## Course Syllabus

### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Instructor:** Prof. Jean Muteba Rahier  
**Phone:** (305) 348-6860  
**Office:** LC308 (Modesto Maidique Campus)  
**Fax:** (305) 348-3270  
**Office Hours:** By phone or through Moodle chat by appointment or in person, by appointment  
**E-mail:** Please use Moodle Course Mail ONLY. Do not use FIU e-mail system to contact me or my TA

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, students will acquire conceptual tools that will enable them to conduct analysis of visual and other representations of Africa and Africans. The conceptual tools and analytical methods they will master by the end of the course should give them the skills to critically approach any kind of representations.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

- The main objective of this course is to conduct analyses of representations of Sub-Saharan Africa and Africans in films from various cinematic traditions, examining these representations as they took shape within specific socio-economic and political contexts.

- The course is organized around the “cultural studies” concept of “representation” as it relates to the analysis of discourses about Africa.

- The hope is that this course will contribute to the development of critical thinking among participating students, so that they will be able to deconstruct representations of Africa and Africans.

### TEXTBOOK

### REQUIRED READINGS
The required readings are indicated for each week of the semester in the Course Calendar.

There is one required text that you must purchase for this course. This book is on sale at both FIU bookstores, at Biscayne Bay and University Park.

*Mistaking Africa: Curiosities and Inventions of the American Mind.*
Curtis Keim,

**Recommended Readings**

MUDIMBE, V.Y.

CAMERON, Kenneth

THACKWAY, Melissa

GUGLER, Josef
2003 *African Film: Re-Imagining a Continent,* Oxford: James Currey Ltd.

DIAWARA, Manthia

**Recommended Readings on Afrocentrism**

HOWE, Stephen

APPIAH, Kwame Anthony

Early, Gerald

**COURSE PREREQUISITES**

There are no prerequisites for this course.
For more information about prerequisites, click here.

**GRADING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Requirements</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation (through informed involvement in discussions in Moodle)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 quizzes</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Film reports</td>
<td>495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1015</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>above 92</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>81 - 83</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67 - 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>91 - 92</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 - 80</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>64 - 66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 - 90</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>74 - 76</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>61 - 63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84 - 86</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>71 - 73</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note the **total points possible in this course is 1,100**; 85 extra credit points have been built into the method of assessment (I will calculate the final grade as if your total number of points was out of 1,000). For this reason, there will be NO OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXTRA CREDIT given for any reason in this course.

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

As a college, we care about and enforce the Policies and Procedures as they are important to the quality of the education we are providing to you. Details on FIU Policies can be found at:

http://online.fiu.edu/moodle/policies_and_resources/

**EXTRA CREDIT**

Attend at least one of the plenary sessions of the all day symposium organized by FIU’s African & African Diaspora Studies Program on October 30, 2009 in the GC Ballrooms on Modesto Maidique Campus. Write a 2 page report about the arguments developed by the main speaker, and summarize the response of the two discussants that followed the main speaker of the plenary session you chose to attend. The total length may not be over two pages. Identify the plenary session you have attended at the beginning of the two page report. Be sure to sign in on the appropriate sign-in sheet for this class so your attendance can be verified.

The program of the 10/30/2009 one day symposium will be posted on the main page of this course’s website shortly. An announcement will be made to advertise the posting.

**DISCUSSION**
As indicated in the syllabus, 10% (100 points) of the final grade will be reflective of your level of participation in the chapter discussions that the professor will initiate. There will be more than one discussion open per chapter. The chapter discussions will be open for a limited time period, which will correspond to the chapter we are covering in each specific week (see “Course Calendar”). When the discussions of a specific chapter will close, the discussions of the following chapters will automatically be available. What is looked for here with this system is your enthusiastic participation IN DUE TIME. It is highly recommended that you keep up with the program set up in the syllabus and calendar. Participation in chapter discussions helps students to score better in quizzes.

At the end of the semester, the professor will review the level of participation of each student in the course's e-archives and assign a participation grade accordingly.

The objective of these discussions is to provide the students with the opportunity to discuss material that might be novel and surprising. Discussions help the comprehension of new concepts. However, in order to facilitate the actual discussions, and make sure that they stay on focus, students should enter relatively brief (3 paragraphs maximum) interventions at a time. Twice a week, the professor will take a look at the evolving discussions and intervene as he sees it necessary.

The e-space of the discussions may NOT be used for the transmission of personal messages from a student to another, or from a student to the professor. For the latter, the course's e-mail and message posting systems must be used.

**QUIZZES**

Important information regarding quizzes:

- If a quiz/exam has a time limit; all questions must be answered and **submitted before** the time expires. When the time has run out, the quiz/exam is submitted automatically with whatever answers have been filled in so far and will automatically receive a grade of zero.
- Be aware of the availability window on quizzes/exams.
  - For example: If your quiz/exam is available from 7am - 7pm and you have 1 hour to complete the exam; you would need to start your quiz/exam at 6pm in order for you to have the full hour. If you start at 6:20 then you will only have 40 minutes to complete your exam.
- If multiple attempts are allowed on your quiz/exam there will be a 30 minute time delay between attempts.

One quiz (focused on the required readings) will be administered at specific dates (see calendar and syllabus). Each quiz (short answer questions) will count for 70 points. These quizzes will not be cumulative. The dates of availability of each quiz are indicated below and in the Course Calendar. They will be available for two days, always starting on a Friday afternoon and due by Sunday at 11:55pm. Required readings MUST be done in advance, which is to say by the dates indicated in the table below, and in the Course Calendar. You should read the required readings after going through the short videotaped conversations with
Dr. Rahier, and before viewing the Power Point presentations.

Students are strongly encouraged to present the quizzes individually. Quizzes will be completed on Moodle via the weekly links on the course homepage. Students can complete the quizzes in Moodle by following the procedure below:

- Click on the assignment labeled “Quiz” in the appropriate weekly section.
- Read the instructions for the quiz at the top of the page.
- Type your answers into the individual submission fields.
- Click “Submit” when you are finished.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quizzes Due Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QUIZ 1 due September 6, 2009 at midnight</td>
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<tr>
<td>QUIZ 2 due September 20, 2009 at midnight</td>
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<tr>
<td>QUIZ 3 due October 4, 2009 at midnight</td>
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<td>QUIZ 4 due October 25, 2009 at midnight</td>
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<tr>
<td>QUIZ 5 due November 22, 2009 at midnight</td>
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<tr>
<td>QUIZ 6 due November 29, 2009 at midnight</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

FILM REPORTS

You will watch 11 films directly related to the course’s content throughout the semester. These films will be either fiction films or non-fiction films. Most of these films have been chosen by the professor. However, towards the end of the course students will have to choose one film to report on according to the specifications of the assignment. Lists have been compiled to assist in the search for films. Review all the information in the section entitled, “Important Film Report Information” at the top of the course homepage. Students are strongly encouraged to watch films from these lists for their own education and pleasure, even though they will not report on them.

A typed report will have to be uploaded by each due date. For each film report, depending on the content of the film, you will have to use either the film report format for fiction films or the film report format for non-fiction films. The required formats for both fiction and non-fiction films can be found in the section entitled, “Important Film Report Information” at the top of the course homepage.

No report will be accepted after the due date (see syllabus and Course Calendar for due dates). The reports may NOT be longer than the space indicated on the film report format. **Respecting the space limit is an integral part of the exercise that each film report constitutes.**

Students can access the instructions for each report via the weekly links on the course homepage. Students will also submit (upload) assignments via these links. The title of the document you upload MUST be "YourLastNameYourFirstNameReport 1," "YourLastNameYourFirstNameReport 2," or "YourLastNameYourFirstNameReport 3," etc.
TURNITIN.COM
Students MUST upload the film reports AND the Extra Credit in MICROSOFT WORD FORMAT ONLY TO BOTH TURNITIN.COM AND MOODLE by the due date in order to receive credit. Any submission in any other format than Microsoft Word will not be graded. Students can attach their submission in Moodle by following the procedure below:

- Click on the assignment labeled “Film Report” in the appropriate weekly section
- You will have the option to “Upload” your submission
- Click on “Browse”, or type the file path of your Word document
- Click “Upload File”

The professor has a zero tolerance for plagiarism, as per the FIU policies (see course's homepage). Any student who is caught plagiarizing will receive an "F" grade for the course. In such a case, the professor will request from FIU's Academic Affairs that this "F" grade not be removed. Your film reports must be uploaded both on the FIU course's website, and on the Turnitin website. The latter will help the professor to detect any plagiarism. REPORTS THAT ARE NOT UPLOADED ON BOTH WEBSITES BY THE STUDENT WILL NOT BE GRADED.

Turnitin login information:
For posting your compositions you must register with www.turnitin.com. Once you are in that site, you must create a user profile. To create a user profile please do the following:

· On the upper right corner, click CREATE A USER PROFILE.
· Click NEXT.
· On the next window, enter the CLASS ID which is 2793318
· On CLASS ENROLLMENT PASSWORD enter: privilege (all lower case and together)

If you do not understand the instructions above, watch this video.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Due Dates</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Film report 1 due September 18, 2009 at midnight</td>
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<tr>
<td>Film report 2 due September 25, 2009 at midnight</td>
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<tr>
<td>Film report 3 due October 2, 2009 at midnight</td>
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<td>Film report 4 due October 9, 2009 at midnight</td>
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<td>Film report 5 due October 16, 2009 at midnight</td>
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<td>Film report 6 due October 23, 2009 at midnight</td>
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<td>Film report 7 due October 30, 2009 at midnight</td>
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<tr>
<td>Film Report 8 due November 6, 2009 at midnight</td>
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<td>Film report 9 due November 13, 2009 at midnight</td>
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<td>Film report 10 due November 20, 2009 at midnight</td>
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REQUIRED FILMS

*denotes an alternate title
MOST FILMS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR VIEWING ON THE COURSE WEBSITE. YOU DO NOT HAVE TO ACQUIRE THE REQUIRED FILMS ON YOUR OWN. PLEASE SEE “COURSE ANNOUNCEMENTS” FOR UPDATES.


This documentary describes the life a Khoikhoi woman who was taken from South Africa in 1810 and exhibited as a freak across Britain. The image and ideas for "The Hottentot Venus" (particularly the interest in her sexual anatomy) swept through British popular culture. A court battle waged by abolitionists to free her from her exhibitors failed. In 1814, a year before her death, she was taken to France and became the object of scientific research that formed the bedrock of European ideas about black female sexuality.

2. “The Birth of a Nation”

Director D.W. Griffith's historical saga recounts the genesis of the U.S. Civil War, the destruction it wrought upon the populace, and the social ills spawned by Reconstruction, including the ascent of the Ku Klux Klan. The story plays out in the intertwining fates of two fictional families -- the Northern Stonemans and the Southern Camerons. Though the film's legacy is stained by its racist content, it remains a landmark in filmmaking technique.

This movie is a “Watch Instantly” option on the Netflix website.

3. “Tarzan Finds a Son”

In Tarzan Finds a Son, Tarzan (Johnny Weismuller) and Jane (Maureen O'Sullivan) find a young boy -- the sole survivor of a tragic plane crash that claimed his parents -- and raise him as their own.

4. “Boma-Tervuren, The Journey” *(“Congo white king, red rubber, black death”)*

This film describes how King Leopold II of Belgium turned Congo into his private colony between 1885 and 1908. Under his control, Congo became a labor camp of shocking brutality, its people starved and tortured in the name of harvesting rubber.

5. “Coming to America”

A pampered African prince (Eddie Murphy) wants more out of life than the beautiful woman to whom he's engaged. So, he heads to America to find a mate who will fall for him, not his riches. Joined by his trusty sidekick (Arsenio Hall), the prince plunges into a low-paying job at a fast-food chain, and a romance with the boss's daughter. Murphy and Hall play a range of colorful characters, thanks to hilarious makeup wizardry.

Legrand H. Clegg II noted authority in the fields of African and American history and culture for nearly thirty years, reveals history as it was first told, as it was handed down from generation to generation by the ancient Nubians, Egyptians, Hebrews, Greeks and Romans.

7. “Chocolat”

A young woman returns to Cameroon to trace her past. Soon the sights, sounds and smells sweep her back to her childhood and memories of the people who populated her youth.

Or

“Black & White in Color”

The idyllic life in a French-African settlement is rudely interrupted in 1915 by news of war in Europe. The settlement’s sergeant tries to assemble an army of native soldiers to capture a neighboring German settlement. What develops is a hilarious spectacle of inept Europeans trying to carry on World War I in Africa. It won the 1977 Academy Award for Best Foreign Film.

8. “Indigènes Days of glory”

This film tells the tale of a 1943 WWII French Algerian Unit facing discrimination by its European counterparts due to prejudice and ignorance. The French armed forces are preparing to land troops in Europe to win back their homeland from the Axis Powers, but they cannot accomplish their task without recruiting men from their African colonies. The Africans themselves start their long journey full of hope and anticipation, but as they get closer to their goal they realize that their enemy is not necessarily the Germans.

9. Afrique, je te plumerai *(Africa I’m Going to Fleece You)*

This film provides a devastating overview of 100 years of cultural genocide in Africa. Director Jean-Marie Teno uses Cameroon, the only African country colonized by three European powers, as the basis for a carefully researched case study of the continuing damage done to traditional African societies by alien neocolonial cultures.

Unlike most historical films, Afrique, je te plumerai moves from present to past, peeling away layer upon layer of cultural forgetting. Teno explains: "I wanted to trace cause and effect between an intolerable present and the colonial violence of yesterday...to understand how a country once composed of well-structured traditional societies could fail to succeed as a state."

10. “Moolaadé”

Set in a small village, four young girls face ritual "purification" decide to flee to the household of Collé Ardo Gallo Sy, a strong-willed woman who has managed to shield her own teenage daughter from the mutilation. Collé invokes the time-honored custom of moolaadé
(sanctuary) to protect the fugitives, and tension mounts as the ensuing stand-off pits Collé against village traditionalists. This endangers the prospective marriage of her daughter to the heir-apparent to the tribal throne.

**EXPECTATION OF THIS COURSE**

This is an online course, meaning that most of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online courses are the same as for traditional courses; in fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills that can make them more demanding for some students.

Online courses are not independent study courses. You will be expected to interact online with the professor and your fellow students; to do assignments; to meet deadlines; and in many classes, to work in virtual groups.

Tips for Success in your online course, [click here](#).

Online Etiquette, [click here](#).

**COURSE CALENDAR**

It is highly recommended that all students consult regularly, for each chapter, the resources that the professor has made available on the course's website. These resources include a series of relevant information related to the content of the articles included in each chapter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODULE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Weeks 1 & 2**<br>(08/24 & 08/31) | -Presentation of the course's objectives, assignments, and other details. Watch the videotaped conversation with the Professor  
I  **Introduction to the course's main concepts.**  
-Do the required reading for the Introduction.  
-Go through the PPT presentation, “Introduction to the Course’s Main Concepts.”  
-Go through the PPT presentation, “Power, Knowledge, and Discourse.”-Watch the videotaped lecture of Stuart Hall on “Representation and the Media.”  
-Go through the Study Guide prepared by the professor which accompanies the videotaped lecture of Stuart Hall.  
-Participate in online discussions.  
-Do quiz # 1.  
-Required readings  
The study guide for the videotaped lecture “Representations and the Media.”  
AITKEN, S. and L. ZONN |

MACDONALD, G.  

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### Weeks 3 & 4 (09/07 & 09/14)

#### II The Long History of Stereotyping Africa.  
- Watch the videotaped conversation with Professor Rahier.  
- Do the required reading.  
- Go through the PPT presentation.  
- Watch the clip from Brazilian TV show Globo TV  
- Participate in online discussions.  
- Do quiz # 2.  
- Do the film report 1 on “The life and times of Sara Baartman ‘The Hottentot Venus’.”

- Required readings  
KEIM, Curtis  

This book is on sale at the FIU bookstore. YOU MUST READ THE ENTIRE BOOK.

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### Week 5 (09/21)

#### III Africa and Africans in the Hollywood Cinematic Tradition  
- Watch the videotaped conversation with Professor Rahier.  
- Do the required reading.  
- Go through the PPT presentation.  
- Participate in online discussions.  
- Do the Film Report 2 on “The Birth of a Nation.”

- Required readings  
TAYLOR, Clyde  

CRIPPS, Thomas  
### Week 6 (09/28)

**III Africa and Africans in the Hollywood Cinematic Tradition**

2) **Tarzan, the Aristocrat of the Treetops, versus the Savage Africans**
   - Watch the videotaped conversation with Professor Rahier.
   - Do the required reading.
   - Watch video clips of “Amistad” and of “The Naked Prey.”
   - Participate in online discussions.
   - Do the Film Report 3 on “Tarzan Finds a Son.”
   - Do the quiz #3.

   **Required readings**
   - **CAMERON, Kenneth**
   - **HENDERSON, Clara**
   - **MAYER, Ruth**

### Week 7 (10/05)

**IV Representations of Africa and Africans in “Universal Exhibitions” and Museums**

- Watch the videotaped conversation with Professor Rahier.
- Do the required reading.
- Go through the PPT presentation.
- Participate in online discussions.
- Do the Film Report 4 on “Boma-Tervuren, The Journey.”

   **Required readings**
   - **RAHIER, Jean Muteba**

### V Some African American Representations of Africa and Africans

- Watch the videotaped conversation with Professor Rahier.
- Do the required reading.
- Go through the PPT presentation “Some African American Representations…”
- Go through the PPT presentation “Understanding Afrocentrism.”
### Weeks 8 & 9  
**10/12 & 10/19**

- Participate in online discussions.
- Do Film Report 5 on “Coming to America” and Film Report 6 on “When Black Men Ruled the World.”
- Do the quiz #4

**Required readings**

**CRUSZ, Robert**  

**HALL, Stuart**  

**RAHIER, Jean Muteba**  

For more information about Afrocentrism, see the recommended readings at the end of the syllabus.

### Week 10 (10/26)

**VI French Cinema and Africa**

- Watch the videotaped conversation with Professor Rahier.
- Do the required reading.
- Go through the PPT presentation.
- Participate in online discussions.
- Do Film Report 7 on “Chocolat” or “Black & White in Color.”

**Required readings**


**VII Africa and Africans in African Cinema (1)**

- Watch the videotaped conversation with Professor Rahier.
- Watch the videotaped lecture by Dr. Kenneth Vickery.
- Do the required reading.
- Go through the PPT presentation.
- Participate in online discussions.
- Do Film Report 8 on “Indigènes Days of glory.”

**Required readings**
Week 11 (11/02)

HALE, Dana S.

Recent Press Article
SALTMARSH, Matthew

Week 12 (11/09)

VII Africa and Africans in African Cinema (2)
- Review the videotaped conversation with Professor Rahier.
- Do the required reading.
- Go through the PPT presentation.
- Participate in online discussions.
- Do the quiz #5
- Do Film Report 9 on “Afrique, Je te Plumerai.”

Required Readings
UKADIKE, Nwachukwu Franck

HONDO, Med

GENOVA, James

VII Africa and Africans in African Cinema (3)
- Review the videotaped conversation with Professor Rahier.
- Do the required reading.
- Go through PPT presentation
- Participate in online discussions.
- Do the quiz #6
- Do Film Report 10 on “Moolaadé.”

Required Readings
TOMASELLI, Kenyan G.
### Weeks 13&14 (11/16 & 11/23)

- **STONEMAN, Rod**  

- **AYARI, Farida**  

- **PETTY, Sheila**  

- **UKADIKE, Nwachukwu Frank**  

- **DIAWARA, Manthia**  

### Week 15 (11/30)

- **Conclusions of the course.**
  - Go through the PPT presentation.
  - Choose one film to report on from one of the lists given to you on the course’s website.
  - Do Film Report 11 on the film of your choice. *It is expected that your analysis in this film report will much more sophisticated as you apply all that you have learned in the course.*