

HIS 568/469 COURSE SYLLABUS

African History and Cultures through Film
Dr. Colleen Kriger
Office: 2107 MHRA (2nd floor)

Spring 2020, Tuesdays 4 – 6:50 pm
Telephone: 334-5205 (office); 334-5992 (History Department)
Office Hours: W 10-11am/Th 11 – 12 noon, or by appt.

Course Objectives: In this course we analyze the multiple mappings of race, gender, class, and sexuality in contemporary Francophone Cinema. Along the way, we will examine the historical intricacies of Africa's precolonial and colonial eras, struggles for independence, and the legacies of these histories in the current post-colonial period. In particular, we will discuss the ongoing flows between Francophone African countries and France. We will focus on the ways in which Africa and Africans have been portrayed in a variety of film genres, and so we will be especially concerned with issues of *content* – that is, messages conveyed in film about Africa and Africans – and the *ways* in which those messages are conveyed in order to decode them. We look at stereotypes about Africa in film, where those stereotypes have come from, in what forms they persist over time, and responses to them by politically aware and engaged filmmakers. We will therefore identify historical, social, economic, political, and cultural forces at play both in the productions of the films and in their content. What are the challenges of imagining Africa on its own terms and not in relation to the west, especially the former colonial power? How are interactions with the West negotiated? Finally, we will consider how some films and their circulation may change perceptions of Africa both from within and outside the continent. **All films will be subtitled in English and this course will be taught in English.**

Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)s: At the completion of this course the undergraduate student should be able to:

1. Identify, describe, and analyze common stereotypes Americans have about Africa and/or African people;
2. Explain the historical and political dimensions of media studies;
3. Describe and critically analyze and interpret scenes or segments of films.

Graduate Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs): In addition to the above learning outcomes:

4. Plan and present to undergraduate students a clearly organized, formal summary of a published critical analysis of a film.

Course requirements for undergraduate students:

Weekly Position Papers (based on weekly readings, 1p. typed), together worth 30% of final grade (SLOs 1 and 2);

Paper #1 (film summary/scene selection essay, 5pp. typed), 25% of final grade (SLO 3);

Paper #2 (film scene analysis, 6-7pp. typed), 30% of final grade (SLO 3);

Attendance and class lecture/discussion participation, 15% of final grade.

Course requirements for graduate students:

Weekly Position Papers (as above), together worth 25% of final grade (SLOs 1 and 2);

Paper #1 (film summary/scene selection essay, 5pp. typed), 25% of final grade (SLO 3);

Paper #2 (film scene analysis, 10-12 pp. typed), 30% of final grade (SLO 3);

Attendance and class lecture/discussion participation, 10% of final grade;

Class presentation, 10% of final grade (SLO 4) (See Oral Communication Value Rubric).