COURSE OBJECTIVES

Africa occupies 20 percent of the earth’s land surface. It is about 4 times the size of the coterminous United States and ranks just below Asia as the world’s largest continent. Africa is the place where humankind originated. It was a major center of culture and civilization long before the Europeans arrived. Today, immense diversity still characterizes the continent’s population, culture and ways of life. Africa offers many fascinating opportunities for us to study the complex interplay between environment and society.

This course begins by examining the relations between the human and physical aspects of African geography. It analyzes the many forces and factors that have shaped contemporary African societies within this very diverse context. The courses’ main focus is to uncover the social, economic, political and physical forces impeding and facilitating the development of Africa.

The course will help students to delve below the stereotypes of One Africa and enhance their understanding of this multi-faceted continent. Topics include the spatial dimensions of colonialism, and neo-colonialism, problems of urban growth and housing, environmental problems, the quest for democratic governments, the Aids epidemic, problems associated with foreign aid, and Africa’s role within the global environment.

READINGS

The following readings are REQUIRED, and are available for purchase at the Hofstra University Bookstore:


I have also assigned various REQUIRED extra readings on important topics which are not adequately covered in the main text. These readings are available in two places:

a) Longer required readings can be found on ERES. You can access them on the web via the library or my website. The access password will be provided on the first day of class.

b) Shorter topical readings, mostly from Newspapers can be found in BLACKBOARD

Important course information such as the syllabus, study guides, notes etc will also be posted on Blackboard. It is important that you access Blackboard regularly to read
course announcements and extra readings. New readings will be added to Blackboard as the course progresses. **Failure to access these readings will not be considered as a valid excuse for poor performance in exams or assignments.**

**IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU BE ABLE TO ACCESS ERES, BLACKBOARD AND YOUR HOFSTRA EMAIL.** Training and help are provided by the Computer Center.

**The Additional Prescribed Readings on ERES Are:**
“South Africa’s Uncertain Future.” December 13-19, 1997

**ADDITIONAL READING MAY BE ADDED AS THE COURSE PROGRSSES**

You will also need to have access to an **ATLAS** for the map test and for use in various sections of the course. **For those who do not have an atlas,** I recommend: Hammond The New Comparative World Atlas

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

This class is a Social Science Division cross-cultural (core) distribution class. This means that as per the guidelines for core classes at Hofstra, the class requires a large amount of reading and writing. Students entering this class should thus be aware
that they are expected to do all the set readings and that the exams will include a written component. Poor written work will be penalized; any students who feel that their writing is not up to an acceptable standard should seek immediate help from the writing laboratory.

Students are expected to attend classes and to be on time. THERE IS UP TO A 5% BONUS GRADE for students who participate in class by contributing to discussions and raising questions (attending class is not on its own sufficient to receive more than a token bonus point). The importance of this bonus grade should not be underestimated, as 5 bonus points is sufficient to raise a student's grade by one whole category (such as a B- to a B). On the other hand, more than three absences, chronic lateness, sleeping, making no attempt to answer direct questions, showing disrespect to the instructor or fellow students and/or creating any disturbances in class will result in the forfeiture of the entire bonus grade and could, under certain conditions, warrant further penalties or disciplinary procedures. STUDENTS ENTERING THE CLASS AFTER I HAVE TAKEN ATTENDANCE WILL NOT BE MARKED PRESENT FOR THAT CLASS.

Test material will be based on both the assigned readings and material covered during lectures (which may or may not be covered in the readings). In order to gain a firm grasp of the issues discussed in class, it is imperative that students complete the required readings before class. On occasion my lectures may be supplemented with videos, slides or guest lectures. Questions on any material covered in these presentations can be asked in the exams.

Although this is an introductory course, it is still important for students who do not have any prior background in geography to realize that it may require more work to achieve a high grade in this course than in courses where the student has a prior familiarity with the subject matter (such as the major department).

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR CELL PHONES ARE TURNED OFF BEFORE ENTERING CLASS. Any disruptions in this regard will result in forfeiture of the bonus grade and possible ejection from class.

ALSO, NO EATING DURING CLASS. If you are hungry, feel free to enjoy your meal outside of the classroom.

EXAMS, TESTS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

There will be three exams and a map test as part of this course.

a) THE MAP TEST:
The map test will take place on the fourth meeting of the class and counts 10% towards your final grade. A blank practice map together with a study guide is available on Blackboard. Any students who register late and miss the test or have not attended classes prior to the test are not eligible for a make-up exam and will thus have forfeited this grade.
b) THE EXAMS:

The combined weight of the three exams will make up 90% of your final grade. The first exam is provisionally scheduled to take place during regular class time on 10/5 and the second is on 11/14. The final exam according to the Hofstra examination schedule will take place on 12/19 at 4:00 pm for Section A and 12/21 at 1:30 pm for Section 01. I will make every attempt to try and stick to the above dates.

A study guide for each exam will be made available on Blackboard at least one week prior to each of the exams and if possible there will be a review session held during the class prior to each of the exams. All exams contain a mixture of multiple choice, short essays and long essay questions.

OTHER EXAM RELATED INFORMATION:

1) THE FINAL EXAM:
The reason that the final exam is weighted more than the other exams because in addition to the normal questions, you will be required to write a long essay on your understanding of the Hochschild book. This question, counting approximately 30% of the final examinations total grade, asks you to interpret the events highlighted in the book. For example, you should be able to list the key events and policies outlined in the book and then discuss if knowledge of these events can help explain the political geography of contemporary Africa.

2) EACH EXAM WILL HAVE UP TO FIVE SHORT QUESTIONS RELATING TO CURRENT AFRICAN EVENTS found in the New York Times (from articles published this semester). You are thus expected to read issues relating to Africa found in the media (and particularly the NYT) during the course of this semester. You are encouraged to raise questions about these events in class.

GRADES WILL BE DETERMINED AS FOLLOWS:

1) Students will be awarded the higher grade from Exams 1 and 2 provided that BOTH grades ARE ABOVE 55%. In cases where only one grade is above 55%, then an average of the two grades will be applied.

2) The Final grade will thus be an average of the higher grade from exams 1 and 2 (see above), and the weighted grades from the other components of the course.

BREACKDOWN OF THE FINAL GRADE EVALUATION:

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<thead>
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<th>EVALUATION</th>
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<td>Exam 2</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>Map Test</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td>Bonus Class Mark (when applicable), up to an additional:</td>
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OTHER REQUIREMENTS AND COURSE POLICIES:

1) Students are required to respect other students and the instructor. Any behavior that
may disturb the class or the instructor will be warned only once. A second offense would subject the student to appropriate disciplinary action.

2) **Plagiarism or any other cheating in a paper is a serious offence and will result in:**
   a) The paper receiving a zero grade, b) The student being reported for a breach of academic honesty to the provost and c) if a very serious breach has occurred will receive an F grade for the course.

3) Exam dates will not be changed and **make-up exams** will not be given except due to a **medical emergency on the part of the student**. The procedure for getting a makeup examination is as follows: a) the student must contact me (by phone or email) **prior** to the examination notifying me that s/he will be absent and stating when s/he will return to class. If it is impossible to contact me prior to the exam, you are required to notify me as soon as possible, **but before** the next meeting of the class. b) On the day that the student first returns, s/he must come and see me in my office **prior** to class. At this time the student **must hand me a note** from an MD attesting that s/he was **too ill** to attend classes on the exam day (A note from a medical officer saying that the student was seen or complained of certain illness will not be accepted as a reason for missing an examination). c) If this note is found to be acceptable I will allow a make-up examination to take place **at that time** (not at a later date). In other words you should be prepared to take the examination during the time period of the first class meeting after you return to school. Without proper documentation, a student will receive a **zero point for a ‘no-show’ exam.** d) No student who has not met with me prior to the first class after an examination will be given a make-up examination. e) Students who miss the final exam, even with a valid doctor’s note, still need to contact me before the exam and they will only be given a make-up exam within two weeks of the beginning of the following semester.

4) Anyone caught cheating in an exam (or for a paper) will be reported to the provost in line with the university procedures for a breach of academic honesty (it is important that all students familiarize themselves with Hofstra guidelines on this matter). It is likely that any student who is caught cheating in examination will receive an automatic F grade for the class.

5) You are responsible for everything covered in class (and the readings), including any lectures you may have missed and any handouts. In the event that you may miss a class, you must copy any handouts and lecture notes from your classmates. **No incompletes** will be granted for this course.

6) I will only give a **UW grade** to students that have stopped attending class **no later than one meeting after the second mid-term examination**. Please familiarize yourself with Hofstra policies regarding grades and also with the **official date for withdrawing** from class.

7) It is your duty to check your **email for messages** from me. These email messages could relate to your specific performance or pertain to important class announcements. I will be using the **email address that Hofstra provides** to each student (and then gives to the instructor). It is your responsibility to know this address and to familiarize yourself with the Hofstra email system (you can for example, automatically forward this email to another address). You should check your email prior to every class for announcements. **I am not responsible for teaching you how to use the Hofstra computer system**, please contact student computing if you need help.
8) The syllabus, Blackboard and other student resources can be accessed from my website [http://people.hofstra.edu/faculty/Grant_Saff/](http://people.hofstra.edu/faculty/Grant_Saff/) and are also available in Blackboard.

9) The best way to communicate with me outside of class times and my office hours is via email. I will endeavor to answer all email questions within 24 hours (excepting weekends). You may leave voice mail messages for me, but this will be less efficient than emailing me. Please identify yourself in the heading of your email by name and by class. The heading should thus read: "A question from Pike Bishop, Geog 145 sec 1". This will ensure that the message gets opened, rather than being deleted as spam. Please use your Hofstra email to contact me as some domains are blocked by my spam blocker (such as Yahoo).

10) You will be held accountable for any email that you send me. Make sure that you check for viruses before you send anything electronic submissions to me.

11) If for any reason you are having problems following lectures, cannot cope with the readings, or have any other problems with the course, it is your duty to bring these to my attention. I will be more than willing to help you out if you come to me with any course related problems. Any problems not brought to my attention will not be considered at an excuse for poor performance in the examinations or paper.

YOUR PRESENCE IN THIS CLASS SIGNIFYS THAT YOU HAVE READ THE SYLLABUS AND ARE WILLING TO COMPLY WITH ITS CONTENTS.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic (s)</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<td>Introduction The Map of Africa, Regional Groupings</td>
<td>Hochschild, pp. 6-18, Stock Introduction, Ch. 1-2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Physical Geography of Africa: Climate, Land, Biomes, Resources</td>
<td>Stock, Ch. 4, 5, 6</td>
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<td>The Population and People of Africa: Language, Religion and Population</td>
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<td>Urban Geography: Urbanization and Cities in Africa:</td>
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<td>Sub-Saharan Cities</td>
<td>O’Conner pp. 28-41, Mehretu, pp. 267-284, 295-301.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Medical Geography: Health care, Infectious Diseases and AIDS in Africa</td>
<td>Stock Ch. 21, Newsweek.</td>
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<td>African Women, Children and Development</td>
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<td>Country Study: South Africa: From Apartheid to Democracy.</td>
<td>Stock Ch.29, Economist articles Grimond</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>The Future/Review</td>
<td>Whitaker, Stock Conclusion.</td>
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