

AFST/CMLT 3030: African Languages and Cultures

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Office Hours: 02⁰⁰pm – 03⁰⁰pm TR

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Course Outline

This course is designed to provide students with some background information on the diversity of languages and cultures on the African continent. The class will concern itself with identifying elements of variability of language and culture on the African continent. The class will attempt to define culture within the African situation and examine selected African cultures to illustrate some of these definitions. The primacy of language in the study of Africa will be the dominating factor especially since language and its use is core to many cultural experiences and identities in the continent.

In considering language and culture in Africa, we will focus principally on language and its socio-cultural roles in many societies. The class is a complimentary course to African language classes offered at UGA (Manding, Swahili, Yoruba and Amharic) and as such, illustrations of the discussions in the class would be drawn primarily from these societies. It is hoped that the class will provide enough background information on focused areas for the students to better understand and critically appreciate some of the issues related to language and culture in Africa.

Course Requirements

The course will involve more discussion than most classes and students are required to come well prepared to class. The best preparation is the completion of assigned readings. Supplementary readings will also be recommended. **Each student will be expected to present the summary of assigned class readings (in part or completely) and may be asked to provide the lead for discussions on readings. A signup for this exercise will be required.** Additionally, students will write responses after the discussion of themes/topics. These responses will serve as the major feedback on student views on assigned readings and discussions.

Active participation via regular attendance and class contribution is expected of every student. There will be group work activities, therefore students are expected to join a group of not more than three and make a presentation that will further illustrate or exemplify any of the themes covered in class.

Evaluation

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| • Attendance | 30% |
| • 10 Response papers (1-2pgs) | 20% |
| • Reading summary | 5% |
| • Group Presentation | 10% |
| • Culture assignment | 10% |
| • Final Paper (8-12pgs) | 25% |
| Total | 100% |

Academic Standards: All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. For more information on academic honesty see: <http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/acadhon.html>

Proposed Course Schedule

Week/Dates	Topic/Reading Activity	Assignment due date
Week 1 January		
Tues 8	Introduction: Course, Materials and Class	
Thurs 10	Video 1: What do we know about Africa?	
Week 2		
Tues 15	Language and Culture: A Theoretical perspective Readings: Harry Hoijer, “Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis” Diane Kramsch, “The Relationship between Language and Culture”	
Thurs 17	Language and Culture: A Historical Perspective Readings: Vansina, J. “The Roots of African Cultures”	Response #1/ 01-22
Week 3		
Tues 22	Classification of African Languages Readings: Joseph Greenberg, “The Classification of African Languages”	
Thurs 24	Readings: Heine and Nurse, “ Introduction” in African Languages: An Introduction	Response #2/ 01-29
Week 4		
Tues 29	Sampling African Peoples and Sources of Cultural information in Oral Societies Readings: “Hausa Medicine- Illness and Wellbeing in a West African Culture” “Hausa Folk Tales”	
Thurs 31	Readings: “Luo Religion and Folklore”	Response #3/ 02-05
Week 5 February		
Tues 5	Language and Society Readings: Ekkehard Wolff, “Language and Society”	
Thurs 7	Video 2: Africa	
Week 6		
Tues 12	Social Institutions: The African Family Readings: Ambe Njoh, “The Traditional African	

	Family”	
Thurs14	Readings: Kayongo Male, “The Sociology of the African Family”	Response #4/ 02-19
Week 7		
Tues 19	Ethnography of Communication: An African perspective Readings: Murielle Saville-Troike, “The Ethnography of Communication- Basic Terms, Concepts and Issues” Werbner, R., “Nostalgia, Quarrel Stories and Cautionary moments: Grandparents recall	
Thurs 21	Readings: Andersen, P. “Explaining Intercultural differences in Nonverbal communication” Peltzer, Karl, “Personality and Person Perception in Africa”	
Week 8		
Tues 26	Cultural Aspects: African Eating Habits, Cuisine Readings: Case Studies of Kenya and Rwanda Case Studies of Mozambique and Somalia	
Thurs 28	Readings: Ulrich Olsterdorf, “Comparison of Nutrient Intakes in East Africa”	Response #5/ 03-04
Week 9 March		
Tues 4	Cultural Aspects: The Culture of Naming and Naming Systems Readings: Akinloye Ojo, “What is in a Name? The Contents and Gender representation of Some Yoruba Personal Names, Praise Names and Aliases”	
Thurs 6	Readings: Sadiku and Sodiq, “Names and Naming”	Response #6/03-18
Week 10 March 10-14		
SPRING BREAK		
Week 11		
Tues 18	Cultural Aspects: Traditional Dress, Social Lifestyles Readings: Case Studies of Kenya and Rwanda	

Thurs 20	Readings Case Studies of Mozambique and Somalia	Response #7/ 03-25
Week 12		
Tues 25	Video 3: Africa	
Thurs 27	Video 4: Africa	Response #8/04-01
Week 13 April		
Tues 1	Cultural Aspects: Veiled Culture of Language Use Readings: Okot P'Bitek, "Song of Lawino"	
Thurs 3	Readings: Okot P'Bitek, "Song of Ocol"	Response #9/ 04-08
Week 14		
Tues 8	Cultural Aspects: Challenges and the way forward for African Languages and Culture Guest Speakers and Classroom Debate	
Thurs 10	Presentation	
Week 15		
Tues 15	Preparation for Cultural awareness	
Thurs 17	CULTURAL AWARENESS EVENT	Response #10/04-22
Week 16		
Tues 22	Presentation	
Thurs 24	Presentation	
Week 17 May		
Tues 29	Presentation	
Submission Date for final paper		
TUESDAY, MAY 6th 2008 Not later than 12 00Noon		