Introduction to Africana Studies – AFRS 1100

Dr. D.C. Smith
Telephone: 704.953.6856 cell
Email: debrasmi@uncc.edu

Spring 2014
Office Hours: By appointment

Email is the best way to contact me

Required texts:
Africana Studies, (3rd edition), Mario J. Azevedo (ed.)
Things Fall Apart, Chinua Achebe

Course objectives and structure: This introductory Africana Studies course is designed to acquaint students with the history, culture, and contemporary status of Africans and peoples of African decent. The course will provide interdisciplinary exposure to the African continent including its history, people, social features, government, culture, and its contributions to our world. As we progress through the course, one primary objective is to denounce the stereotypes and distortions that have been associated with Sub-Saharan Africa.

Students will visit a cultural or historical institution, exhibit or display that connects back to in-class lectures and course themes. Students must reserve space on their personal calendars to accommodate this assignment.

Weekly readings, quizzes and themed assignment modules will comprise class sessions. Students are encouraged to work on each module weekly while meeting deadlines. Module themes are as follows:

- Foundational material about the continent of Africa (continent demographics and languages)
- Slavery in Sub Sahara Africa
- Cultural Africa (art, literature, music)
- Socio-Political material (politics, economics, family structure)
- Health and Environment
- Media/Newspapers
- Gender and Sexuality
- Modern Africa (contemporary issues in Africa)
Course requirements and grading: The final semester grade will be based upon the evaluation of course requirements as weighted below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test #1</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test #2</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test #3 – Final Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module Assignments (5)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things Fall Apart Review</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural field trip</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Post</td>
<td>05%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tests (55%): Three tests will be given in this course. Each test is timed and information regarding the test will be relayed to you prior to its date. You will have up to 30 minutes to complete Test 1 and Test 2. They are not cumulative. Test 3 is the final exam. Test 3 will be cumulative and will be comprised of 50-100 questions. You will have 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete Test 3. The philosophy is that if you are familiar with the material, you should be able to progress through each test in plenty of time. If you have difficulty with timed tests, you may want to reconsider taking this course. I will not entertain queries about timed tests.

Written Module Assignments (15%): Five assignments (each valued at 3%) will test your comprehension of overarching course themes and theories. These assignments must be submitted as a Microsoft Word document. Sometimes the questions for these assignments will come from those listed in your textbook. Format the assignment by question number and answer. Single space each question and double space between questions. Use 12 pt. font (Times New Roman or Arial).

Things Fall Apart Review (15%): You are required to write a 500-word review of the novel Things Fall Apart. Please use “Word Count” to ensure that you have a minimum of 500 words and a maximum of 600 words. There should be NO SUMMARY OF THE NOVEL in your review. The guidelines and example for the review are below. Due date: Tuesday, April 1 by 11:00PM.

Cultural Field Trip (10%): Students must visit one cultural/historical institution or exhibit that has relevance to our course. The guidelines and example for Cultural Field Trip PowerPoint are below. Due Date: Within 7 days of attending. Deadline to complete the assignment is Monday, March 31 by 11:00 PM.

Discussion Post (5%) – Students will use the Forum in Moodle to interrogate and assert your understanding of one course reading, concept, or viewing based upon topics like identity, conflict, culture, political struggle, or
media/contemporary Africa. One topic will be presented per Learning Module. You will only receive credit for one post. Select the date you want to post based upon the topic and post only one time this semester. Your discussion post must be relevant in that it responds to the topic posed. Use examples, and demonstrate your comprehension of the topic based upon course readings and outside readings. While your post will be graded based mostly on quality rather than quantity, it is unlikely that you can achieve a comprehensive discussion post in less than 2-3 exhaustive paragraphs. Your post should be free of spelling and grammatical errors.

**Grading Scale:** Your final grade in the course is based upon a 10-point scale:

- 90-100 A  
- 80-89 B  
- 70-79 C  
- 60-69 D  
- 59 and below F

**49-er account** - You must check your UNC Charlotte email account regularly for announcements and emails from me. The 49-er account is the only email account to which I will send correspondence.

**Code of Academic Integrity:** This course is governed by the University code of academic integrity. Please familiarize yourself with this code by accessing it on the university’s website (http://www.legal.uncc.edu/policies/ps-105.html).

**Late assignments** - Late assignments will not be accepted unless you can provide a letter noting extenuating circumstances from the UNC Charlotte Dean of Students. All assignments are due according to the posted schedule. All assignments must be uploaded NOT sent to my email address. There will be a link for each assignment. Because this is an online course, any assignments left in my office or underneath my door will not be acknowledged. I repeat, no late assignments of any kind will be graded.

**Make-up assignments** - Make-up assignments, tests, etc. will not be offered. Please do not ask. In rare circumstances, a waiver may be given because of illness or university business. In this case, you must obtain a letter of absence from the Dean of Students from UNC Charlotte in order to make-up any assignment.

**Extra Credit** – No extra credit is planned for this course. No student will be given extra opportunities that are not made available to all students, so please do not ask.

**Contacting me** – Email is the best means of contacting me. I will respond to email in most cases within 24 hours. Make sure you identify in the Subject line of each email that you send to me that you are in AFRS 1100. This is very important so that I will know which of my courses you are in.
Please be reminded that:
1. No Extra Credit will be offered to any one student that is not offered to the entire class. I will not respond to requests for individual extra credit assignments to improve your grade, so please do not ask. It is unfair for me to make a deal with you that is not offered to the entire class.

2. No final grade will be changed unless there is a calculation error. No additional work can be assigned to change/improve your grade once the semester has ended and the final grade has been assigned.

3. You must keep track of your own grades. I will not respond to your request for my record of your grades nor will I “average” your grade for you. I also will not calculate any final averages until grades are due at the conclusion of the semester so do not ask.

4. Any discrepancies in grading for tests, quizzes, assignments must be cleared up within 7 days of the assignment or else the grade will stand as is. There is NO exception to this rule.

5. Assignments must be uploaded to Moodle, NOT emailed to me.

6. All assignments must be in Microsoft Word or Microsoft PowerPoint.

Department of Africana Studies: Africana Studies employs interdisciplinary approaches to the study of experiences of African-descended populations worldwide: Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas. It offers a comprehensive liberal arts curriculum that enhances global awareness, engages social policies, and fosters entrepreneurial skills in regional and transnational contexts. This course serves as an elective for the Major and Minor in Africana Studies.
Things Fall Apart Book Review: Due April 1, 2014 by 11:00 PM

You must include all of the following in your review:

1. Title: Things Fall Apart
   Author: Chinua Achebe. (Place of publication): (Name of Press),
   (Number of pages)
   Novel Reviewed by: Your Name

2. Introduction
3. What are TWO main points that the author is attempting to make?
4. What evidence is used to prove and support his points?
5. How does this book compare or contrast with at least one other scholarly
   novel you have read?
6. What makes this novel unique in your opinion?
7. How does this novel relate to any aspect of our course?
8. Conclusion: What is your scholarly assessment of the novel? What quote
   in the novel stood out to you the most and why?

Your review must be free of grammatical and spelling errors which will greatly
impact your grade. Your writing must demonstrate that you are a college level
student.

Review should be composed as a Microsoft Word document single spaced within
paragraphs and double-spaced between paragraphs.

Your review must be original work created by you. No outside sources are
necessary other than for question #5.

Your review will be submitted via “Turnit In” to ensure its originality.

See the sample formatted review below which gives examples of each required
section of the review.

**Submit your review in the assignment drop box by clicking on the Things
Fall Apart Review link**
Sample Book Review

1.
Title: The Secret Rooms
Author: Catherine Bailey. New York: Viking Press, 480 pages
Novel Reviewed by: Jane Doe

2.

Introduction - Catherine Bailey capitalized on American’s obsession with England and the television series “Downton Abbey” for her newest novel published in 2012. The novel’s setting in England resonates with those of us who feel some familiarity with the country that is home to the royal family based upon our exposure to Downton Abbey.

3 & 4

In the novel, Bailey makes two interesting points. The first is that an intimate family drama can be of interest to the general reader, and the second is that one man’s castle is another man’s prison. With regard to the first point, Bailey presents the story of John Manners, a sad, gentle boy who grew up to be a deeply troubled man. John Manners, ninth Duke of Rutland, had the misfortune to come of age not only in brutal times but among real brutes. Manners was a product of dreadful parenting. Wasn’t it insult enough to be the “spare” in a world that prized first sons above all others? Dwindling family wealth aside, a glorious accident of birth changed John’s existence as the mysterious death of his 9-year-old brother elevated him, at age 8, to the status of heir.

3 & 4

The next point Bailey makes is that one man’s castle is another man’s prison. This is evident in the storyline featuring the secret rooms in Belvoir. While Evelyn found the rooms to be a source of light and happiness, John Manners, the lead character considers the Belvoir Castle to be a room of “doom.” For example, he says “these rooms are cheerless archives.”

5

Catherine Bailey has established herself as a descriptive writer, much like Toni Morrison. For example in Beloved, the primary character struggles in her own personal prison much like John Manners does in Bailey’s novel. Morrison captures the captivity with eloquent, descriptive, language.
Despite some similarities with Toni Morrison, Bailey is unique in that she brings the pages of the novel alive based upon her own experiences not only living in England, but also growing up in a dysfunctional family. John Manners is thus a revelation of the events that occurred in Bailey’s life. For example, Manners leaves home for the first time at age 13. Bailey did the same thing as a 13 year old as she went to live with her paternal aunt for three years.

The Secret Rooms is about family. Family is a primary component of our course with regard to culture, customs, and functionality. For example, in Africa the family is a strong unit that sometimes traces it roots maternally and paternally. In the case of the novel, John Manners feels no connection to either of his parents, a concept which would be considered foreign to Africans who demonstrate strong familial ties.

With its steady stream of cliffhangers, “The Secret Rooms” feels overdone, but the book reminds me why this seemingly insignificant story bears telling. John entered World War I, as an effort to help stem the tide of class resentment that was tearing Britain apart. He also joined because he wanted to be someone other, as his sister put it, than “the last male issue of our noble house.”

Guidelines and example for Cultural Field Trip PowerPoint

Due: Within 7 days of attending. Deadline to submit assignment is Monday, March 31, 2014
Must be done in Microsoft PowerPoint – No exceptions

Students must visit one cultural/historical institution or exhibit that has relevance to our course. Prepare a 5-slide PowerPoint presentation on your field trip using the questions below as a guide. Provide sources for where you obtained your information. Most information should come from your tour. Call ahead for exhibit information, hours of operation, and costs (some are free) and parking information. Make sure the cultural field trip site you select has specific relevance to our course content.
Sample Field Trip Sites include:
Historical Institutions – landmarks, historic churches
Museums
Exhibits
Events/Parades/Concerts
African-American newspaper publishing companies
Some places you might consider:
Charlotte, NC
--The Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts and Culture
--The Mint Museum
--Discovery Place
--Charlotte Museum of History
--Latibah Collard Green Museum
--MLK Holiday celebrations in the city of Charlotte or on campus

Greensboro, NC
--Civil Rights Museum
- The African American Atelier (africanamericanatelier.org)

Go to [http://ncculturetour.org/sites.htm](http://ncculturetour.org/sites.htm) for more NC sites. If you are enrolled in this course but you are not in North Carolina, please select similar types of places.

Field Trip Questions:
1. What is the history of the program/exhibit/event?
2. In what ways was your institution/exhibit/event interdisciplinary (give three examples)
3. How did your visit deepen your awareness and understanding of African and/or African-American history and culture?
4. In what ways was your visit informed by class readings, viewings, etc?

Requirements:
1. Read the guidelines for an effective PowerPoint presentation that are posted on Moodle – this is very important
2. Presentation must not be more than 5 slides including a cover slide with your name and the institution/exhibit/event and a final slide with your sources. See the Slide by Slide Guidelines below.
3. Include one picture of you in front of the entrance to your field trip location as well as a snapshot of your ticket with the date of your visit visible OR a program or document from the event you attended
4. Assignment can be submitted anytime during the semester before Monday, March 31, 2004 at 11PM but it must be submitted within 7 days of your visit.

**Submit your PowerPoint in the assignment drop box by clicking on the Cultural Field Trip link**
Cultural Field Trip PowerPoint  
Slide by Slide Guidelines

There should be 5 PowerPoint slides in your presentation. Your presentation should be visually appealing and free of spelling/grammatical errors.

You must have a minimum of two pictures:
A picture of yourself in front of the building where you went (most places will not allow you to take pictures inside).
A picture of your ticket, program or other document of the event with the date visible.

You must submit your PowerPoint within 7 days of the date on your ticket, program, or other document.

Provide similar pictures from the Internet if you were unable to take pictures inside the facility. I should be able to get the feel that you physically visited an institution/exhibit/event.

Any of the PowerPoint slides may contain a picture (not clip art) but overall you must have a minimum of the two required pictures as listed above in your entire presentation. The “History of Sculpture” exhibit used in the example below is not an actual exhibit. It is simply being used to give you an example.

---

**PowerPoint Slide #1 – Cover Page**

**This means:**
Your Name
Name of Institution/Exhibit Event
AFRS 1100

---

**PowerPoint Slide #2 – History of the Sculpture Exhibit at the Harvey B. Gantt Center in Charlotte, North Carolina**

**What is the history of the institution/exhibit/event?**

**This means:** What is the background of the exhibit, event, program you saw? Who was instrumental in the exhibit being brought to where you saw it? Why is the exhibit/institution important? Explain if the museums/centers/exhibits are based upon something that occurred in history.

---

**PowerPoint Slide #3 – The Interdisciplinary Nature of the History of the Sculpture Exhibit**

**In what ways was your institution/exhibit/event interdisciplinary (give three examples).** **This means:** In what ways did what you viewed relate to subjects like history, art, science, technology, language, music, dance, etc. Pick three subjects and explain.
PowerPoint Slide #4 – Personal Reflection
How did your visit deepen your awareness and understanding of African and/or African-American history and culture?
This means: This is personal reflection and critical discussion that must reference any portion of our reading assignments/viewing assignments. Be specific about the class reading/activity/viewing it relates to.

PowerPoint Slide #5 – References
You must list your references rather than just provide a web address
Example:

---

**Test Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Opens on Moodle</th>
<th>Closes on Moodle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test 1</td>
<td>Tuesday, February 18 at 9:00 AM</td>
<td>Thursday, February 20 at 11:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 2</td>
<td>Tuesday, March 25 at 9:00 AM</td>
<td>Thursday, March 27 at 11:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 3</td>
<td>Tuesday, May 6 at 9:00 AM</td>
<td>Thursday, May 8 at 11:00 PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assignment Schedule**

- Optional Discussion due by Tuesday, January 14 at 11:00 PM

  **Module 1** assignment due by Friday, January 17 at 11:00 PM

- Optional Discussion due by Tuesday, January 28 at 11:00 PM

  **Module 2** assignment due by Friday, January 31 at 11:00 PM

- Optional Discussion due by Tuesday, February 11 at 11:00 PM

  **Module 3** assignment due by Friday, February 14 at 11:00 PM

- Optional Discussion due by Tuesday, February 25 at 11:00 PM

  **Module 4** assignment due by Friday, February 28 at 11:00 PM

- Optional Discussion due by Tuesday, March 11 at 11:00 PM (this is the last discussion topic for the semester. If you have not posted already, you must respond to this topic).

  **Module 5** assignment due by Friday, March 14 at 11:00 PM

**Project Schedule**

- Cultural Field Trip PowerPoint due within 7 days of visit/attendance but not later than Monday, March 31 at 11:00 PM

- Things Fall Apart Review Due by Tuesday, April 1 at 11:00 PM.
Just so you Remember

- **Discussion questions** are due on **Tuesdays** according to schedule
- **Tests** open on **Tuesdays** and close on **Thursdays** according to schedule
- **Written Module assignments** are due on **Fridays** according to schedule

No late assignments are accepted without proper documentation from the UNC Charlotte Dean of Students.

When to Expect Your Grade

There are over 125 students enrolled in this course. This means it will take some time to receive your grade for written assignments. I have approximated when you can expect to receive assignment grades:

**Tests**
You will receive your grade for tests immediately after the test closes at 11:00 PM on Thursdays.

**Module assignments and Discussion Post**
You will receive your grade for module assignments and your discussion post within 10 days after the assignment closes.

**Cultural PowerPoint**
You will receive your grade for your Cultural PowerPoint within 10 days if they are turned in on a rotating basis. If more than 25% of them are turned in on the last day, you will receive your grade by May 4.

**Things Fall Apart Review**
You will receive your grade for the Things Fall Apart review by May 4.

**Final Course Grade**
Your final grade for the course will be submitted to Moodle by Monday, May 12. I will try to post your grade early so that you can review it before it becomes a permanent part of your transcript.