

African Studies 250A – Introduction to African Studies
(Major cultural, historical and geographical issues of African Studies)

AFST 250 is an introductory course designed to provide students with background information and critical approaches that will enable them to participate in academic discussions and take more advanced courses in the field of African Studies. It will emphasize critical thinking and seek to foster an awareness of the conceptual challenges involved in our attempts to understand the complexities of African Studies.

**University of British Columbia
School of Music**

**INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN STUDIES
AFTS 250A**

School:		Department:	African Studies
Course:	AFST 250A	Credits:	3
Term:	1 (Fall) 2018	Date:	Sept 4-Nov. 30, 2018
Location:	UBC, Vancouver	Bldg/Room:	Hugh Dempster Pavilion/Rm 301
Day/Time:	Tuesday/Thursday	Time:	12:30 - 2:00pm
Instructor:	Dr. Kofi J. S. Gbolonyo	E-mail:	gbolonyo@mail.ubc.ca
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TA Office:		Office Hours:	

COURSE DESCRIPTION, OBJECTIVES, AND CONTENT

The course provides an ethnographic and ethnological survey of Sub-Saharan African peoples and culture. It highlights the change and the resistance to change in the period since the Berlin Conference of 1885, which redrew the map of Africa to serve the needs of European nations, but it also gives an in-depth look at 'traditional' Africa. The effect of the colonial period upon socio-cultural development is examined through a variety of literature and field notes. The general focus is on relations between humans and environment, between cultures, and within societies. Students in all majors should find topics of interest. Background in social sciences, especially anthropology, is highly recommended.

The objectives of the course include:

- ❑ To provide a broader and better background of understanding of Africa and Africans (both at 'home' and in the Diaspora).
- ❑ To establish the bases of intellectual engagement with Africa and Africans (e.g., help students to be able to interpret news items and other information from a critical perspective; help students to identify and correct some common misconceptions).
- ❑ To understand the scope of African culture from the philosophical, historical, spiritual, political, aesthetic, and artistic dimensions.
- ❑ To gain a broader and deeper knowledge of the historical, social, linguistic, geographic, economic, and cultural changes of pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial Africa (e.g., The impact of European intrusion on Africa and people of African descent).
- ❑ To recognize attitudinal values and belief systems in African socio-cultural practices and to develop an appreciation for and intellectual engagement with African art forms.
- ❑ To identify and analyze peculiar stylistic tokens that mark the African socio-cultural systems.
- ❑ To understand the ways in which African indigenous philosophies and African identity are linked within socio-cultural formations, particularly along axes of gender, class, and ethnicity.
- ❑ To solicit, discuss and nature the student's own objectives for the class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This is *An Introduction to African Studies*. An *introduction* does not necessarily and/or always mean 'elementary' or 'easy'. The course is primarily a survey of the culture, history and geography of Africa and its people. Be ready to enjoy easy tasks as well as face challenging ones. NOTE: The course is for ALL (year 1 through year 4) levels of students as such it has been designed to cater for different knowledge and skill levels and backgrounds. Depending on your level, past experiences, socio-cultural, and academic background, you may find the materials and the work load sometimes quite easy, familiar, and may be, an

interesting. But other times, you may find topics foreign, quite challenging, focused, deep, thought provoking, and interesting. Irrespective of your background you are expected to fulfill the following course requirements.

1. Required texts and other supplementary reading materials
2. Assignments based on readings and listening
3. Examinations and tests
4. Attendance and participation in class

Requirements for an excellent grade:

1. Regular attendance. Participation in discussions is very desirable. If this is difficult for you due to language, shyness, or a disability, please see the instructor. If you will be unable to attend class, please inform me ahead of time (except in cases of emergency or illness). You are expected to take your own notes, unless you arrange with a classmate to borrow theirs, during an illness or other excused absence.
2. Completing all assigned work on time, including readings, projects, exercises, and test preparation. Also take all exams and quizzes on schedule.
3. Use of good communication skills in written and oral communication. If you have any English language difficulties, help is available. Always proofread written work.
4. Good performance on the mid-term, final exam, and other requirements.
5. Adherence to high standards of student ethics. Students are expected to adhere to the university's policies on academic integrity as described by the University. We will discuss the proper form for citation of sources in class. Group study is highly recommended. However, the end product should reflect your own effort only.
6. It is recommended that all students check with the instructor regularly for announcements, syllabus (for possible revisions), study guides, topics for discussion, revision guidelines, and in general preparation for exams.

RESOURCES

Required Texts (check the University Bookshop for copies and current prices)

7. Khapoya, B Vincent. 2013. *The African Experience: An Introduction*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Hall. (UBC Bookshop: E-Book = \$...; Book New \$...; Used = \$...)
8. Parker, John and Richard Rathbone. 2007. *African History: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford UP. (UBC Bookshop: New = \$.....; Used = \$...)
9. Bohannan, Paul and Philip Curtin. 1995. *Africa and Africans*, 4th ed. Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press. (UBC Bookshop: Book New \$...; Used = \$...)

Additional readings (a list of related and relevant articles and chapters) may be provided in class and students will be conducting additional research in the library and on the internet.

Audiovisual Materials: Audiovisual recordings will be used extensively in and out of class as part of the course materials to illustrate and reinforce specific aspects of the course content.

G. Grading Guideline (Summary)

Final Exam:.....	40%
Mid Term Exam:.....	20%
Essay.....	10%
Quiz.....	10%
Concert Review.....	10%
Weekly Reflection/Reading Summary, Attendance and Participation	10%
Total.....	100%

GRADING GUIDELINE

A. Examinations

There will be a Mid Term Exam and Final Exam all total worth 60 % of the final grade (i.e. Mid Term Exam 20%, Final Exam 40%). See grading guideline summary below. Mid Term and Final Exams in this course will include short answers, multiple choice questions, True/False, fill-in the gap, and short essay questions. Exams will cover lectures, discussions, presentations, assigned readings, and documentary programs and films that are shown in class.

Midterm Exam (All Seat In-Class Exams):

Section A: 15 – 20 Questions. You will answer all.

Section B: 2-3 Short Essay Questions Types. You will answer 1 out of 2 or 3

Final Exam:

Section A (Seat In-Class Exam): 20 -30 Questions. You will answer all.

Section B: (Take Home): 3-4 Short Essay Type Questions. You will answer 2 out of 3 or 4. Section B

Questions will be distributed before the day of the final exam. **Final Exam Section B (Take Home answers) will be submitted on UBC Turnitin.** The answers to Section B of the Final Exam will be DUE on Turnitin on the Day of the Final Exam.

No make-up exams will be administered unless prior arrangements are made or emergency situations arise.

B. Essay/Term Project

Research Essay/Research Project paper would entail individual research that would lead to a written term paper to be submitted in class on the last day of class. Each student would select their own topics, research and write a paper and present it in class. The essay/paper will be a 3-5 pages worth 10% of the total grade. Each student would choose a contemporary African country (ethnic group, city, town, village or any current or historical issue of interest) and present an overall picture of its main features, history, and issues, focusing on a set of guiding questions to be provided. Students are also free to choose their own topics outside of the suggested areas. The specific topic on which you will write the paper must be decided in consultation with me, the instructor. The length of the paper should be 3-5- Pages, Typed, Double-Spaced, Times New Romans 12 Font Size, excluding endnotes and references cited with full bibliography (MLA or Chicago Style citations).

This Essay/Term Project Paper will be submitted on UBC Turnitin. An account would be created and the necessary information sent to all students.

Please, you may consult the following books to help in your writing: Zinsser William Knowlton (2001) On Writing Well: An Informal Guide to Writing Nonfiction. New York, New York: Harper Perennial; Michael Murphy's Writing Tools for Anthropology Students; Jim Bindon's Rules for Writing a Research Paper.

Details about the essay would be discussed in class and also posted on connect/canvas.

C. Live Concert Performance Review

Students are expected to attend and write a descriptive and critical review of one live concert performance for 10% towards the final grade. ***This Review Paper will be submitted on UBC Turnitin.*** It is **Due On or Before Final Exam day.** Details of the scope and nature of the report will be discussed in class.

D. Quiz

There will be 2 quizzes worth 10%. The quizzes would be based on readings and lecture presentations and discussions. There will be multiple choice, short answer, true/false, and fill-in the gap question types.

E. Policy on Make-Up Exams

Make-up exams/quizzes are strongly discouraged. In order to make up an exam/a quiz, a student must present the instructor with an official or published document from a third party verifying medical treatment or a family emergency that occurred on the day of the missed exam/quiz. The document must be presented to the instructor at or before the next regularly scheduled class meeting. Missed exams/quizzes may be made up only if/when the above procedures are followed.

F. Attendance, Participation, Proverb Assignment & Weekly Reflections (incl. reading Summary)

Attendance, participation in discussions, reading and submission of reflections/summaries will be worth 10% of the final grade. *All students are expected to read assigned chapters and submit short (Not More Than One Page Single Space) reflection /summary of assigned readings and the weekly topics/issues discussed in class. The weekly reflections/summaries are due on every Tuesday in class.*

Proverb Assignment: Students are also expected to submit one African Proverb on knowledge, intelligence, education, teaching or learning (details to be discussed in class). ***This Proverb assignment will be submitted on UBC Turnitin. See Syllabus Schedule for the Due date.***

It is advised that all students attend class regularly and be actively engaged in lecture discussions. Active participation in the discussions is important and a good way to raise your grade. Exceptional high quality participation will be taken into added consideration and will be factored into the student's grades.

Attendance will be taken regularly throughout the semester.

G. Absences

Regular attendance is crucial to good course performance. *More than three unexcused absences in class will lower the student's grade one letter grade (i.e., A down to B, B down to C, etc.). Each additional unexcused absence will reduce the grade further by a notch (i.e., A to A-, B to B-, C+ to C, etc). Seven unexcused absences will automatically translate into an F grade for the course.* All excused absences must be approved by the instructor in advance and/or verified with appropriate documentation in emergency cases. Students are encouraged to ask questions, seek clarification, and feel free to discuss any relevant issues with the instructor.

H. Other Policies

All assignments must be submitted on time on their Due Dates. Please submit all your assignments on or before the DUE date. ***Term Essay/Research Project, Concert performance Review Paper, Proverb Assignment, Final Exam Section B (Take Home)*** will all be ***submitted on UBC Turnitin***. An account would be created and the necessary information sent to all students. In fairness to all students who have met the deadline, late papers/assignments will be marked down by half a letter grade for every day they are late, with exceptions made only for severe illness or emergency cases. If extraordinary circumstances prevail that make it impossible for you to meet a deadline, please contact me as soon as possible (prior to turning in late work for review). Deferrals and incompletes will be given only in accordance with UBC policy as set forth in the catalogue. Unless you are already familiar with UBC's Office of Equity and its policies, I would urge you to do so. Furthermore, please revisit and update yourself with UBC's policy on plagiarism. Please note that according to the Faculty of Arts, Faculty Grading Guidelines "results in an average class of reasonable size will normally fall somewhere within the following broad limits:

Grade "A" 5% to 25% of the class

Grades "A" and "B" combined not more than 75% of the class

Grade "F" not over 20% of the class"

For further details, please see http://www.arts.ubc.ca/Grading_Guidelines.81.0.html

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1:

Sept. 4 & 6: **Introduction to Africa 1**

- ❑ Overview of the course
- ❑ Map exercise in class
- ❑ The Idea of “Africa”: Basic conceptual tools, Ethnocentrism and cultural relativism.
- ❑ Misconceptions, missing information, and the legacy of racism and imperialism.

Week 2:

Sept. 11 & 13: **Introduction to Africa 2**

- ❑ Regions, ‘races,’ language families, and ethnic groups of the continent.
- ❑ Overview of Africa’s geography and population.

*Essay Assignment Discussion 1: Select Essay topics

Reading assignment:

- The African Experience*, Chapter 1
- Africa & Africans*, Chapter 1 and 2;
- African History*, Chapter 1

Week 3:

Sept. 18 & 20: **Introduction to Africa 3**

- ❑ African Philosophical Concepts and Cultural Values.
- ❑ Principal Institutions of Indigenous African Political and Sociocultural Systems
- ❑ Gender/Sexuality, Marriage, Age/Status and Kinship
- ❑ **FILM/VIDEO: The King and the City (Episode 4)**

Reading assignment:

- The African Experience*, Chapter 2
- Africa & Africans*, Chapter 5 and 6
- African History*, Chapter 2

Week 4:

Sept. 25 and 27: **History and Its Challenges**

- ❑ Historical problems and problems of history in Africa
- ❑ Commerce with Arab and North African peoples, China, contact with Europe.
- ❑ Inter-cultural influences and relations. Contact with and influences by Arab/Islam, and Europe/Christian cultures.
- ❑ **FILM/VIDEO: Medieval African Civilizations (Episode 1)**

Reading assignment:

- The African Experience*, Chapter 3
- Africa & Africans*, Chapter 12
- African History*, Chapter 3 & 4

Week 5:

Oct. 2 & 4: **Pre-Colonial Africa 2 – Religion and Indigenous Belief Systems**

- ❑ Religion and Belief Systems
- ❑ Indigenous Belief systems in Africa.

Reading List

- Africa & Africans*, Chapter 16
- African History*, Chapter 6

Week 6:

Oct. 9 & 11: **Pre-Colonial Africa 1: Trade and Slavery**

- ❑ **FILM/VIDEO: Caravans of Gold (Episode 3).**
- ❑ Slavery: Native and Arab forms of slavery
- ❑ Exploration and Legitimate Trade (Gold)
- ❑ The Atlantic Slave Trade.
- ❑ **Quiz 1 (Thur., Oct 11)**

Reading assignment:

- Africa & Africans*, Chapter 14 and 17
- African History*, Chapter 5

Week 7:

Oct. 16 & 18: **Pre-Colonial Africa 3: Islam and Christianity**

- ❑ Islam and Christianity in Africa.
- ❑ Syncretism and sectarianism
- ❑ The Colonial strategies and relationships between Muslims, Christians, Traditionalists
- ❑ **FILM/VIDEO: The Bible and the Gun (Episode 5):**

Reading assignment:

- Africa & Africans*, Chapter 19

Week 8:

Oct. 23 & 25: **Colonial Africa 1: African Colonization - The Scramble for Africa**

- ❑ Colonialism and the scramble for Africa.
- ❑ Trade and Politics: Deals between Europeans and African chiefdoms and states.
- ❑ Colonial African Resistance, Accommodation and Essentialization
- ❑ **FILM/VIDEO: The Magnificent African Cake (Episode 6)**

Reading assignment:

- The African Experience*, Chapter 4

Week 9:

Oct. 30 & Nov. 1: **Colonial Africa 2: African Independence 1**

- ❑ African Decolonization
- ❑ Struggles for Independence and Independence movements
- ❑ **MID TERM Exams (Thur., Nov 1)**

Readings List:

- The African Experience*, Chapter 5
- African History*, Chapter 7

Week 10:

Nov. 6 & 8: **Colonial Africa 3: African Independence 2**

- ❑ African Independence and Conflicts
- ❑ Modern African political systems and culture
- ❑ Political instability
- ❑ **FILM/VIDEO: The Rise of Nationalism (Episode 7).**

Readings List:

- The African Experience*, Chapter 6

Week 11:

Nov. 13 & 15: **Modern Africa 1: Education, Politics & Development**

- ❑ Conflict in contemporary Africa
- ❑ Education, social culture, language and communication
- ❑ Urbanization, social transformation.
- ❑ Environmental and health problems of modern Africa.
- ❑ **FILM/VIDEO: The Legacy (Episode 8)**
- ❑ **African Proverb Assignment DUE (Thur. Nov. 15)**

Reading List

-*The African Experience*, Chapter 7

Week 12:

Nov. 20 & 22: **Modern Africa 2: Democracy and Economics**

- ❑ The African Struggle for democracy
- ❑ Economic changes in Post-colonial Africa.
- ❑ The impact of Western/Global trade networks and capitalism/imperialism on economic systems.
- ❑ Development and globalization. Multilateral institutions of 'aid' and 'development'.
- ❑ The concept of neo-colonialism.
- ❑ Politics and Leadership in Africa today: 'Traditional' models & systems vs. 'democratic' models.
- ❑ Grassroots leaders versus 'elected dictators.'
- ❑ **Quiz 2 (Thur., Nov. 22)**

Reading List

-*The African Experience*, Chapter 8

-*Africa & Africans*, Chapter 20

Week 13:

Nov. 27 & 29: **Review and Summary**

- ❑ **Film Documentary: An African Music/Dance/Culture Celebration.**
- ❑ **Thur., Nov. 29: Essay/Term Project DUE (Submit in Class and on UBC Turnitin)**
- ❑ Talks and Perspectives on Africa
- ❑ General Review

FINAL EXAMINATION: TBA by the University.

*** Concert Reviews Due on the Day of Final Exam**

NB:

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the schedule, readings, and any other related materials as become necessary at any point in time. Students would be notified of any such change

DISABILITIES

If you have a disability that requires special testing accommodation or other classroom modifications, you need to notify both the instructor and the Disability Resources and Services no later than the second week of the term. You may be asked to provide documentation of your disability to determine the appropriateness of accommodations.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to comply with the University of British Columbia's Policy on Academic Integrity. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the term will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of the student involved. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including textbooks, photocopied texts, dictionaries, and programmable calculators.