



Images by Ossewa (top) and Giraudon Francis (bottom) (both, <http://www.panoramio.com>)

GEOGRAPHY 2030A Geography of Africa South of the Sahara

Fall 2012

Course Outline



Western
UNIVERSITY · CANADA

Department of Geography
University of Western Ontario

Contact Details

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Course Instructor:

Dr. Jana Fried
office: Room 2221, Social Sciences Centre
email: jfried4@uwo.ca
telephone: 519 661-2111 ext. 82829
(please call during office hours only)
office hours: Tuesday, 14:00 – 16:00 (SSC 2221),
or by appointment

Teaching Assistants:

Mengieng (May) Ung
email: mung2@uwo.ca
office hours: TBA

AND

Vincent Zubedaar Kuuire
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office hours: TBA



Images by Dr Thomas Wagner (<http://www.panoramio.com>)

Lectures:

weekly

Tuesday, 9:30am – 11:30am

Room 3024, Social Sciences Centre

Attendance:

Attendance at lectures is optional, but strongly recommended. Students are responsible for keeping up with course material of missed lectures.

Communication with the Instructor:

I am happy to help you with any problems you might have with the course, by email or by person during my office hours or by appointment. I am also open to suggestions for improving the course and would be happy to hear from you even before the official course evaluation. I am willing to provide feedback in person or by email, but ask you to do one of the following:

- come to talk to me during regular office hours (Tuesdays 14-16 pm, Room 2221 SSC)
- email me to schedule an appointment
- email me with a question. I will try to reply within 24 hours unless the email is send during weekends.

Course Description:

This course provides an introduction to the fascinating and diverse geography of Africa South of the Sahara. The course is based on a variety of themes, rather than on an individual presentation of different countries. Using such a systematic approach allows us to examine a wide range of topics, including some of the continent's common historical experiences, environmental, political, social and economic processes of the region. We will also pay attention to the cultural, political, environmental and economic diversity and specific historical experiences of different regions within Africa South of the Sahara. Major themes explored during the course include: the physical environment of the continent, pre-colonial and colonial history and its long term consequences, the Cold War in Africa and authoritarian rule, structural adjustment, agriculture and food security, the mining industry, gender relations, conflict and genocide, HIV/AIDS and other health issues.

Course Prerequisites:

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Course Objectives:

At the end of the course, students should be able to

- understand both the diversity and some commonalities (social, environmental, political, historical, economic) across different countries, cultures and regions of Africa South of the Sahara;
- understand some crucial roots of common social, environmental and economic issues faced by people in Africa South of the Sahara;
- understand some important linkages between Africa and the rest of the (globalized) world;
- critically assess and evaluate how Africa South of the Sahara is depicted in popular culture, the media and Canadian society more broadly in relation to the course material;
- have a stronger sense of active and responsible global citizenship in relation to the problems faced in Africa South of the Sahara.

Course Content

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The course takes a systematic approach, by which different aspects of Africa South of the Sahara's geography will be explored each week. Case studies are used to illustrate key issues in greater detail.

Lecture schedule

- Tue, September 11: Course overview & introduction
- Tue, September 18: Physical Geography of Africa South of the Sahara
- Tue, September 25: Historical background with focus on slave trade and colonialism
- Tue, October 2: Map Quiz and guest lecture/film
- Tue, October 9: Post-colonial state building, authoritarian rule & the Cold War in Africa
- Tue, October 16: Structural adjustment, debt and international trade
- Tue, October 23: Agricultural development, water resources and food security
- Tue, October 30: Mid-term exam [in class]
- Tue, November 6: Urbanization and industrial development
- Tue, November 13: Environmental issues [Final due date for assignment: Monday(!), November 19]
- Tue, November 20: Key health issues with a focus on Malaria, TB and HIV/AIDS
- Tue, November 27: Alternative developments and focus of hope
- Tue, December 4: Catching Up / Review

NOTE: This scheduling of lecture topics is provisional, and may change depending on guest speaker availability, current events (news items related to Africa) and class dynamics during term.

Evaluation of the course will be based on the following components:

Map Quiz: 10 %

The map quiz assesses students' factual knowledge of physical features and political boundaries (e.g. countries, capital cities) of Africa South of the Sahara. The quiz will take place during class hours on Tues, October 2, 2012.

Mid-term Exam: 20%

The mid-term exam is provisionally scheduled on Tuesday, October 30, 2012. The mid-term exam will be an in-class exam and will include a combination of multiple choice, short-answer and short essay-type questions.

Assignment: 20 %

Short Essay on an issue of the region. Essay topics will be suggested, but students have some freedom to chose a topic according to their own interest. However, topics need be approved by TA beforehand. Earlier submission welcome, final submission deadline: Mon, November 19, 2012.

Final exam: 50 %

The final exam will be held during the official University examination period (December 8-19 2012). The final exam will be a 3-hour exam, using a combination of multiple choice, short-answer and short essay-type questions. Questions will cover the course lectures (incl. guest lectures), films and readings.

NOTE: No electronic devices will be allowed during tests and examinations.

NOTE: The mark awarded by an instructor in a course at UWO is only final when students receive it from the Registrar.

Late Policy:

All assignments must be handed in before 5pm on the due date. Late submissions will be penalized at a rate of 10% per day for the first seven days. A mark of 0%-mark will be recorded if work is submitted more than a week late.

Extensions:

If you have genuine extenuating circumstances and will not be able submit an assignment on time, you may submit a written request for extension, clearly outlining why you should be granted an extension. This request must be submitted to the course instructor at least seven days before the assignment is due.

Accommodation:

If you have genuine extenuating circumstances and failed to submit an assignment on time, you must submit a signed doctor's letter or other legitimate documentation explaining why you failed to meet the deadline. This documentation should be submitted directly to the Dean's Office, not the course instructor. It is the Dean's Office that will determine if accommodation is warranted.

*NOTE: Also see UWO's Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness (<https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm> or http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf
The downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC) can be found here: <https://studentservices.uwo.ca> (under the Medical Documentation heading).*

Textbook and Readings

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There is no course textbook.

Handouts of selected lecture material will be provided electronically (via OWL) before each lecture, but students may find it helpful to take notes during the lectures to complement the handouts. The OWL site will provide a range of resources to assist with the course. Use <https://owl.uwo.ca> and then log in using your UWO username and password. Your log in will require that you be officially enrolled in the course. You should also synchronize your passwords to ensure you have access to UWO and SSC computer resources.

Additional reading, to be assigned during term, will be provided electronically (via OWL) and/or consist of selected scientific papers from academic journals to which the University subscribes (in print or online), such as *African Geographical Review*, *Africa today*, *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, *Development Southern Africa*, *Gender & Development*, *Journal of Development Studies*, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, *Social Science & Medicine*, *Third World Quarterly*.

Furthermore, interested students may wish to have a look at (optional):

- S. Aryeetey-Attoh, 2003. *Geography of Sub-Saharan Africa*. Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River.
- T. Binns, A. Dixon & E. Nel, 2012. *Africa. Diversity and Development*. Routledge: London.
- R. Stock, 2004. *Africa South of the Sahara*. Guilford Press: New York.

These three books were used as sources of information for creating this course, as were ongoing research projects, academic journals, other academic books, textbooks, and various internet sources. All sources are credited in the lecture handouts.

Cautionary Words

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Academic Conduct: Students should be familiar with the University Academic Policies and Regulations, and with the Academic Rights and Responsibilities in the Academic Calendar on the Registrar's website.

<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2012/pg37.html>

Plagiarism refers to the inclusion or submission of someone else's work (published or unpublished) without giving credit to the original author. Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

Scholastic Offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>.

NOTE: All required papers, exams and computer-marked multiple-choice tests may be subject to submission for textual similarity review (or a review of unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating) to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Accessibility:

The University of Western Ontario is committed to achieving barrier free accessibility for persons studying, visiting and working at Western. Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

Geography Undergraduate Assistant:

Angelica Lucaci
SSC 2322A

Mental Health:

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources at Western to assist you. Please visit <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for more information on these resources and on mental health.

Registrarial Services:

<http://www3.registrar.uwo.ca/index.cfm>

Student Development Services:

<http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Social Sciences Academic Counselling:

<http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/>
SSC 2105