

Tentative and subject to change

Migration and Refugees in African History

Instructor

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Office: 306G College Hall (8-2188)

Meeting time: M: 2:00-5:00

Office hours: M 12-1, F 12-1 or by appt.

Room: TBA

Aims and Format

This seminar will examine the experiences of recent African emigrants and refugees within and from the continent Africa from a historical and comparative perspective. We will look at the relations of overseas Africans with both their home and host societies, drawing on some of the extensive comparative literature on immigration, ethnic diasporas, and transnationalism. Other topics include reasons for leaving Africa, patterns of economic and educational adaptation abroad, changes in gender and generational roles, issues of cultural, religious, and political identity, and the impact of international immigration policies. Students will have the opportunity to conduct focused research on specific African communities in Philadelphia or elsewhere in North America, Europe, or the Middle East. We will employ a variety of sources and methodologies from different disciplines--including newspapers, government and NGOs, literature and film, and diaspora internet sites--to explore the lives, aspirations, and perceptions of Africans abroad.

Class meets Mondays from 2:00-5:00 and will consist of a combination of lectures (including several by invited guests), discussions, video screenings, and presentations by students of their research in progress.

Course requirements

All students are expected to keep up with the weekly assigned readings, to participate in a weekly blackboard forum, to submit written assignments on the dates indicated in the syllabus, and to participate actively in class discussions. The weekly forum post is due Monday 8:00 AM. Written assignments include: 1) an analysis of the media's coverage of an event involving African immigrants or a film or novel about Africans abroad; and 2) a report on the nature and content of an African diaspora website. 3) There is also a final project which may build on one of the earlier assignments but which must involve substantial new documentary, oral, or field research (12-15 pp.) Each week, one or two students will be asked to co-lead off the discussion with the instructor, and at the end of the semester, students will make an oral presentation to the

class, individually or as part of a team, on some aspect of his/her final project. In this way, everyone will contribute to our cumulative knowledge of the African immigrant experience.

Attendance and class participation

This is a seminar; therefore, regular attendance and participation in class discussions are essential. You are expected to be thoroughly familiar with the readings for each meeting and to participate actively in discussion. These readings will provide background to your individual research projects and help you complete the weekly assignment. Assigned reading is indicated on the syllabus for each week. It is the student's responsibility to complete the required reading on schedule so as to participate fruitfully in the weekly discussion. Both attendance and in-class participation will count towards your grade. **One absence does not carry penalty but any additional absence will incur half a grade penalty (B+ to B). If you have a reason to miss class, please let me know ahead of time.** The Course Absence Report system will not be used for this course

Grading

Media analysis 15 points

Website report 15 points

Class participation (forum, discussion, co-leading) 30 points

Term paper 40 points.

Academic integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the university's academic integrity and plagiarism policies on all assignments. Plagiarism consists of using other people's ideas without proper acknowledgment. Students who violate the university's academic integrity policies may fail the course. (For more on academic integrity see Links on Blackboard.)

Books

The following required books are available at Penn Book Center, 130 So. 34th Street.

Americanah by [Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie \(Links to an external site.\)](#) (Amazon, Penn Bookstore, etc.)

Bruce Whitehouse, *Migrants and Strangers in an African City* (Indiana U Press, 2012)

Ousmane Kane; *The Homeland is the Arena* (Oxford, 2011)

Jan D. Holtzman, *Nuer Journeys, Nuer Lives : Sudanese Refugees in Minnesota* (Pearson, 2008, 1st ed. 2000)

Other required readings will be posted on the course Blackboard site (**Bb**)

Provisional Schedule of Meetings and Assignments

1. Intro and overview; issues and approaches

2. Dr. MLK day, no classes

PART I. Internal African migrations

3. Old and new migratory patterns

Film: *Taxi to Timbuktu*, DVD, 002 318

Readings:

Manchuelle, *Willing Migrants*, 9-65

Dougnon, "Comparing Dogon and Songhay migrations," 177-201 **Bb**

Pamela Kea, "Senegalese in the Gambia," 1-21, **Bb**

4. African regional migration

Readings:

B. Whitehouse, *Migrants and Strangers*

PART II: Undocumented immigrants, Refugees, and Asylum Seekers

5. Why Africans emigrate

Film: *Has God forsaken Africa?* DVD 002 731

Readings:

Manchuelle, *Willing Migrants*, pp. 179-227 **Bb**

Abdullah, ch. 2, *Black Mecca*, pp. 15-46 **Bb**

O & N, chs. 3 (Jones), 5 (Kaba), 12 (Takyi) **Bb**

6. Sudanese refugees in Africa and the United States

Film: *Dinka Diaries* (available at Van Pelt) or "God Grew Tired of Us" or "War Child"

Guest: Film maker Filmon Mebrahtu

Readings:

Author: Abusharaf, Rogaia Mustafa.

Title: *Wanderings : Sudanese migrants and exiles in North America / Rogaia Mustafa Abusharaf.*

Publisher: Ithaca, N.Y. : Cornell University Press, 2002.

Nuer Journeys, Nuer Lives ; or

xxxx-Media report due in class (4-5 pp)

7. The challenges of integration

Readings: Film "The Invader", about an African illegal immigrant in Belgium

IOM *World Migration Report 2011*, Part A, ch. 1, 1-40 (*recommended*) **Bb**

Raynel A Shepard, "Cultural Adaptation," xi-6;72-83;113-126;127-134 **Bb**

J. Crush and W Pendleton, "Regionalizing Xenophobia," pp. 1-48. **Bb**

Ives et al. "Who is welcoming the Strangers?" 71-89, **Bb**

Pamela A De Voe, "Symbolic action," pp. 234-246, **Bb**

Part III: The New African Diaspora

8. Spring break, no classes

9. Racial and spatial identities

Film: *'The Neo-African Americans'*

Readings:

Americana

10. African women abroad

Film: *Restless City*

Readings:

Arthur, *African Diaspora*, ch. 5

Babou, "Senegalese Female Hair braiders in the US," **Bb**

Gemignani, in Olapuna ed., "Gender, Power and Identity in African Immigrant Evangelical Churches", 133-157, **Bb**

11. Work and welfare among African immigrants

Guest speaker: TBA

Film: *Otomo DVD 016 661*

Readings:

Stoller, *Money Has No Smell*, excerpts, 1-45 **Bb**

Congo-Paris pp. 1-7; 9-27; 50-78 Bb

Elizabeth Campbell, "Urban Refugees in Nairobi," 396-413 **Bb**

S. Mohapatra and D. Ratha, *Remittance Markets in Africa*, 3-58 **Bb**

12. Keeping in touch: newspapers, radio, and the internet

Panel discussion with members of African diaspora in Philadelphia

Guests: Elhadj Ndiaye, talk show host, and TBA

Readings:

O & N, chs. 18 (Nzegwa) and 19 (Ogundimu)

13. Diaspora-homeland relations

Readings:

Kane: *homeland is the arena*

14. African professionals and the 'brain drain'

Readings:

Abel Chikanga, "Medical Leave", 1-34, **Bb**

R. Mattes, J. Crush, W. Richmond, "The Brain Gain," 1-32, **Bb**

+++**Report on African diaspora website due (4-5 pp.)**

15. Tem paper presentations and semester review

May 3rd **Term Papers due**