

AFH 3200: Africa since 1800

Spring 2015
T/R 4/4-5
111 Keene-Flint Hall

Professor Luise White
office hours:
19 Keene-Flint: Tuesday 11:45-12:45
Thursday 12:30- 1:30
488 Grinter Hall: Friday 2-3pm
Or by appointment
lwhite@ufl.edu

Objectives and Goals: North Americans tend to know less about Africa than they do about any other continent, Africa is presented to us as a mess of jungles, warlords, and disease. The goal of this class is to help you understand the complexities of Africa and its rich, and richly diverse, history over the last 200 years. How do we understand the changes wrought by the history of enslavement, African state formation, Islamic reform movements, colonialism, nationalism and all the struggles that accompanied them? How do we understand these changes in a continent that is sometimes ravaged by disease and famine? There is a tendency to seek a single answer, to say that the slave trade, or colonialism, or radical nationalist movements have caused Africa's misery. In this course we will study Africa differently: we will not seek any single overarching cause of Africa's successes or failures. In fact, I will begin this course by asking you to unlearn much of what you think you know about Africa: we will start by talking about health and wealth on the continent, a continent on which poverty and disease are the exceptions, not the rule. In order to do this, and to have a concrete way to look at social change over the last 200 years, we will focus on slavery and its slow demise, the politics of colonialism and the politics of African nationalism, and disease in Africa since 1800.

Books: The first reading – the essay by Wainaina – is required, as are the following books. They are available from various bookstores around campus and on line. All are in paperback. Buchi Emecheta, *The Slave Girl*; Trevor Getz, *Abina and the Important Men*; Jonny Steinberg, *Sizwe's Test*; Richard Reid, *A History of Modern Africa*, 2nd edition. If you're buying books on line please make sure you get the 2nd edition of *A History of Modern Africa*; otherwise you won't have all the pages I assign.

Attendance: I will take attendance. I allow students to miss five classes without a medical or legal documentation: after that you are at risk to fail, as is consistent with university guidelines.
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Assignments: There will be a midterm (30%) a map quiz (10%), a final paper or project (30%), and a final exam (30%). I will give make-up exams for students who have a medical or legal reason for missing an exam, as per the university's requirements.

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

For the final paper or project students have two options. They may write a 4-6 pp. paper on a topic I assign or they may undertake a creative project, which is to write a 3-5pp. imaginary dialogue between two of the historical actors we have studied. One example of this is the courtroom testimony in *Abina*

and the Important Men. There is no outside research required for either of these assignments; they are to be based entirely on the readings and lectures. We will have plenty of time to talk about this before they are due. I will suggest topics for the dialogue assignment and I will assign topics for the paper: please do not write on a topic of your own choosing without clearing it with me. This assignment is due on Tuesday, April 14. The final exam will cover the material we have studied since the midterm but will have at least one question designed to cover the entire course.

Grades: Consistent with UF policy you will be graded on your understanding of the materials presented in the readings and lectures and your ability to construct a clear and well-grounded argument: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Students with disabilities: Students with disabilities requesting accommodation for exams should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor; she will sign this and you can return it to the Disability Resource Center; it will allow you to take exams there, with extra time. If you need this service, please make sure you get the procedure up and running early in the semester. The Disability Resource Center website is www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/

Honor code: UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” This website details which behaviors constitute violations of the honor code.

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

Counseling: It is suggested that I give you the phone number and website for the Counseling and Wellness Center. The phone is 392-1575 and the website is <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>

Evaluations: Students are requested to give feedback on a course and the quality of instruction therein during the last two or three weeks of the semester by completing on line evaluations. Students will be informed when this website is open to them: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Students can see the summary results of these assessments at: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>

Class schedule:

Week 1: January 6-9

How we think about Africa

Required reading: Binyavindu Wainaina, "How to Write about Africa"

<http://www.granta.com/Archive/92/How-to-Write-about-Africa/>

Week 2: January 13-15: East and West Africa after 1800

Reid, *Modern Africa*, 23-64

Week 3: January 20-22: warfare, jihad and state-building in Africa after 1800

Reid, *Modern Africa*, 65-111

Week 4: January 27-29: Europeans and Africans in the 19th century

Reid, *Modern Africa*, 113-49

Week 5: February 3-5: Africans and Europeans in the 19th Century

Getz, *Abina and the Important Men*

Week 6: February 10-12: African states and colonial states

Reid, *Modern Africa*. 150-82

Map quiz February 12 at start of class

Week 7: January 17-19: World War I and the consolidation of colonialism

Reid, *Modern Africa*, 183-217

Week 8: February 24-26: Africa and the Great Depression

Reid, *Modern Africa*, 218-35

Midterm (one hour only) Thursday February 26

Week 9: March 3-5: **SPRING BREAK**

Week 10: March 10-12: West Africa in the 1920s: the view from below

Emecheta, *The Slave Girl*

Week 11: March 17-19: World War II and the second colonial occupation

Reid, *Modern Africa*, 236-44

No class March 19

Week 12: March 24-26: from colonial to post-colonial

Reid, *Modern Africa*, 245-75

No class March 24

Week 13: March 31-April 2: history and epidemic disease

Steinberg, *Sizwe's Test*

Week 14: April 7-9: toward independence

Reid, *Modern Africa*, 276-95

No class April 9

Week 15: April 14-16: worse than before?

Reid, *Modern Africa*, 298-352

Final paper or project due Tuesday April 14

Week 16: April 21: a future for Africa?

Reid, *Modern Africa*, 352-61

Final exam: Friday, May 1, 4th period in our classroom 111 Keene-Flint Hall