**INST 2240 /AAST 2240: Introduction to African Studies**

Instructor: Marcus D. Watson Class Meets: MWF, 10:00 – 10:50 am

Contact Info: mwatso10 / 766-4169 Location: Engineering, room 1055

Office: 235 Ross Hall Semester: Spring 2015

Office Hrs: Tues. 9:30-11:30 am

 Thurs. 12:00-1:00 pm

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course focuses on Africa in order to fulfill the WB and COM 2 university requirements; as such, it asks students to read, write, orate, and digitize about Africa in academic ways. This goal is fitting, since Africa is represented in mainstream society, and often enough in academic settings, in ways that distort its reality. You know the stereotypes: underdeveloped, poverty, disease, warfare, jungles, corrupt, illiterate, unchanging, and so on. By closely reading texts from academic disciplines as diverse yet complementary as anthropology and economics, students will learn to re-think how to represent Africa, ultimately helping to bring reality to a world that increasingly prefers the quick, the fun, and the fake. In all cases, the instructor will provide detailed guidance so that students may better perform on assignments.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

* Understand the thinking behind academic writing
* Improve performance of academic writing
* Practice and improve academically grounded oral and digital skills
* Appreciate Africa from multi-disciplinary perspectives

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

* Bohannan/Curtin (B/C). 1995*. Africa and Africans*. Waveland Press. bookstore
* Hochschild. 1999. *King Leopold’s Ghost*. Mariner Books. bookstore
* Stoller. 2002. *Money has no Smell*. University of Chicago Press bookstore
* All other readings wyocourses/web

**ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

Instead of two or three large exams or papers, students will be graded on a series of smaller assignments, designed to test and improve specific communication skills in the social sciences. With the exception of the final paper, students will have the option of re-doing assignments. In such cases, final grades for individual assignments will be the average between the first and second scores. For final papers, students will have a chance to submit drafts, which the instructor will comment on in a broad way but will not grade. Specifically, assignments include two “identify” activities (40), two “explain” paragraphs (60), a descriptive (40), analytic (60), and explanation (100) essay, an e-poster (50), a final paper (100), and two presentations, the first (25) for e-posters and the second (25) for final papers. TOTAL = 500 points.

There are two “identify” activities, the first (20) asking students to identify parts of an introductory paragraph and the second (20) to identify parts of a full article or chapter. There are also two “explanation” activities, the first (30) asking students to explain the logic behind every element of a given introductory paragraph and the second (30) to explain the logic behind every part of a full article or chapter. Since academic composition in the social sciences involves descriptive, analytic, and explanatory forms of communication, students will raise their awareness and execution of these skills by writing a descriptive essay (40), an analytic essay (60), and an explanatory essay (100). For the activities and essays, the instructor will provide specific guidelines and texts at an appropriate time.

Students will create an e-poster (50), modeled on posters presented by scholars at academic conferences. Traditional posters are one or two paneled poster boards that communicate a scholar’s research, using mostly visuals, some text, and all of the logic behind communication reviewed in the activities and essays discussed above. For our purposes, students will use just one PowerPoint slide to make their e-posters, which means that students must be concise with content when making them. Final papers (100) will ask students to bring many of the communication skills they’ve learned into one synthetically written document. Students will also orally present the e-posters (25) and final papers (25) at scheduled times. In all cases, the instructor will provide detailed guidelines for pursuing the activities.

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| --- | --- |
| Identify “parts” of introduction 20Identify “parts” of article/chapter 20Paragraph explaining an introduction 30Paragraph explaining an article/chapter 30Descriptive essay 40Analytic essay 60Explanation essay 100 Final paper 100E-poster 50Poster presentations 25Paper presentations 25***TOTAL***  ***500*** | A = 450 – 500 Extraordinary workB = 400 – 449 Above average workC = 350 – 399 Average workD = 300 – 349 Below average workF = below 300 Lack of thought and skill |

**COURSE POLICIES AND NOTES**

Attendance**:** Students are expected to attend class regularly, though three unexcused absences will be permitted without penalty. Written medical or academic excuses are required after three absences. Each unexcused absence over three will result in a half-letter grade deduction from the final grade. NOTE: An excused absence is the only way to make-up for graded assignments that were missed due to being absent. For fairness, the instructor does not make exceptions here, no matter how good a student’s excuse.

Disabilities**:** If you have a physical, learning, sensory or psychological disability and require accommodations, let me know as soon as possible. You will need to register with and provide documentation of your disability to University Disability Support Services (UDSS): 330 Knight Hall.

Academic Dishonesty**:** UW Regulation 6-802. The University of Wyoming is built upon a strong foundation of integrity, respect and trust. All members of the university community have a responsibility to be honest and the right to expect honesty from others. Any form of academic dishonesty is unacceptable, will not be tolerated, and may result in lowered course grade or failure. Teachers and students should report suspected violations of standards of academic honesty to the instructor, department head, or dean. Other University regulations can be found at: <http://uwadmnweb.uwyo.edu/legal/universityregulations.htm>.

Notes**:** (1)Students are expected to take twice as much time outside of class as in class studying for the course. (2) All technology devices must be turned off while class is in session. (3) Students are expected to come and leave class on-time. (4) Email exchanges between students and instructor are a formal form of communication, meaning students should write in full sentences and use proper punctuation, spelling, salutation, and leave-taking.

**IMPORTANT DATES**

March 16 spring break (5 days) classes canceled

May 8 last day of classes

March 13 mid-semester

May 11 finals week (5 days)

**SCHEDULE FOR READINGS, FILMS, PAPERS, ETC.[[1]](#footnote-1)**

PART 1: SYLLABUS AND COM 2

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| Jan. 26 | Syllabus |  |
| Jan. 28 | WB/COM 2 | Parts of Academic Writing: Intros. and Bodies |
| Jan. 30 | WB/COM 2 | Modes of Academic Writing |
| Feb. 2 | WB/COM 2 | Line by Line Editing Issues |

PART 2: OVERVIEW OF AFRICA

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Feb. 4  | Mis-Imagining Africa | B/C, Ch. 1 |
| Feb. 6  | Geography/Mapping | B/C, Ch. 2-3 |
| Feb. 9  |  | Lecture: Communication, Introductions, and the Social Sciences  |
| Feb. 11  | Family, Land, Labor | B/C, Ch. 5-6 |
| Feb. 13  | History | B/C, Ch. 10/12*Identify #1* |
| Feb. 16  |  | Lecture: Communication, Articles, and the Social Sciences |
| Feb. 18  | European Enslavement | B/C, Ch. 14 |
| Feb. 20  | Imperial Era | B/C, Ch. 15 *Identify #2*  |
| Feb. 23  | Islam and Africa | B/C, Ch. 16 |

PART 3: COLONIALISM UP-CLOSE

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Feb. 25 | Colonial Era | B/C, Ch. 18  |
| Feb. 27  | Toward Independence | B/C, Ch. 19 *Paragraph #1* |
| Mar. 2  | Colonial Case: Congo | Hochschild, 1-74  |
| Mar. 4 |  | *film:* This Magnificent African Cake[[2]](#footnote-2) |
| Mar. 6  |  | Hochschild, 150-224*Paragraph #2* |
| Mar. 9  |  | Hochschild, 225-end |
| Mar. 11 |  | Review Hochschild Reading  |

PART 4: OVERVIEW AND CASE OF INDEPENDENCE

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| Mar. 13  | Decolonization | Keller, decolonization *Descriptive Essay*  |
| Mar. 23  | Decolonization Case | *film:* Black Power  |

PART 5: POST-INDEPENDENCE

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Mar. 25  |  | Review Black Power Film |
| Mar. 27  | Politics Since Independence | Winchester *Analysis essay* |
| Mar. 30  | Economy Since Independence | Berry  |
| Apr. 1 |  | Lecture: Communication, Posters, and the Social Sciences |
| Apr. 3 | Political-Economic Case | *film:* Blood Colton[[3]](#footnote-3) *Explanation Essay* |
| Apr. 6 |  | Review Blood Colton Film |
| Apr. 8 | Development Puzzle | Stryker and Ndegwa |
| Apr. 10 |  | Lecture: Communicating Finished Products in Social Science*E-Posters* |
| Apr. 13 |  | Watson (Half-Connecting Development) |

PART 6: AFRICAN PHYSICAL AND VIRTUAL “MIGRATION”

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Apr. 15 | Migration Rationale | Ferguson |
| Apr. 17 | Migration Case: USA | Stoller, Prologue and Ch. 1 |
| Apr. 20 |  | Stoller, Ch. 2 |
| Apr. 22 |  | Stoller, Ch. 3  |
| Apr. 24  |  | *E-Poster Presentations*  |
| Apr. 27  |  | *E-Poster Presentations* |
| Apr. 29  |  | *E-Poster Presentations*  |
| May 1  |  | Stoller, Ch. 4 |
| May 4 |  | Stoller, Ch. 7 |
| May 6  | Virtual Migration | Watson and Atuick |
| May 8 |  | tba |
|  | **FINAL’S WEEK** | *Paper Presentations* |

1. ***Schedule is subject to change at discretion of instructor.*** [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=irDWdqOvjVA> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cM23HXtPPRk> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)