

HIS 581-01 Perspectives on the Rwandan Genocide  
Dr. Colleen Kriger, Fall 2015, M 3:30-6:20, 2204 MHRA

**Course Description:**

What did the American mainstream media coverage of the Rwandan genocide reveal about western views and stereotypes of Africa? What can a study of the Rwandan genocide teach us about the social and economic history of Africa? This seminar begins with a viewing of the film *Hotel Rwanda* and selected readings from newspaper coverage of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. We will then explore the deeper pre-colonial history of peoples and societies of the region, the more recent economic conditions and events that sparked the genocide, and the very difficult social and judicial problems that mark its aftermath.

**Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes:** At the successful completion of this course, the undergraduate student should be able to:

1. Explain the historical context of the Rwandan genocide and the conditions and events that set off the violence;
2. Analyze and compare the experiences of various social and political groups who, willingly or not, were involved in the genocide;
3. Describe the aftermath of the genocide and relate it to current conflicts in the DRC and its environs.

**Teaching Methods and Assignments for Achieving Undergraduate Student Learning**

**Outcomes:** The primary assignments that are designed to achieve the first two Learning Outcomes are the formal short writing assignments (Assignments 1-8) and the Analytical Essay. The primary assignments that are designed to achieve the third Learning Outcome are the review exercises (1-8). Group work, readings, class discussions, and film viewings all build on and reinforce the formal writing assignments and the review exercises.

**Undergraduate Student course Requirements as percentage of final grade:**

- 10% Attendance, group work, and general class participation
- 30% Formal short writing assignments (8 total)
- 30% Review Exercises (8 total)
- 30% End of semester analytical essay

**Graduate Student Learning Outcomes:** At the successful completion of this course, the graduate student should be able to:

1. Explain the historical context of the Rwandan genocide and the conditions and events that set off the violence;
2. Analyze and compare the experiences of various social and political groups who, willingly or not, were involved in the genocide;
3. Describe the aftermath of the genocide and relate it to current conflicts in the DRC and its environs;
4. See and understand the Rwandan genocide in a broad, comparative historical framework, that is, in relation to other times and areas in world history.

**Teaching Methods and Assignments for Achieving Graduate Student Learning Outcomes:**

The primary assignments that are designed to achieve the first two Learning Outcomes are the formal short writing assignments (Assignments 1-8) and the Analytical Essay. The primary assignments that are designed to achieve the second two Learning Outcomes are the review exercises (1-8) and the Comparative History Project Proposal. Group work, readings, class discussions, and film viewings all build on and reinforce the formal writing assignments and the review exercises.

**Graduate Student Course Requirements as percentage of final grade:**

- 10% Attendance, group work, and general class participation
- 20% Formal short writing assignments (8 total)
- 20% Review Exercises (8 total)
- 20% End of semester analytical essay
- 30% Comparative History Project Proposal

**Evaluation and Grading:**

Coursework is graded according to the following criteria:

1. Level of success in identifying the question, problem, or issue at hand.
2. Level of success in presenting sufficient evidence, analysis, or information to address the particular assignment.
3. Level of success in clearly explaining insights, thoughts, and ideas to the reader.

Short writing assignments and review exercises are graded on a scale of 6, 4, 2, or 0 points each. The end of semester analytical essay and Comparative History Project Proposal will be given a letter grade (with the possible addition of + or -) of A (excellent), B (very good), C (average), D (below average), or F (failure to minimally meet the criteria).

**Attendance Policy:**

Prompt attendance in all class meetings is mandatory and will be regularly recorded; two points will be taken off your final course grade for each unexcused absence. Excused absences should be documented. Students engaging in electronic messaging or online activity in the classroom will be asked to leave and will receive an unexcused absence for that day.

**Academic Integrity Policy:**

All assignments must be your own work, in your own words. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and may be reported to the UNCG administration. Any information that you borrow from another source, even if you do not use a direct quotation, must be cited in a footnote or endnote giving credit to that source. You must make sure that you comply with the UNCG Academic Integrity Policy. It is online at <http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/>

**Required Readings:** Umutesi, Marie Béatrice. *Surviving the Slaughter: The Ordeal of a Rwandan Refugee in Zaire* (Madison, WI, 2004).

Required eReserve readings on Canvas in the HIS 581 Module (listed in class calendar).