

Please note this syllabus is subject to minor changes. See the syllabus posted on our Moodle page for most up to date version

GEA 3600

Population and Geography of Africa

Instructor: Dr. Caroline Faria (cvfaria@fiu.edu)

Office: SIPA Level 3, room 308

Office hours: T/Th 930am-1030am (or by appointment)

Class meets: T/Th 8am-915am in GC 283 A

See our Moodle page on your MyFIU for sign-up pages, assignments, message boards, announcements etc.

Course Description

- How are popular representations of Africa reflected in development policy?
- What are the historical and globalized roots of 'underdevelopment' in Africa?
- What were the outcomes of big dam and fishing projects in Ghana and Tanzania?
- Is global warming the cause of the conflict in Darfur, Sudan?
- What are the ethics around diamond mining in Sierra Leone and oil drilling in Nigeria?
- How have women combined feminist and environmentalist efforts in Kenya?
- How has the 'War on Terror' reshaped African geopolitics?

Welcome to GEA 3600 Population and Geography of Africa! This course critically examines the major approaches to development on the African continent with a focus on African resources. We will review how these approaches are connected to and underpinned by historically persistent representations, policies and political inequalities and the ways in which they have changed over time. Using a case study approach we will consider one major resource each week, from water to wildlife, forests to farms, airways to rangelands, and including a consideration of African bodies themselves as resources and sites of development. Through these examples we will explore, discuss and debate the ideological foundations of varied development approaches and their political, social and economic outcomes for African people and places. In doing so we will also examine the ways in which African people and places are linked to broader international process. Finally we will pay attention each week to the ways in which dominant development practices have been taken up, resisted and reworked by Africans in varied ways.

Key theoretical goals of the class:

- To critically examine changing ideas of development in Africa in the context of a range of resources
- To historicize the construction of varied contemporary environments in Africa and related ecological and development issues
- To examine the links between representations of Africa and African bodies and historical and contemporary forms of extraction, exploitation, and development
- To consider the ecological, social and political outcomes of oil and mineral resource extraction, water, forest and rangeland management projects, conservation efforts and agricultural development in Africa
- To explore how ecological challenges are being addressed across a range of scales; from the global to the local

Key learning goals of the class:

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- *Describe and critique* the dominant approaches to development in Africa
- *Connect* key problems around ecology and development in Africa to histories, ideologies, policies, and resistances within and beyond the continent
- *Critically evaluate* a range of visual, textual and oral evidence relating to development and ecology in Africa
- *Participate* in key debates about the role of the environment in African 'development' and 'underdevelopment'
- *Write* in varied styles and review your peers' written work

Required Texts

- Maathai, W. (2010) *The Challenge for Africa*. Anchor Books: New York.
- A series of articles are available on our Moodle page. Book chapters are available through the library course reserves
- Film material is available on course reserve from the library (level 5).

Using Moodle

Our course will be on ecampus moodle at <https://ecampus.fiu.edu/> Plan to use and check the website regularly. You will log in to the site with the same username and password that you use for your email. For tech support with ecampus moodle, contact them at: 305-348-2284 or in the Green Library Room 249. It is your responsibility to assure that you have access to the course website. If you have technical difficulties that cannot be resolved, contact myself or Elisa Melendez, our teaching assistant.

Requirements

1. In-class participation (15%)

Due during class session

You will be expected to come to all classes and to be prepared to discuss the reading material for that day. All students can expect to be called upon for participation. Examples of 'participation' include the following and will be a useful way to prepare for in-class quizzes and writing exercises.

- Noting down the key words that arose for you from the readings
- Commenting on the readings and connecting readings to lecture/ other student's comments
- Raising questions about the content of the reading or lecture material
- Responding to the preparatory questions that may be posed
- Providing insights into your understanding of the key concepts
- Connecting different students' comments and ideas together

In addition, during class we may complete a variety of short exercises intended to help you make connections between the class material (perhaps a lecture, radio or film clip, photograph, newspaper article etc) and the course readings for that day. These exercises may take the form of a peer review on your written work, pop quiz on the readings, a worksheet connected to a film or another class material, a short written reflective piece, or a group activity. A portion of these exercises will be collected at the end of session for grading.

2. Weekly blogs (~2% each = 15%)

Due by 6pm on Mondays OR Wednesdays (one blog per week, set to a consistent day)

Each week, prior to ONE of the week's sessions you will be expected to write a short (400 word) post to the blackboard blog. These blogs should provide a thoughtful commentary and critical engagement with the readings, highlighting the connections and contrasts and listing 1-3 key words/ concepts that tie them together. Discuss the most interesting/ frustrating/ exciting/ engaging etc aspect of the pieces for you, closing with 1-2 thoughtful questions raised by the readings to prompt in-class discussion. Posts are due by 6pm on the day before class. Bloggers in particular will be called upon to comment, raise questions and facilitate discussion. You can find a grade guide used to assess these essays at the course blackboard site. Please sign up for your chosen regular **blog day (Tues/Thurs) in week 1 of class**. If you join the class after week 1 I will assign you a blog day and the list will be posted on Moodle.

3. Short film Presentation (15%)

Due on Thursdays from week 5-14 (one presentation per student only, groups of 3-5 students)

From week 5 on, groups of 3-5 students will produce and present a short film to the class aimed at teaching and reviewing a key course concept. You will present on a Tuesday with your film focusing on the material we covered in the previous week. These films can include visual and audio material produced originally by students and/or collected from a range of sources and edited together into 5-minute short films. Students should begin their video with a brief (1-2 minute) discussion of how they chose their theme and what they would like students to think about as they view the film. The presentation will close with a Q and A session and a discussion of the key themes raised. We will review these as a class on Thursdays as a way to stimulate discussion, to learn about new case studies researched and to review key concepts of the class so far. You will be asked to **sign up for your chosen presentation week in week 1**. If you join the class after week 2 I will assign you a group and the list will be posted on Moodle.

5. Three course tests (35%)

You will complete three tests during the semester. These are designed to encourage you to review the key concepts, case studies and ideas presented in the class as we move through it. The tests will include a series of multiple-choice, short and mid-length written responses in which you will be asked to define key concepts and discuss the class lectures, film and reading material. More information to come.

6. Final research paper (20%)

(5% = preliminary paper drafts, 15% = final paper)

Format: 10-12 pages, 12 font, 1.5 space, 1-inch margins, stapled. Include a bibliography in Harvard or Chicago Reference Format. No late or emailed final assignments will be accepted.

During the course of the semester alongside our regular course readings you will be reading Wangari Maathai's "*The Challenge for Africa*". In your final research paper I would like you to take up one key issue that she writes about (the history of colonialism, debt, unfair trade, corruption, nationalism, land ownership, ethnic conflict etc). Your paper should make an argument as to why this is a key *Challenge for Africa*. What is the history of this issue, how did it develop and why? What models of development are connected to this issue (if any)? What are the impacts of this issue on the people and places within Africa? What social, cultural,

political, economic and ecological factors are tied to this issue? How are people and places outside of Africa implicated or involved in this issue? Are there other related issues we must consider? How might this issue be addressed and by whom? In your paper you should focus in on a case study that illustrates this issue/problem – in this way you can ground your arguments in a real-life situation that affects people and places in Africa. This is your opportunity to take up an issue that is of particular interest to you and to explore it further independently. The research for your paper should come from a range of sources. Your first stop will be the wealth of resources we have covered in class; lectures, course films and course readings. You must then combine this with your own independent library research that may include other films available in the library and scholarly articles and books. Please note that Internet evidence may be used only where the source is considered relatively reliable (eg Governmental or Multi-lateral institutional statistics from the World Health Organization, the UN, or USAID). You will be assessed on:

- The quality of your argument about why your chosen issue is a key challenge for Africa
- Your integration of class concepts and materials
- The quality of research materials you have found yourself
- Your writing style including clarity, structure, spelling and grammar.

Throughout the course of the class you will complete mini-assignments that will build up to the final written piece. No late or emailed mini-assignments are accepted and you can only receive credit for these pieces if you hand them in on time and in class. More information to follow.

Course Content

Please note that all required readings should be completed before class.

Week 1: January 11th & 13th

Representing Africa I: African voices

Due: Sign up for chosen blog day, complete assigned readings, purchase course text and reader, homework blog assignment on Adichie

In our first module we will consider the ways in which Africa is commonly understood and represented in scholarly, policy-based and creative materials produced by those outside of it. Our goal is to be aware of these problematic representations in order to understand their power and to establish a more critical and complex understanding of the Continent.

Read in preparation for Thursday's class:

- This syllabus
- Wainaina, B. (2006) 'How to write about Africa' *Granta* January 92-95
- Listen to: Adichie, C. (2009) 'The danger of the single story', presentation for TED, July, Oxford, England. Available at:

http://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.html

Homework assignment:

Read article by Wainaina and listen to Adichie's account. Write a few lines on how her story and Wainaina's piece made you feel (intrigued, bored, frustrated, angry...? Describe your emotions explicitly). At what particular points did you experience particular emotions and why do you think this was the case? In your answer, tie in a discussion of the connections perhaps the contrasts between Wainaina's piece and Adichie's words. Close by articulating at least 1 question raised by your reflection of these pieces.

Post your answer to the Moodle blog by 6pm Wednesday January 12th. Please limit your blog entry to no more than 400 words.

Week 2: January 18th & 20th

Representing Africa II: the myth of the Dark Continent

Tuesday:

- Brantlinger, P. (1985) "Victorians and Africans: The Genealogy of the Myth of the Dark Continent" in *Critical Inquiry* 12 Autumn

Thursday:

- Jarosz, L. (1992) 'Constructing the Dark Continent: Metaphor as Geographic Representation of Africa'

Aim also to have read Maathai, W. *The Challenge for Africa*. Introduction, ch 1, ch 2.

Week 3: January 25th & 27th

African bodies: development through extraction

In this week we will consider historical and contemporary forms of development in Africa that have focused on African bodies as objects for resource extraction both in the form of the slave trade and the brain drain.

Tuesday:

- Northrup, (2001) 'Why were Africans enslaved?' in *The African Slave Trade*, 1-23
- Northrup, (2001) 'The effects of the slave trade' in *The African Slave Trade*, 101-132

Thursday:

- Akokpari, J. (2006) Globalization, Migration and the challenges of development in Africa. *Perspectives on Globalization, development and technology*. Vol. 5(3): 125-153

Aim also to have read Maathai, W. *The Challenge for Africa*. ch. 3.

Week 4: February 1st & 3rd

The People and the Parks I: conservation as development

In this block we consider national parks and African wildlife as a key ecological resource on the continent. We will review the colonial history of conservation and critically examine the implications of conservation as development for African ecologies and African peoples.

Tuesday:

- Neumann, R. (2002) The postwar conservation boom in British Colonial Africa. *Environmental History*, Vol. 7(1): 24-47

Thursday:

- Igoe, J. (2004) 'Fortress Conservation: A Social History of National Parks' In *Conservation and Globalization: A Study of National Parks and Indigenous Communities from East Africa to South Dakota*, 69-100.

Week 5: February 8th & 10th

The People and the Parks II: alternative models

Due Tuesday: Film presentations groups 1 & 2

Tuesday:

- Igoe, J. (2004) 'The Maasai NGO Movement and Tanzania's Transition from Fortress Conservation to Community-Based Conservation.' In *Conservation and Globalization: A Study of National Parks and Indigenous Communities from East Africa to South Dakota*, 103-133

Thursday:

- No reading, review material covered in weeks 1-4 for in-class test.

Week 6: February 15th & 17th

The politics of water: Modernization and privatization

Due Tuesday: Film presentation group 3

This week we turn to the hotly contested debates around water resources in Africa. We consider the positive and negative outcomes of large dam projects and fish introduction projects as a form of development through modernization as well as the contemporary politics around the privatization of water.

Tuesday:

- Lenocho, T. (2005) 'Beneath a fluid surface: the Volta Valley, the Dente Shrine and Kete-Krachi, Ghana' MA Thesis
- -- (1997) Nile Perch: Marketing Success or ecological disaster? Originally available through *Seafood International*. Now available online at <http://www.megapesca.com/nileperch.html>
- Reynolds, J.E. and Greyboval, D.F (1988) 'Appendix: The Nile Perch Question: A General Review' *FAO documents*. Available at: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/005/t0037e/t0037e09.htm>

Thursday:

- Bond, P. (2004) The Political Roots of South Africa's Cholera Epidemic in Mercer, MA. and Gish, O. (eds) (2004) *Sickness and Wealth* South End Press chapter 10

Aim also to have read Maathai, W. *The Challenge for Africa*. Ch. 4

Week 7: February 22nd & 24th

Whose Farm?: Shifting land rights and agricultural production

Due Tuesday: Film presentation group 4

Agricultural resources are central both to the everyday subsistence of many Africans and a significant form of internal and external revenue. This week we examine some of the historical and contemporary controversies around agricultural land tenure and land rights on the continent.

Tuesday:

- Francis, E. and Williams, G. (1993) 'The Land Question' *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 27(3): 380-403

- Maathai, W. *The Challenge for Africa*. Ch. 11

Thursday:

- Anon. 2009. Buying farmland abroad: Outsourcing's third wave. *The Economist* 23 May.
- Maathai, W. *The Challenge for Africa*. Ch. 5

Week 8: March 1st & 3rd

The Green and Gene Revolutions in African farming

Due Tuesday: Film presentation group 5

In week 8 we take a critical look at some of the shifting development policies linked to agriculture focusing on the Green and Gene Revolutions. Here we will debate their varied social, ecological, political and economic impacts.

Tuesday:

- Conway, G. 'From the Green Revolution to the Biotechnology Revolution: food for poor people in the 21st Century'
- Holt-Gimenez, E. (2006). Ten reasons why the Rockefeller and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundations' alliance for another Green Revolution will not solve the problems of poverty and hunger in sub-Saharan Africa. *Food First Policy Brief* No. 12.

Thursday:

- Zerbe, Noah (2004) 'Feeding the Famine? American Food Aid and the GMO debate in Southern Africa' in *Food Policy* 29 pp 593-608

Week 9: March 8th & 10

Forest ecologies: Gender and Indigeneity in development models

Due Tuesday: Film presentation group 6

In week 9 we examine African forests and the contradictory ways in which they have been valued for local and international timber consumption and as vital ecological resources. We will use the case study of forestland to examine the rise of Gender and Development approaches in international policy, as well as more localized forms of 'eco-feminism'.

Tuesday:

- Schroeder, R. (1997) 'Re-claiming land in the Gambia: Gendered property rights and environmental intervention' *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 87(3): 487
- Appiah-Opoku, S. (2007) 'Indigenous beliefs and environmental stewardship: A rural Ghana experience' *Journal of Cultural Geography*, Vol. 24(2): 79-98

Thursday:

- Maathai, W. *The Challenge for Africa*. Ch. 12 and 13

Week 10: March 15th & 17th

SPRING BREAK

Spend this week resting, preparing for our next test and working on your final research paper. Aim to have read chapters 8, 9, 10 of Maathai, W. *The Challenge for Africa*.

Week 11: March 22nd & 24th

Politicizing Rangelands: Debating overpopulation and desertification

Due Tuesday: Film presentation group 7

In weeks 11 and 12 we turn to a discussion of rangeland ecologies and rangeland management as a form of development. We will critically review the arguments around overpopulation and desertification and consider some of the possible political, social and environmental roots of rangeland resource conflicts.

Tuesday:

- De Waal, A. (2007) 'Is Climate Change the Culprit for Darfur?' Read online at: <http://www.ssrc.org/blogs/darfur/2007/06/25/is-climate-change-the-culprit-for-darfur/>
- Rowntree, K., Duma, M., Kakemo, V., Thornes, J. (2004) 'Debunking the myth of overgrazing and soil erosion' *Land Degradation and Development*, Vol. 15(3): 203-214
- Davis, D. (2005) 'Indigenous Knowledge and the desertification debate: problematising expert knowledge in North Africa' *Geoforum*, Vol. 36(4): 509-524

Thursday:

- No reading, review material covered in weeks 5-10 for in-class test.

Week 12: March 29th & 31st

Oceans & Airways: Geopolitical shifts and the War on Terror in Africa

Due Tuesday: Film presentation group 8

This week we explore the ways in which Africa has been used as a site for geopolitical strategy and conflict between the 1960s and today. In particular we examine the impact of the Cold War on African politics and the contemporary War on Terror.

Tuesday 2nd March

- Mamdani, M. (2009) 'The Cold War and its Aftermath' in *Saviors and Survivors: Darfur, Politics and the War on Terror*, 206-277. Pantheon Books
- Owusu, F. (2007) 'Post 9/11 US Foreign Aid: The Millennium Challenge Account and Africa: How many birds can one stone kill?' *Africa Today* 54(1): 3-26

Thursday 4th March

- Abrahamsen, R. (2004) 'A breeding ground for terrorism?: Africa and Britain's 'War on Terrorism'' *Review of African Political Economy*, 31(102): 677-684
- Auma, D. (2007) 'US rendition on trial in Africa' *Spero News*, Sept. 25th. Available online at <http://www.speroforum.com/a/11196/US-rendition-on-trial-in-Africa>

Week 13: April 5th & 7th

A resource blessing or curse? Debating dependency and development in mineral and oil extraction

Due Tuesday: Film presentation group 9

In weeks 13 & 14 we critically examine the politics around mineral and oil extraction in Africa, focusing primarily on diamond mining and oil drilling. We will review the benefits of such practices for national development in places like Botswana as well as the problematic implications of local access to land, ecological destruction and civil conflict.

Tuesday:

- Sachs, J. and Andrew M. Warner (2001) 'The curse of natural resources'. *European Economic Review* 45: 827-838.

Thursday:

- O'Neill, Tom. 2007. *Curse of the Black Gold: Hope and betrayal on the Niger Delta* <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2007/02/nigerian-oil/oneill-text>
- Maathai, W. *The Challenge for Africa* reading: Chapter 6

Week 14: April 12th & 14th

Tuesday:

- Maconachie, R. and Binns, T. (2007). 'Beyond the resource curse? Diamond mining, development and post-conflict reconstruction in Sierra Leone'. *Resources Policy* 32: 104-115 **[alternative in the form of our in-class speaker's research proposal TBA]**

Thursday:

- Testimony by Deputy Assistant Secretary Todd Moss, Bureau of African Affairs, US Department of State Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Subcommittee on African Affairs, Sept 24 2008.
- Maathai, W. *The Challenge for Africa* reading: Chapter 7

Week 15: April 19th & 21st

Due Tuesday: Film presentation group 10

This week we will reflect on the key concepts, themes and case studies we have covered over the class and review these together. We'll return to our discussions on day 1 and consider how our dominant understandings and representations of the continent have been challenged, reworked or reinforced by our readings, in-class discussions and coursework. We'll close by considering how this process might reshape our encounters with and understandings of Africa and our next steps as critical scholars of development and ecology.

Tuesday:

- No new assigned readings. Review any missed/ difficult readings/ complete Maathai

Thursday:

- Final research paper due

Final test: week 16. See MyFIU for details regarding the date, time and location