activities, international institutions, environmental problems, cultural complexes, etc. This does not mean that you will need to know the name of every hill, stream, and provincial capital on the continent. It does mean that when some place or issue is raised in the news, other courses, etc., you will have an idea about what is being discussed, or at least enough of an idea to know where to turn to learn more.
2. *Understand and describe major processes shaping Africa.* Very little of what happens on Earth happens in isolation – including in Africa. Large-scale processes – such as trade, religion, and migration – cut across countries and regions. Therefore, it is not enough to know simply what is “out there” in the world; it is equally important to attempt to understand why (or why *not*) and to be able to describe how processes work.
3. *Be able to critically compare what you hear/read about Africa, apply the knowledge gained in this course to delve deeper into the issues, and analyze/argue/assess its various perspectives.* This course is not about adopting any particular perspective on Africa. What the course *is* about is realizing that there are multiple perspectives for many of the region's issues, and being able to examine your and others' assumptions about Africa. This does *not* mean not having a position, only a willingness to examine various perspectives on their own terms.

### Required Texts

Achebe, Chinua (1996 [1958]) *Things Fall Apart* Heinemann. ISBN: 978-0-43590525.

Gourevitch, Phillip (1999) *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will be Killed With Our Families: Stories from Rwanda*. New York: Picador (Macmillan). ISBN: 978-0312243357.

Stoller, Paul (2002) *Money Has No Smell: The Africanization of New York City*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ISBN: 978-0226775302.

### Course Website

**Maps & additional readings/websites/films** will be assigned (see course schedule below) and are available to view/download on the GEOG 321 elearning website and, when available, via the links below. You will be expected to have read any supplementary reading before the class day on which it's assigned. If there is no link on the syllabus, the map/reading is only available at <http://elearning.tamu.edu>.

Given our focus, I also expect that you will consult (online, in print, and/or on radio) at least one current **international news source** throughout the semester (this is in addition to your Media Project – see below). I recommend the *BBC* (<http://news.bbc.co.uk>) and *The Christian Science Monitor* (<http://csmonitor.com>) as starting points. Regional news sources (most often in English or French) are also available online. Current events questions, as they relate to Africa and to classroom discussions, will appear on exams and quizzes.

### Course Requirements

I expect that you will attend class, having read any assigned readings for that day/week. Your course grade will be determined by 7 components: 1 map quiz, 2 book reviews, 2 in-class midterm exams, an in-class media presentation, and a final paper.

### Grading

Map quiz	=	5 points
Book Reviews (2 @ 15 points each)	=	30 points total
Media presentation	=	10 points
Midterm Exam 1	=	15 points
Midterm Exam 2	=	15 points
Final (Media) Paper	=	25 points
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Course Total	=	100 points

### Grading Scale

A = 89.6-100, B = 79.6-89.5, C = 69.6-79.5, D = 59.6-69.5, F = < 59.6

### Grade Components

- 1) **Map quiz:** In-class, Monday, September 8<sup>th</sup>.
- 2) **Book reviews:** You must choose 2 of the 3 books assigned for class (you will be expected to read and discuss all three, but write a review of only 2). These reviews will be 3-4 pages long and offer a critical analysis of the work, drawing on class lectures, additional readings, and discussions, as well as the text. Book review due dates appear on the course schedule below and will be due at the beginning of class. I will not accept late papers.

3) **Media presentation:** Once during the semester you will give a 10-15 minute in-class presentation on a topic you will be investigating throughout the term (this topic will also form the basis of your final paper). I have a list of 10 topics, below – you will either choose your topic (4-5 students per topic) or I will assign one to you, depending upon the class distribution. We will discuss this project during week 1 (with periodic updates) and get your assignments then. The goals of the media project are multi-fold: a) to have you investigate and explain a current issue of relevance to Africa; 2) to assess the reporting perspective of your various sources; 3) to seek out local media outlets from throughout the continent; 4) to be a source of on-going information for your classmates on a particular topic. You will submit a paper of 6-8 pages on your media topic as your final assignment for the course.

4) **Midterm exams** 1 (October 6) and 2 (November 5) will contain a series of multiple-choice and short-answer questions based on lectures, readings, films, and media presentations. Each in-class exam will have 30 questions.

5) **Final (Media) paper:** see also # 3. In this paper, you will introduce your [previously assigned] topic, provide historical contextualization, and a summary of the media coverage from throughout the semester. You will conclude with an analysis of the topic/events, your sources, and an assessment of its representations. The final paper is due on Monday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, at 11:30 am.

#### Media Topics (for in-class presentations and final papers):

- 1) region 1 – East/Southern Africa
- 2) region 2 – West/Central Africa
- 3) environment & natural resources
- 4) agriculture & animal husbandry
- 5) politics
- 6) development
- 7) peace & conflict
- 8) health
- 9) arts & music
- 10) trade & economics

#### Final Exam

Final paper to be submitted AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS on Monday, December 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### Additional Course Information

##### *elearning*

I will be posting the syllabus, course readings, web links, additional class information, and your grades on the Geog 321 elearning website (<http://elearning.tamu.edu>). You may access the site by logging in with your NET ID and password.

##### *Office Hours/Email*

I will be holding office hours every Monday and Wednesday from 2:30 – 3:30 in CSA 203C. If you are unable to meet or call during these hours, I am also available by appointment, to be scheduled in advance (in person, via email, or by phone). Please be aware that I will not discuss grades by email or phone, in keeping with federal privacy legislation. To ensure that I see your email (and don't erase it as spam), please use **“Geog 321”** in the subject line.

***Media Matrix***

We will be using “Media Matrix” to view two films this semester. You may access Media Matrix at <http://mediamatrix.tamu.edu> by logging in with your NET ID and password. Additional log-in information will be posted on the elearning course website.

***Special Needs***

The **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Department of Student Life, Services for Students with Disabilities in Room B118 of Cain Hall or 845-1637.

***Copyright***

All materials used in this class are **copyrighted**, including, but not limited to, syllabi, quizzes, exams, in-class materials and review sheets. As these materials are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy the handouts, unless permission is expressly granted.

***Academic Integrity***

My goal for this class is the creation of a learning community – where we work together to learn and support one another in that process. Be respectful of one another. Do not come late or leave early. Keep noise to a minimum. Ask questions and listen. As a learning community, we must be able to trust one another. For this reason, I place a high value on scholastic honesty. In other words, everything you claim as your work *is* your work. To copy another person’s work – quiz, exam, paper, project – and claim it as your own is a violation of trust and a violation of the Aggie Honor Code: “An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal, or tolerate those who do.” For additional information, visit the following website for Honor Council Rules and Procedures: <http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor/>.

**Course Schedule**

	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT</b>
<b>M 25 Aug</b>	Africa: an introduction	
<b>W 27 Aug</b>	Africa as Other: Representing Africa	Myers, G. (2001) ...Representations of Africa.. <a href="http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/118972388/PDFSTART">http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/118972388/PDFSTART</a>
<b>F 29 Aug</b>	Physical geographies	Physical map of Africa: <a href="http://www.ilike2learn.com/ilike2learn/Continent%20Maps/AfricaPhysicalLarge.jpg">http://www.ilike2learn.com/ilike2learn/Continent%20Maps/AfricaPhysicalLarge.jpg</a> Interactive political map of Africa: <a href="http://www.vanityfair.com/politics/africa/map">http://www.vanityfair.com/politics/africa/map</a>
<b>M 1 Sept</b>	Cultural & linguistic geographies	Brief History of the Swahili language: <a href="http://www.zanzinet.org/swahili_history.html">http://www.zanzinet.org/swahili_history.html</a>
<b>W 3 Sept</b>	Archaeology	Great Zimbabwe: <a href="http://www.postcolonialweb.org/zimbabwe/art/greatzim/gz1.html">http://www.postcolonialweb.org/zimbabwe/art/greatzim/gz1.html</a>

<b>F 5 Sept</b>	The Black Atlantic	Gilroy, P. (1993) <i>The Black Atlantic</i> <a href="http://www.english.emory.edu/Bahri/Gilroy.htm">http://www.english.emory.edu/Bahri/Gilroy.htm</a>
<b>M 8 Sept</b>	Imperialism & Africa	MAP QUIZ** list of place-names/features on Blackboard  Kipling, R. (1899) <i>The White Man's Burden</i> <a href="http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/Kipling.html">http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/Kipling.html</a>
<b>W 10 Sept</b>	CLASS CANCELLED	View: <i>White King, Red Rubber, Black Death</i> (2006)
<b>F 12 Sept</b>	<i>Media presentations 1</i>	Region 1: East/Southern Africa
<b>M 15 Sept</b>	DISCUSS <i>TFA</i>	Chapters 1-14
<b>W 17 Sept</b>	Colonial economies/ "natural" resources	Colonialism & Africa's integration into the global economy: <a href="http://exploringafrica.matrix.msu.edu/students/curriculum/m9/activity4.php">http://exploringafrica.matrix.msu.edu/students/curriculum/m9/activity4.php</a>
<b>F 19 Sept</b>	<i>Media presentations 2</i>	Region 2: West/Central Africa
<b>M 22 Sept</b>	Colonialism & cultural institutions	Césaire, A. (1955) "Between Colonizer and Colonized" in <i>Social Theory: The multicultural and classic readings</i> , pp. 342-344.
<b>W 24 Sept</b>	Colonial mentalities	wa Thiong'o, N. (1986) "Decolonizing the Mind" <a href="http://www.swaraj.org/ngugi.htm">http://www.swaraj.org/ngugi.htm</a>
<b>F 26 Sept</b>	<i>Media presentations 3</i>	Environment
<b>M 29 Sept</b>	<i>TFA</i> concludes	<i>TFA</i> paper due @ 11:30
<b>W 1 Oct</b>	Independence Movements	Fanon, F. (1963) "Concerning Violence" <a href="http://www.tamilnation.org/ideology/fannon.htm">http://www.tamilnation.org/ideology/fannon.htm</a> UN (1960) Declaration on Granting Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples <a href="http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1960-un-colonialism.html">http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1960-un-colonialism.html</a>
<b>F 3 Oct</b>	<i>Media presentations 4</i>	Agriculture/animal husbandry
<b>M 6 Oct</b>	MIDTERM EXAM 1	
<b>W 8 Oct</b>	Posting the colony	Ferguson, J (2002) "Global Disconnect" in <i>The Anthropology of Globalization, a reader</i> , pp. 136-153.
<b>F 10 Oct</b>	<i>Media presentations 5</i>	Politics

<b>M 13 Oct</b>	<i>WWTI</i> discussion	Part 1: 1-171
<b>W 15 Oct</b>	Challenges after independence	Mbembe, A (2001) <i>On the postcolony</i> [excerpt] <a href="http://www.ucpress.edu/books/pages/6782/6782.ch2.pdf">http://www.ucpress.edu/books/pages/6782/6782.ch2.pdf</a>
<b>F 17 Oct</b>	<i>Media presentations 6</i>	Development
<b>M 20 Oct</b>	Development of underdevelopment	Esteva, G (1992) "Development" in <i>The Development Dictionary</i> pp. 6-25.
<b>W 22 Oct</b>	Post-development?	Green Belt Movement website: <a href="http://www.greenbeltmovement.org/">http://www.greenbeltmovement.org/</a>
<b>F 24 Oct</b>	<i>Media presentations 7</i>	Conflict
<b>M 27 Oct</b>	<i>WWTI</i> concludes	<i>WWTI</i> paper due @ 11:30
<b>W 29 Oct</b>	Contemporary crises: Darfur, Zimbabwe, DRC	Mapping Initiatives: Crisis in Darfur <a href="http://www.ushmm.org/maps/projects/darfur/">http://www.ushmm.org/maps/projects/darfur/</a>
<b>F 31 Oct</b>	<i>Media presentations 8</i>	Health
<b>M 3 Nov</b>	Health	<a href="http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/yellowBookCh3-Africa.aspx">http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/yellowBookCh3-Africa.aspx</a> , <a href="http://www.globalissues.org/article/90/aids-in-africa">http://www.globalissues.org/article/90/aids-in-africa</a> , <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/eid/vol4no3/nchinda.htm">http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/eid/vol4no3/nchinda.htm</a> and <a href="http://www.aidsinafrica.net/">http://www.aidsinafrica.net/</a>
<b>W 5 Nov</b>	MIDTERM 2	
<b>F 7 Nov</b>	CLASS CANCELLED	View: <i>Konkombe</i> (1995)
<b>M 10 Nov</b>	<i>MHNS</i> discussion: new African diasporas	Chapters 1-5
<b>W 12 Nov</b>	African popular cultures	Ntama: Journal of African music & popular culture: <a href="http://ntama.uni-mainz.de/content/category/10/79/39/">http://ntama.uni-mainz.de/content/category/10/79/39/</a> & Benn loxo du taccu: <a href="http://bennloxo.com/">http://bennloxo.com/</a>
<b>F 14 Nov</b>	<i>Media presentations 9</i>	Arts/music
<b>M 17 Nov</b>	Eco-tourism, micro-credit & sustainable development?	Ecotourism propels development: <a href="http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/vol13no1/tourism.htm">http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/vol13no1/tourism.htm</a> & kiva.org: <a href="http://www.kiva.org">http://www.kiva.org</a>

<b>W 19 Nov</b>	Ideas & Innovations	AfriGadget: <a href="http://www.afrigadget.com/">http://www.afrigadget.com/</a> & video of William Kamkwamba (TED conference): <a href="http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/william_kamkwamba_on_building_a_windmill.html">http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/william_kamkwamba_on_building_a_windmill.html</a>
<b>F 21 Nov</b>	<i>Media presentations 10</i>	Trade/economics
<b>M 24 Nov</b>	<i>MHNS concludes</i>	Chapters 6-epilogue MHNS paper due @ 11:30
<b>W 26 Nov &amp; F 28 Nov</b>	CLASS CANCELLED	Enjoy your holiday!
<b>M 1 Dec</b>	African globalizations	Mamdani, M. (n.d.) Good Muslim, Bad Muslim – An African Perspective: <a href="http://www.ssrc.org/sept11/essays/mamdani.htm">http://www.ssrc.org/sept11/essays/mamdani.htm</a>  <b>Final papers due @ 11:30</b>