

## **AFR 215: Introduction to African Studies**

Professor Melissa Graboyes, MPH, Ph.D.

T/Th 12-1.20 pm; 242 Gerlinger Hall

University of Oregon--Spring 2023

---

### **Professor Graboyes**

Email: [graboyes@uoregon.edu](mailto:graboyes@uoregon.edu)

Office: 369 McKenzie Hall

Office hours: Thursdays 1.30-3.30\*

### **Graduate Assistant: Vivian Koomson**

Email: [vkoomso5@uoregon.edu](mailto:vkoomso5@uoregon.edu)

Office: 370 PLC

Office hours: Fridays 10-12\*

\* For office hours: you can always drop by our offices without an appointment, or schedule an appointment with Professor Graboyes on zoom via: <https://graboyes-officehours.youcanbook.me/>

### **Course Description**

This course introduces you to the field of African Studies and the social, cultural, political, economic and environmental diversity of the African continent, through a cross-section of key issues, trends, perspectives, and modes of analysis employed by scholars working in African Studies. Students will become familiar with a wide range of disciplinary approaches to the study of historical and contemporary Africa and will analyze topical issues affecting African societies. Numerous University of Oregon faculty and staff members with expertise on Africa will participate, including faculty from Anthropology; Comparative Literature; History; Global Health; Global Studies; Journalism; Linguistics; Romance Languages; Sociology; and Women's and Gender Studies. The course is appropriate for anyone interested in international studies, especially those considering the further study of Africa or travel to Africa. There are no prerequisites. **This course fulfills the Social Science General Education Requirements and the Global Perspectives (GP).** It also counts towards the African Studies Minor

### **Learning Outcomes**

#### **Skill Based**

- Develop ability to read and question critically, think logically, and reason effectively
- Describe the underlying premises in your own and others' arguments or perspectives
- Identify a range of disciplinary approaches used to conduct research in African Studies
- Practice active participation and oral communication of ideas in a group setting
- Use library databases to identify academic sources

#### **Content Based**

- Develop a critical understanding of Africa's geography and diversity
- Interact with a variety of primary and secondary sources related to Africa, which present a multi-disciplinary perspective
- Identify examples of African indigenous knowledge in multiple realms
- Understand the theoretical importance of studying leisure and the "every day"

- Be familiar with how gender, class, ethnicity, nationality and history shape contemporary conditions on the African continent
- Identify and describe major patterns and processes in the African past.
- Examine and analyze topical issues relevant to life in contemporary African settings.

### **Required Readings**

We have one main text we'll be using throughout the term, in addition to outside readings used to complement some guest lectures. The book we'll be using is:

Oluwakemi M. Balogun, Lisa Gilman, Melissa Graboyes, Habib Iddrisu, eds. *Africa Every Day: Fun, Leisure, and Expressive Culture on the Continent* (Ohio University Press, 2019).

It is available for purchase at the UO bookstore and is also available free of charge electronically through the UO library database. You can read it online, download chapters, or download the entire book to read using the software program Adobe Digital Editions. All readings outside of the book will be posted on Canvas under the "Course Readings" module.

### **Assignments and Grades**

You will be assessed in the following manner:

10 In-Class Quizzes	20%
Exam 1 (class 6)	10%
Exam 2 (class 11)	20%
Exam 3 (class 20)	30%
"Tell Me More" Assignment	20%
Extra Credit	4%
TOTAL	104%

### **In-Class Quizzes (20%)**

13 in-class, Canvas-based, quizzes will be given throughout the term at the start of class, but only the top 10 quiz grades will count toward the grade (each quiz counts for 2% of the final grade). The quizzes will be given through Canvas and will consist of 3-5 questions that are multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer. Questions will focus on the reading assigned for that day's class and content that was covered in prior class lectures. Students may drop their three lowest scores or can be absent for up to three exams without penalty. If a student misses more than three quizzes and is absent on a quiz day, they will receive a score of "0". No make-up quizzes will be given. Please bring your laptop to each class to take the quiz.

### **Exam 1: class 6, April 20: (10%)~ Exam 2: class 11, May 9: (20%)~ Exam 3: class 20, June 8: (30%)**

All exams will be held in person during the class period, with an estimated 40-minute completion time though all students will have the full class period to complete the exam. Questions will be multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank and short answer questions drawing on readings, class lectures, films, and guest lectures. Each quiz will also have a mapping component, asking you to identify African countries. Questions will be generated by students during an in-class brainstorming session prior to the exam and will be drawn from past in-class

quizzes. These strategies are meant to facilitate student preparation both independently and in groups ahead of the exam. Exam 1 is only worth 10% of the total grade to allow students to become familiar with the format and expectations.

The exams will be comprehensive (i.e., including all content through the exam date) and no make ups will be given. If you are unable to attend during class 6, 11, or 20, you can take the make-up exam during finals week (Mon, June 12, 8 am), which will count for the exam missed. If you were to miss more than one exam, you will only be able to make up one missed exam.

If you do not like your score on Exam 1, 2 or 3, you have the option of taking the finals week make-up exam (Mon, June 12, 8 am) to replace your lowest exam grade.

**"Tell Me More" Writing Assignment (20%): class 16, May 25, noon to Canvas**

This activity will have a separate handout with detailed instructions, and will be explained in depth in Class 2, April 6. You will be asked to investigate a topic covered in class before week 8 that interests you, and to “tell me more” about that topic. You will need to identify three academic sources using the library database, read one academic article (10 pages or longer), then summarize that article, and provide a detailed analysis of it in your own words. All students must complete this activity to pass the class. It is due May 25, 12 noon to Canvas. Late assignments will be reduced 1/3 of a letter grade each day they are late.

**Extra Credit (4%)**

There will be four extra credit opportunities during the term. If you attend the event and write a one-page summary of the event (what was the topic, the main argument, how does it relate to this class?) and upload it to Canvas by class 20, you can earn 1% extra credit for each event.

Extra Credit 1: Thursday, May 4, 3.30-5 pm. Knight Library Browsing Room

Extra Credit 2: Wednesday, May 10, 3.30-5 pm. Knight Library Browsing Room

Extra Credit 3: Thursday, May 25, 3.30-5 pm. Knight Library Browsing Room

Extra Credit 4: Thursday, April 15, 5 pm. Film Screening. Location TBA.

I will assign final grades using this rubric:

A+	97 -100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	F	< 60
A	93-96.9	B	83-86.9	C	73-76.9	D	63-66.9		
A-	90-92.9	B-	80-82.9	C-	70-72.9	D-	60-62.9		

**Attendance Policy**

Attendance will not count toward your grade, and you do not need to explain your absences to me. I do hope, however, that you are present in class since peer interaction and discussion will make our class rich. Please do not come to class if you are sick or have tested positive for Covid and are in your 5-day isolation period. If you miss class, I strongly recommend you: 1) complete all assigned reading; 2) review Canvas for lecture slides; 3) check in with classmates for notes; and 4) consider visiting me or Vivian during office hours to discuss what was covered.

### **Accessibility & Accommodation**

I realize that these are extremely challenging times. I am committed to making this class as accessible and accommodating as possible while still maintaining the academic integrity of the course and the experience for all students. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your participation.

If you are working with AEC and need an accommodation, please let me know as soon as possible. You may also want to schedule a time to talk with me during office hours to discuss appropriate accommodations. If you receive an AEC letter mid-quarter, I cannot permit retroactive accommodation of any assignment for which the deadline has already passed; accommodations will be provided from the date the letter is received. You can contact the Accessible Education Center at [uoaec@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoaec@uoregon.edu) or 541-346-1155.

### **Academic Misconduct & Plagiarism**

The University Student Conduct Code defines academic misconduct, which includes unauthorized help on assignments and examinations and the use of sources without acknowledgment. Academic misconduct is prohibited at UO. I will report misconduct to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards—consequences can include failure of the course. If you are uncertain about how to avoid plagiarism, please see: <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/>.

### **Mental Health Services**

Life at college can often leave students feeling overwhelmed or stressed, experiencing anxiety or depression, struggling with relationships, or just need help navigating challenges in their life. If you're facing such challenges, please consider reaching out to the University Counseling Services. All clinical services are free and confidential. You can reach them at [counseling.uoregon.edu](http://counseling.uoregon.edu) or by calling 541-346-3227 (anytime UCS is closed, the After-Hours Support and Crisis Line is available by calling this same number).

As your instructor if I believe you may need additional support, I will express my concerns, the reasons for them, and refer you to resources that might be helpful. It is not my intention to know the details of what might be bothering you, but simply to let you know I care and that help is available. Getting help is a courageous thing to do.

## Class Schedule

### **[1] Tuesday, April 4—Introductions; What do you know? What do you want to know?**

Homework: Write me a letter telling me what you think is important for me to know about you. What are you excited about this term? What are you worried about? How might I support your learning this term? What kinds of positive learning experiences have you had in the past: what has worked well for you in the past? What are your long-term goals? Please write your letter by hand on notebook paper, or don't forget to print it out and bring it to next class to turn in.

### **[2] Thursday, April 6—Why Leisure? Why the "Every Day"?**

Detailed explanation of "Tell Me More" Activity

Reading for today's class:

- *Africa Every Day*, Introduction (pg. 1-20). Oluwakemi M. Balogun and Melissa Graboyes, "Everyday Life in Africa: The Importance of Leisure and Fun"
- *Africa Every Day* ch 23 (pg. 253-264). Laura Fair, "Meeting Up at the Movies in Tanzania"

### **[3] Tuesday, April 11—Africa's Early History. Guest Speaker!**

**Stephen Frost** (Anthropology Department) is a paleontologist interested in evolutionary theory and human and primate evolution. His research on late Miocene to Pleistocene East African old world monkeys (cercopithecids) describes material from the Afar Region of Ethiopia. He has participated in fieldwork in Ethiopia, Tanzania, France, and Greece.

Reading for today's class:

- "Encyclopedia of Human Evolution and Prehistory" (pg. 9-21)
- Zerensenay Alemseged, Jackson Njau, Briana Pobiner and Emmanuel Ndiema, "Connecting Palaeoscientists in eastern Africa and the Wider World" *Nature Ecology and Evolution* (February 2019).

### **[4] Thursday, April 13—Cinema and Filmmaking. Guest Speakers!**

**Michael Allan** (Department of Comparative Literature) focuses his research on debates in world literature, postcolonial studies, literal theory, as well as film and visual culture in Africa and the Middle East. In both his research and teaching, he bridges textual analysis with social theory, and draws from methods in anthropology, religion, queer theory, and area studies. He is currently working on two books: the first, *A Pre-History of World Cinema*, traces the transnational history of camera operators working for the Lumiere Brothers film company. The second, *The Aesthetics of Information*, investigates a history of information systems in the Middle East (telegraph, typewriter, radio, and telephone) and their implications for the study of world literature. (Ask him how many languages he reads!)

**Ali Cherri** is a Lebanese-born, Paris-based independent filmmaker and artist. His most recent film, *The Dam*, depicts how man's action and oppression causes nature to respond. The film is set in Sudan at the time of a 2019 military coup. The film was selected in the Directors' Fortnight at the Cannes Film Festival, and is a French-Sudanese-German-Serbian co-production.

Reading for today's class:

- *Africa Every Day*, ch 18 (pg. 201-210). Maya Angela Smith, "The *Journal Rappe*: Edutaining the Youth through Senegalese Hip-Hop"
- *Africa Every Day*, ch 24 (pg 265-274). Brigit Englert with Nginjai Paul Moreto, "Retelling the World in Swahili: Revisiting the Practice of Film Translation in Tanzania"
- Review this website: <https://cineuropa.org/en/newsdetail/426039/>

**Extra Credit Opportunity—Film Screening of *The Dam***

Thursday, April 13, 5 pm. 115 Lawrence Hall

Join film maker Ali Cherri for a viewing and discussion of his film

**[5] Tuesday, April 18—Food and Culture. Guest Speaker!**

Brainstorm questions for Exam 1 together in class

**Stephen Wooten** (Global Studies Department) is a sociocultural anthropologist whose research interests include political economy and ecology, local food systems, and expressive culture. He has been conducting ethnographic field research in Mali since 1992 and has studied food and agrarian change in Africa. He is the founder of the Food Studies program at the UO.

Reading for today's class:

- *Africa Every Day*, ch 4 (pg. 49-60). Hadeer Aboelnagah, "Beyond Religion: Food, Decoration, and Songs of Egyptian Feasts"
- *Africa Every Day*, ch 5 (pg. 61-72). Scott M. Youngstedt, "New Year's Eve in Niamey, Niger"

**[6] Thursday, April 20—Exam 1**

Reading for today's class: no reading! Good luck studying for Exam 1!

**[7] Tuesday, April 25—Queen Nzinga and Narratives of Female Leaders. Guest Speaker!**

**Lanie Millar** (Department of Romance Languages) is a professor of Spanish and Portuguese. She earned her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature, and in her research, she is interested in the circulation of texts and tropes around the Global South, with a focus on the Caribbean and Africa. Her first book looked at both Cuban and Angolan novels and revolutionary enthusiasm in the late 20th/early 21st century. Her current research includes a translation of Angolan intellectual Mario Pinto de Andrade's essays on African liberation, national development, and Black cultural vindication, and another project on gender and empire in Luso-African-Brazilian fiction.

Reading for today's class:

- Patricia Romero, *African Women: A Historical Panorama*. ch 1: "Pre-Colonial Queens and Powerful Women" (pg 1-20)

**[8] Thursday, April 27— Resources, Corporate Power, Local Participation. Guest Speaker!**

**Senyo Ofori-Parku** (School of Journalism and Communication) conducts research about sociocultural cognition and sense-making as it relates to environmental health risk communication. He also studies corporate sustainability, corporate social responsibility, and consumer behavior. He received his Ph.D. in Communications and is originally from Ghana.

Reading for today's class:

- Sylvester Senyo Ofori-Parku and Paul Koomson. "Corporate Sustainability as a Hegemonic Discourse of Globalization: the Discourse-Historical Approach as a Critical Issues and Stakeholder Analysis Tool" *Public Relations Review* 49 (2023): 1-12.

**[9] Tuesday, May 2— Maternal Health & NGOs. Guest Speakers!**

**Alice Emasu** (MSW, MBA) is co-founder and current board member of the international NGO, Terrewode, which is focused on eliminating obstetric fistula and providing holistic treatment to fistula survivors. Alice grew up in eastern Uganda and has become an international advocate for reproductive health rights.

**Bonnie Ruder** (Ph.D. Medical Anthropology, MPH) is the co-founder and the Executive Director of the international NGO, Terrewode. She has been a practicing midwife for over 15 years, and moved with her family to Soroti, Uganda in 2011 to conduct research on fistulas.

Reading for today's class:

- Bonnie Ruder and Alice Emasu, "The Promise and Neglect of Follow-up Care in Obstetric Fistula Treatment in Uganda" (pg. 37-55) in *Anthropologies of Global Maternal and Reproductive Health*, Lauren Wallace, Margaret MacDonald, Katerini Storeng, Eds.
- Review the Terrewode website to learn more about their work: <https://www.terrewodewomensfund.org/>

**[10] Thursday, May 4— Mid-Term Evaluations and Exam 2 Prep**

Brainstorm questions for Exam 2 together in class

Discuss progress on "Tell Me More" Activity

Reading for today's class:

- *Africa Every Day*, ch 14 (pg. 155-164). Michael Gennaro, "We Are Building the New Nigeria: Lagos, Boys' Clubs, and Leisure, 1945-1960"
- *Africa Every Day*, ch 15 (pg. 165-174). Issahaku Adam and Akwasi Kumi-Kyereme, "Leisure, Resistance, and Identity Formation among People with Disabilities in Ghana"

**Extra Credit Opportunity—African Studies Lecture Series Event**

Thursday, May 4, 3.30-5 pm. Knight Library Browsing Room

S.N. Nyeck "A Womanist Ethic for Healing the Africana Household: An Exploration and Justification"

**[11] Tuesday, May 9—EXAM 2**

Reading for today's class: no reading! Good luck studying for Exam 2!

**Extra Credit Opportunity—African Studies Lecture Series Event**

Wednesday, May 10, 3.30-5 pm. Knight Library Browsing Room

Gregg Mitman "The Monkey Books: Yellow Fever and the Remaking of Alliances Among Living Things"

**[12] Thursday, May 11—Languages, Youth Culture, and Humor. Guest Speaker!**

**Mokaya Bosire** (Linguistics Department) earned his Ph.D. in linguistics and has conducted research on Swahili and urban youth languages in East Africa. He explores language contact outcomes and has written widely on Sheng—a youth language of Nairobi. He teaches Swahili at the UO, is originally from Kenya, and is an amazing instructor!

Reading for today's class:

- *Africa Every Day*, ch 17 (pg. 189-200). Mokaya Bosire, "Sheng: Expressivity, Creativity, and Rebellion in Nairobi"
- *Africa Every Day*, ch 19 (pg. 211-218). Alex Perullo and James Nindi, "Teeth Appear Themselves: Laughter and Humor in East Africa"

**[13] Tuesday, May 16—Leisure, Gender and Beauty Pageants. Guest Speaker!**

**Kemi Balogun** (Sociology Department and Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies) pursues research that focuses on gender, globalization, nationalism, race/ethnicity, and migration. Her first book was about the Nigerian beauty pageant industry as a way of documenting the country's transition from post-independence to an emerging nation.

Reading for today's class:

- *Africa Every Day*, ch 8 (pg. 93-102). Daniel Jordan Smith, "Sociality, Money, and the Making of Masculine Privilege in Nigerian Sports Clubs"
- *Africa Every Day*, ch 13 (pg. 145-154). Jacqueline-Bethel Tchouta Mougoue, "Where Are All the Women Who Used to be Good Athletes in Their School Days?: Sports, Gender, and Leisure in English-Speaking Cameroon, 1960s-1970s"

**[14] Thursday, May 18—Global Health and Disease Eradication Attempts. Guest Speaker!**

**Jennifer Tappan** (History) is an Associate Professor at Portland State University. Over the past 15 years, she's researched topics related to the history of nutrition/malnutrition, medical sciences, and diseases on the African continent. For the past year, she has been working in collaboration with Professor Graboyes on a co-authored book on the Histories of Global Health in Africa, intended for use in undergraduate classes.

Reading for today's class:

- Draft chapter of "Histories of Global Health in Africa" book. Co-authored by Melissa Graboyes and Jennifer Tappan



**[15] Tuesday, May 23—Francophone African Literature. Guest Speaker!**

**Andre Djiffack (Department of Romance Languages)** conducts research on Francophone literature, 20th-century French literature and colonial/postcolonial studies. His recent books have focused on the author Mongo Beti. He studied in Cameroon and South Africa, and is originally from Cameroon.

Reading for today's class:

- Ambroise Kom, R.H. Mitsch, "Remember Mongo Beti (1932-2001)." *Research in African Literatures*, 33, 2 (2002): 1-3.
- Olusola Oke, "Revolt and Revolution in the Francophone African Novel of the Colonial Period" in *Introduction to Francophone African Literature: a Collection of Essays*, Eds. Olusola Oke and Sam Ade Ojo. (Ibadan: Spectrum Books, 2000).

**[16] Thursday, May 25—NO CLASS—Attend the Undergraduate Research Symposium!**

**DUE: Tell Me More Activity must be submitted to Canvas by 12 noon!!**

Support your fellow UO student researchers who will be presenting their work! See the full schedule and location of events: <https://urds.uoregon.edu/symposium/2023> You will need to attend at least one session and fill out the symposium engagement survey (a few questions you can do on your phone) + click on our class as the affiliation.

Reading for today's class: no reading! Finish your "Tell Me More" Activity

**Extra Credit Opportunity—African Studies Lecture Series Event**

Thursday, May 25, 3.30-5 pm. Knight Library Browsing Room

Melissa Graboyes and Judith Meta, "Puddles, Ditches, and Drainage: Connected Histories of Water and Malaria in Contemporary Zanzibar"

**[17] Tuesday, May 30—Eradicating Malaria? Guest Speaker!**

**Judith N Meta** (BA Sociology, MPH) is an independent Tanzanian public health researcher and consultant. Over the past 15 years, she's worked in collaboration with national and international partners on projects related to malaria, HIV/AIDS, and maternal and child health. Her work has been published in *BMC Public Health*, *Global Public Health*, and *Pathogens and Global Health*. For the past three years, Judith has been working in collaboration with Melissa Graboyes on a project on the history of malaria elimination attempts in Zanzibar.

Reading for today's class:

- Graboyes, Melissa, and Judith Meta. "Rebounding Malaria and the failures of eradication in Zanzibar: The World Health Organization campaign and the after effects, 1957–1985." *Health & Place* 77 (2022): 102842.

**[18] Thursday, June 1—Work & Labor as the Every Day**

Brainstorm questions for Exam 3 together in class, review material

Reading for today's class:

- *Africa Every Day*, ch 26 (pg. 287-296). Joshua Grace, "Mechanical Expression in a Broken World: Repair, Fun, and the Everyday Life in Tanzanian Garages"
- *Africa Every Day*, ch 28 (pg. 311-320). Eric Debrah Otchere, "Work and Happiness: Songs of Indigenous Ghanian Fisherman."

**Special Event—Afternoon Tea and Treats**  
(with Judith Meta and Professor Graboyes)  
Thursday, June 1, 4 pm, 375 McKenzie

**[19] Tuesday, June 6—Reflections & Conclusions**

Reading for today's class:

- *Africa Every Day*, ch 29 (pg. 321-330). Bill McCoy, "Leisure at the Edge of Legality: Cannabis in Twentieth-Century Swaziland and South Africa."
- *Africa Every Day*, ch 6 (pg. 73-82). Martha Ndakalako-Bannikov, "Tank Park's Children: Recreational Activities of Namibian Children in Oranjemund during the 1980s."

**[20] Thursday, June 8—Exam 3**

Reading for today's class: no reading! Good luck studying for Exam 3!

**\*\*Make Up Exam: Monday, June 12, 8 am, 340A McKenzie Hall\*\***

(Show up at 8 am to take the make-up exam if you've missed a prior exam OR if you want to try to replace an exam grade you're not happy with)