



**Department of Sociology & Social
Work**

SOC/HIS375

African Cultures and Histories

3.0 Units

Fall 2015

Meeting day: Tuesday

Instructor title and name: Dr. Jamie Gates

Meeting time: 3-5:30PM

Phone: 619.849.2659

Meeting location: Rohr Hall #112

E-mail: JamieGates@pointloma.edu

Final Exam: Thursday, 3-5pm

Office location and hours: Rohr Hall #107, by appointment

PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Department Mission

As followers of Christ, our mission is to nurture servant scholars who critically evaluate social and cultural patterns, and constructively engage as agents of hope.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This upper-division seminar-style course will expose students to social and cultural histories of Sub-Saharan Africa with a special emphasis on the contact between Africans and Europeans during and

since the nineteenth Century. The course will draw on interdisciplinary African Studies sources with an emphasis on work done by cultural anthropologists as well as cultural and social historians.

Major themes will include:

- Structural and cultural change in sub-Saharan Africa due to the coming of the Europeans, including changes in social institutions, identity and economic activity.
- The late nineteenth century European “scramble for Africa”
- The nineteenth and twentieth century imperial and colonial incursions into Africa from Europe with a focus on British colonial practices
- African responses to European colonialism
- The post-colonial political economy of violence and change during so-called “independence movements,” i.e. the development of nation-states in sub-Saharan Africa
- Development and International Aid (a study of actions of nation-centered aid agencies like US Agency for International Development, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and church based Non-Governmental Organizations as well as local reactions to actions by these organizations)
- The expansion of Christianity and Islam into sub-Saharan Africa

COURSE GOALS:

Upon completion of this course you should have increased your ability to:

1. understand and articulate histories of contact between Africans and Europeans on the continent of Africa
2. understand and articulate the complexities of European colonialism and African responses
3. understand and articulate the complexities of post-“Independence” African nation-building
4. understand and articulate attempts made to “develop” Africa and African responses to these attempts

COURSE CREDIT HOUR INFORMATION

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 3.0 unit class delivered over 15 weeks. Specific details about how the class meets the credit hour requirement can be provided upon request.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Attendance/Participation

It is important to show up every week prepared for class. Your attendance/participation grade will be based on the quality and quantity of your participation over the entire course. Consistency is expected. As a seminar class that meets once a week, if you miss a class, you miss a whole week out of the course. You cannot afford to do that more than once. By university policy, missing two of these classes that only meet once a week automatically triggers an email to the administration and you will be in danger of being dropped from the course. You can find PLNU's official [Attendance Policy here](#).

Reading Summaries – 20%

Students will write 1-2 page bulleted summaries of the assigned readings for 10 days of the readings. Summaries written in addition to these will count as extra credit. Reading summaries are due before the class in which they will be discussed.

Facilitating Group Discussion – 10%

Each student will be assigned a day during the semester where he/she will be responsible for co-facilitating the discussion. On the assigned day, each co-facilitator will prepare a 4-5 page critical essay on the required reading's main themes. In addition, the co-facilitator will bring a 1-2 page outline of the reading for distribution to the class as well as a 1-2 page list of questions organized to lead the class through a discussion of the assigned material. Points will also be given for supplemental material that the co-facilitator brings/posts to enhance learning (articles, websites, multi-media).

See the [Group Facilitation Rubric](#) to see what will be graded. In addition to the faculty evaluation, students will be evaluated by their peers and themselves.

Critical Film Reviews –10%

Over the course of the semester students must watch two popular contemporary films where African cultures/histories are a central theme. Each student will take notes during the film and prepare a critique that is no fewer than 3 pages and no more than 4 pages in length. This critique should focus on the film's strengths and weaknesses regarding the portrayal of African peoples and history.

Exams –30% (15% each)

Two exams will hold students accountable for reading and studying assigned materials. Mid-term and Final Exams dates are listed on the course calendar. The final exam will be a cumulative take-home essay exam.

Research Paper – 30%

The research paper is assigned to give students an opportunity to focus in on a special area of African studies that is both of personal interest as well as of special interest to African Studies scholars. Students will work with the professor to carefully define research topics and the scope of the research. Topics should be local and specific rather than broad and general. Extra consideration will be given to research that ties the continent to our local context.

Papers should include no fewer than 15 academically credible sources and will be no shorter than 12 pages of content. Research papers will be due on the last day of classes. Further guidance will be given in class.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND RECOMMENDED STUDY RESOURCES

Cooper, Barbara M.

2006 Evangelical Christians in the Muslim Sahel. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Hochschild, Adam

1999 King Leopold's Ghost: A story of greed, terror, and heroism in colonial Africa. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Keim, Curtis A.

2008 Mistaking Africa: Curiosities and Inventions of the American Mind. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2nd Edition.

Kupe, Tawana; Verryn, Bishop Paul; Worby, Eric (Eds.)

2008 Go home or die here: violence, xenophobia and the reinvention of difference in South Africa. Wits University Press.

Additional readings from various sources will be required throughout the semester as assigned. All reading except for the texts above will be available at the course eclass site.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Course Requirements:

General requirements include:

1. Comprehensive reading and viewing of texts and assigned materials.
2. Active participation in online discussions and activities.
3. Demonstration of the ability to apply foundational knowledge and principles to contemporary social circumstances.
4. Successful and timely completion of assignments, course projects and exams.

Course Grading System:

		Grade Determination	
		(Percentage):	
Research Project		300	
Reading Summaries		200	
10 required (20 points each)	A	93	100
Any in addition to the required 10 are extra credit	A-	90	92.9
	B+	87	89.9
Exams		300	
Midterm	B	83	86.9
Final	B-	80	82.9
	C+	77	79.9
Critical Film Reviews		100	
Contemporary Film Review 1	C	73	76.9
Contemporary Film Review 2	C-	70	72.9
	D+	67	69.9
Group Discussion Facilitation		100	
	D	63	66.9
	F	0	62.9
Total		1000	

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings, the faculty member has the option of filing a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice. If the date of de-enrollment is past the last date to withdraw from a class, the student will be assigned a grade of W or WF

consistent with university policy in the grading section of the catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) in the (undergrad/graduate as appropriate) academic catalog.

INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Eclass.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. As explained in the university catalog, academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. Violations of university academic honesty include cheating, plagiarism, falsification, aiding the academic dishonesty of others, or malicious misuse of university resources. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for a) that particular assignment or examination, and/or b) the course following the procedure in the university catalog. Students may appeal also using the procedure in the university catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for further information.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

While all students are expected to meet the minimum academic standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with disabilities may request academic accommodations. At Point Loma Nazarene University, students must request that academic accommodations by filing documentation with the [Disability Resource Center](#) (DRC), located in the Bond Academic Center. Once the student files documentation, the Disability Resource Center will contact the student's instructors and provide written recommendations for reasonable and appropriate accommodations to meet the individual needs of the student. See [Academic Policies](#) in the (undergrad/graduate as appropriate) academic catalog.

FERPA POLICY

In compliance with federal law, neither PLNU student ID nor social security number should be used in publicly posted grades or returned sets of assignments without student written permission. This class will meet the federal requirements by (Note: each faculty member should choose one strategy to use: distributing all grades and papers individually; requesting and filing written student permission; or assigning each student a unique class ID number not identifiable on the alphabetic roster.). Also in compliance with FERPA, you will be the only person given information about your progress in this class unless you have designated others to receive it in the "Information Release"

section of the student portal. See [Policy Statements](#) in the (undergrad/ graduate as appropriate) academic catalog.

FINAL EXAMINATION POLICY

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination **on its scheduled day**. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

COPYRIGHT POLICY

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

Course Calendar

(to be amended by professor as needed)

September

8 - Course Introduction and syllabus review; limiting the scope of our study; introduction to African Studies, incl. resources available; introduction to themes in this course

Mapping Africa

15 - Mistaking Africa

Keim Chapters 1-4

Keim Chapters 5-8

22 - Mistaking Africa; Pre-Colonial Africa

Keim Chapters 9-12

Selections from Thomas Pakkenheim's Scramble for Africa

29 - Pre-colonial Africa (cont'd)

The Scramble for Africa: Introduction to European Colonialism and African Responses

readings TBA

October

06 - Colonialism

King Leopold's Ghost, Intro + Chs.1-4

King Leopold's Ghost, Intro + Chs.5-9

First Film Critique Due

13 - Colonialism (cont'd)

King Leopold's Ghost, Intro + Chs.10-14

King Leopold's Ghost, Intro + Chs.15-19

20 - African Independence and Local Cultures

Reading TBA

Exam 1 due

27 - African Independence and Local Cultures (cont'd)

Reading TBA

November

3 - South Africa, Xenophobia and the Rainbow Nation

Selections from Go Home or Die Here

10- South Africa (cont'd)

Selections from Go Home or Die Here

Second Film Critique Due

17 - Christianity and Islam in West Africa

Evangelical Christians in the Muslim Sahel, Intro + Ch.1-4

24 - Christianity and Islam in West Africa (Cont'd)

Evangelical Christians in the Muslim Sahel, Ch. 5-8

25-29: **THANKSGIVING BREAK**

December

1 - Christianity and Islam in West Africa (cont'd)

Evangelical Christians in the Muslim Sahel, Ch. 9-11, Epilogue

8 - Contemporary Issues in African Theology and Social Life

Readings TBA

Final Exam is due Thursday, December 17, 5pm.