GEOG 550

GEOGRAPHY OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Spring 2016

Maingi Solomon

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to the geography of Sub-Saharan Africa. It will provide an overview of major environmental and human features of the region and examine the dynamic issues facing African societies. Students will learn about environmental and resource issues, historical impacts on development, cultural characteristics, social organization, politics and conflict, and prospects for the future.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

• Students will demonstrate knowledge of the relevant geographical information domains of Sub-Saharan Africa.
• Students will demonstrate critical thinking in evaluating topical issues concerning the human and physical environments of Sub-Saharan Africa.
• Students will understand the diversity and complexity of Sub-Saharan Africa and its context within global geography.

BASICS

Time & Place        MW 2:10AM - 3:30PM                  204 Morrill Hall
Instructor Info   Maingi Solomon                  maingi.solomon@unh.edu
                  331 Huddleston Hall            (603) 862-4007
Office Hours       Tuesday 1:00PM - 3:00PM    Or by appointment
                  Thursday  2:00PM - 3:00PM
CANVAS              Course information can be found in: mycourses.unh.edu
                    Lecture materials and assignments are organized by week under “Files”.
Textbooks

Gepgraphy of Sub-Saharan Africa, Third edition by Samuel Aryeetey-Attoh, Published by Prentice Hall 2010
This textbook is required for this class and students should bring it to all class meetings.

I suggest reading the BBC’s website daily (http://www.bbc.com/news/world/africa) as well as other reputable news sources such as the international edition of The New York Times (www.international.nytimes.com), The Economist (www.economist.com), The Guardian (www.theguardian.com), and others as you may prefer.

Accessibility
The University is committed to providing students with documented disabilities equal access to all University programs and facilities. If you think you have a disability requiring accommodations, you must register with Disability Services for Students (DSS). Contact DSS at (603) 862-2607 or disability.office@unh.edu. If you have received Accommodation Letters for this course from DSS, please provide me with that information privately so that we can review those accommodations. See the DSS Website for details: http://www.unh.edu/disabilityservices/disabilityservices.html.

University Policies
All students should know and understand university policies and procedures regarding academic performance, including attendance and academic dishonesty. If you are unfamiliar with these policies, please refer to the University of New Hampshire Student Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities for details: http://www.unh.edu/student/rights/.

Comments
The following procedures, policies, and schedules may change during the course semester. Any changes will be announced in class and posted on CANVAS. Announcements may also be distributed via email. It is your responsibility to check your university email account and CANVAS regularly.

GRADING PROCEDURES

General
All coursework submitted for evaluation must represent each student’s own, original work. Therefore, all assignments and exams are to be completed individually in accordance with the standards of conduct outlined in Section 09: Academic Honesty of the UNH Students Rights, Rules and Responsibility (http://www.unh.edu/vpsas/handbook/academic-honesty).
Exams  There will be **three exams** in this course worth **25%** of your final grade. The three exams will focus on areas covered before the day of the exam.

Assignments  **Country presentations:** Each student will pick an African country during the first week. You will be required to study that country (economy, politics, and cultures) and make a ten-minute presentation to the rest of the class. On the day of the presentation, the student will be required to present to me a short paper (2000-2500 words) for grading. This assignment is worth **15%** of your final grade. The country presentations will be scattered throughout the semester. Details to follow.

Participation  **Attendance and participation is required for this class and is worth 10% of your final grade.** Students are responsible for completing all the assigned activities including assigned readings before class.

Final Grades  Final grades will be assigned based on the cumulative weighted scores from all coursework using the following grade distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>≥ 93 %</th>
<th>83 %</th>
<th>73 %</th>
<th>63 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 %</td>
<td>90 %</td>
<td>80 %</td>
<td>70 %</td>
<td>60 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87 %</td>
<td>77 %</td>
<td>67 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 60 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ATTENDANCE

Lecture  Tardiness and early departure is incredibly disruptive and may cause you, and your classmates, to miss important material. Lecture begins promptly at 10 minutes after the hour so be on time and prepared for the start of class. Do not expect, nor prepare, to leave before the 80-minute class period has elapsed.

Excused Absences  Attendance is mandatory for this class except in cases of excused absences:

1.) Absences in which prior arrangements have been made. Such arrangements must be made at least one week in advance of the absence.
2.) Absences due to family or personal medical emergencies in which a university approved absence has been granted. You must contact your college’s Dean’s office for a letter verifying your absence.
3.) Absences due to serious illness or personal medical emergency accompanied by a doctor’s note.

Missed Work  In all cases, it is entirely up to you to make arrangements to complete missed work. In the case of an excused absence without prior arrangements, you must notify me within 48 hours of the scheduled exam or homework due date. If you fail to receive approval for a make-up exam or late work within this timeframe, or have an unexcused absence, you will receive a “0” for a missed exam and are subject to the penalties for late work described below.

Late Work  Assignments are due at the beginning of, or prior to, the class period on the indicated due date. Assignments submitted after the due date will be accepted for half credit up to one week after the due date. Assignments that are more than one week late will be assigned a grade of “0.” There is no penalty for late work due to an excused absence.
GENERAL RULES OF CONDUCT

ANNOUNCEMENTS  Procedures, policies, and schedules may change during the course semester. Any changes will be announced in class and posted on blackboard. Announcements may also be distributed via email. It is your responsibility to check your university email account and the course homepage on Blackboard regularly.

COMMUNICATION  All forms of communication directed toward your instructor and classmates should be conducted in a professional manner. Emails should be addressed appropriately, contain your name and text should be written using proper English including the use of complete sentences, capital letters, and proper punctuation.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES  The use of digital communication devices is prohibited while in class unless otherwise approved for note-taking purposes only.

BEHAVIOR  Immature, rude, and inappropriate behavior in the classroom will not be tolerated. This includes talking during lecture, as well as personal use of digital communication devices during lecture including, but not limited to: text, instant or email messaging, social media, and web browsing. Anyone caught engaging in such activity will be asked to leave immediately and will be given an unexcused absence regarding any missed coursework. This is your warning.
SCHEDULE

Week 1: Jan 27/29 (Introduction to Sub-Saharan Africa)
Aryeetey-Attoh, Introduction

Week 2: Feb 1/3 (The Global context)
Aryeetey-Attoh, Ch. 2
(Pick countries for presentation)

Week 3: Feb 8/10 (The physical environmental context)
Aryeetey-Attoh, Ch. 3. The physical environment

Week 4: Feb 15/17 (The physical environmental context)
Aryeetey-Attoh, Ch. 4. Human-Environment Impacts: Forest Degradation and Desertification.

Feb 17: EXAM 1

Week 5: Feb 22/24 (The sociocultural context I)
Aryeetey-Attoh, Ch. 5. Historical Geography of Sub-Saharan Africa

Week 6: Feb 29, March 2/4 (The sociocultural context II)
Aryeetey-Attoh, Ch. 6. Political Landscape of Sub-Saharan Africa: Opportunities and Constraints.

Week 7: March 7/9 (The sociocultural context III)
Aryeetey-Attoh, Ch. 7. Culture, Conflict, and Change in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Week 8: SPRING BREAK (MARCH 14-18) – NO CLASS

Week 9: March 21/23 (The sociocultural context IV)
Aryeetey-Attoh, Ch. 8. Population Geography of Sub-Saharan Africa.

March 23: EXAM 2

Week 10: March 25/28 and April 1 (NO CLASS – AAG)

Week 11: March 4/6 (The Development Context I)
Aryeetey-Attoh, Ch. 9. Geography and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa

Week 12: March 11/13 (The Development Context II)
Aryeetey-Attoh, Ch. 10. Transport, Communication, and Information Technologies in Sub-Saharan Africa: Digital Bridges Over Spatial Divides.
Week 13: April 18/20 (The Development Context III)
Aryeetey-Attoh, Ch. 11. Urban Geography of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Week 14: April 25/27 (The Development Context IV)

April 27: EXAM 3

Week 15: May 2/4 (The Development Context V)
Aryeetey-Attoh, Ch. 15. Spatial Organization and Distribution of Economic Activity: Industry and Entrepreneurship in Africa.