

HIS 364G/AFR 372G/WGS 340-32• AFRICAN WOMEN'S HISTORY

Fall 2013 • Meets: MW 3:00-4:30 PM, PAR 201

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00-3:00pm

Instructor: Ruramisai Charumbira; r-c@austin.utexas.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Samukele, Mauya, Karibu, Welcome! to African Women's History. This course is designed to introduce and expose students to African history *through women's eyes*, beyond media stereotypes. However, given the geographic vastness of the African continent, its deep rich history and cultural diversity, it means we will not be able to cover everything in the course of one semester. Instead, we shall take a chronological approach, studying key themes in African History from all four regions of the continent, thereby allowing students an in-depth understanding of the continent from the earliest times to the present. The course will focus on major themes and issues including: *self-determination, religion, education, feminism, motherhood, colonialism, politics and the environment*. We will study these (and other) themes through the autobiographies and novels written by African women, and monographs and biographies by professional Africanist historians/scholars illuminating the large and small arcs of **change over time** in women's lives (and gender) in African History. Because we can only read so many books and articles during the semester, required course material also includes documentary and feature films, and you may have to watch some out of class time.

The **course's major objectives** are that at the end of the semester you, the student, shall: a) have a good grasp of basic African History, and the lives of women therein; b) have acquired/sharpened your critical thinking and analytical skills; and c) be able to skillfully synthesize and write a first rate paper on African women on a theme of your choice from those taught during the semester. The course is designed to be rigorous and challenging, but plenty fun!

COURSE POLICIES

Academic integrity *is taken very seriously* in this course. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. For an overview of University policy regarding scholastic dishonesty, see the website of the Student Judicial Services:

<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>

Religious Holy Day Policy: Follow the UT Policy for observance of any religious holiday. The Student should inform the Professor as far in advance as possible to make arrangements.

Disability Statement: Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately as soon as possible to discuss his or her specific needs. I rely on the College of Liberal Arts for the need for reasonable accommodation based on documentation on file in their offices. Please act early as retroactive accommodation is not an option.

Respect is important both in and outside the classroom. In the classroom, it means raising your hand, waiting your turn, and being respectful to different points of view. In the 21st century, everyone has a cell phone/iPhone, so please let us have your full attention during class time and store away your gizmos for use after class. It is only respectful.

Communication will be mainly through Blackboard and email. Please make sure you have an active UT email, and/or make sure to forward your UT email to an email account you check daily. Ignorance of important information is not an option.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENT *NB: Late Assignments Not Accepted.*

Since this course is not designed as a MOOC or distance education course, it is in your best interest not only to be physically present, but actively engaged in all class activities.

- **20% Class Participation & Attendance. NB: You have two free classes to miss with no penalty** (including for certified medical/other reasons).
- **40%** Four Analytical Essays @ 10% each
- **10%** Reflection Essay and Proposal for Final Essay
- **10%** Map Quizzes, 2 @ 5% each
- **20% Final Essay** 10-page paper based on your proposed of a topic of your choice. Papers will be **due in my office on Friday, May 2 by 4:00pm**. Late papers will not be accepted.

COURSE GRADING POLICY: An **A** signifies “exceptional work” (A 94-100; A- 90-93); A **B** “superior achievement” (B+ 87-89; B 84-86; B- 80-83); A **C** “satisfactory” (C+ 77-79; C 74-76; C- 70-73); **D** is “passing, but unsatisfactory” (D+ 67-70; D 61-66); And an **F** means “failure” (F 60 and below).

REQUIRED TEXTS (Books available at the Coop Bookstore & PCL Reserve).

Because this is a Women’s History Course, both Collaborative and Individual Effort are Valued. To that end, some readings are assigned in Teams – especially those texts that are long and/or particularly challenging.

- ✓ Joyce A. Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut: The Female Pharaoh*
- ✓ John Thornton, *The Kongolesse Saint Anthony*
- ✓ Trevor R. Getz, L. Clarke, *Abina and the Important Men: A Graphic History*
- ✓ Werewere Liking, trans. from the French by M. de Jager, *The Amputated Memory*
- ✓ Teresa Barnes, *We Women Worked so Hard*
- ✓ Yvonne Vera, *Butterfly Burning*
- ✓ Tsitsi Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*
- ✓ Laretta Ngcobo, *And They Didn’t Die*
- ✓ Mamphela Ramphele, *Across Boundaries*
- ✓ Wangari Maathai, *Unbowed: A Memoir*

- Christopher Ehret, *The Civilizations of Africa: A History to 1800 (Recommended)*
- Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, *African Women: A Modern History (Optional)*
- Oyeronke Oyewumi, *African Gender Studies: A Reader (Optional)*

CLASS SCHEDULE – For your success, it is *very* important that you do your reading homework before each class, as class time is for critically analyzing the historical events, personalities, and themes each text raises, and NOT updating you on the reading.

NB: Assignments are due in class on Wednesdays

PART I – CONCEPTS AND CONTEXTS

Week 01 – Jan. 13-17: Defining Terms and Contexts – Introductions.

Ehret, “Introduction,” *The Civilizations of Africa: A History to 1800*; Iris Berger, “African Women’s History: Themes and Perspectives” *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, 4, 1 (Spring 2003).

Week 02 – Jan. 20-24: Defining Terms: Her Story/His Story or History?

Readings from *African Gender Studies*; Chapter 11, Ziyambe, “Gender Biases in African Historiography;” Chapter 1 – Oyewumi, “Visualizing the Body: Western Theories and African Subjects;” Chapter 4, Lazreg, “Decolonizing Feminism.”

Week 03 – Jan. 27-31: Definitions and Epistemologies – team assigned chapters.

Akosua Adomaka Ampofo and Signe Arnfred, eds., *African Feminist Politics of Knowledge*, <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:288583/FULLTEXT01.pdf>

ANALYTICAL ESSAY 1 DUE WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

PART II – SELF DETERMINATION, RELIGION, POLITICS

- ✓ Joyce A. Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut: The Female Pharaoh*
- ✓ John Thornton, *The Kongolese Saint Anthony*
- ✓ Trevor R. Getz, L. Clarke, *Abina and the Important Men: A Graphic History*

Week 04 – Feb. 03-07: Joyce A. Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut: The Female Pharaoh*

Monday: Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*,
Wednesday: Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*,

Week 05 – Feb. 10-14: John Thornton, *The Kongolese Saint Anthony*

Monday: Thornton, *Kongolese Saint Anthony*,
Wednesday: Thornton, *Kongolese Saint Anthony*,

Week 06 – Feb. 17-21: Trevor R. Getz, L. Clarke, *Abina and the Important Men*

Monday: Getz, Clarke, *Abina*,
Wednesday: Getz, Clarke, *Abina*,

ANALYTIC ESSAY 2 DUE IN CLASS ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2014

PART III – COLONIALISM, EDUCATION, MOTHERHOOD (Map Quiz #1)

- ✓ Werewere Liking, trans. from the French by M. de Jager, *The Amputated Memory*
- ✓ Teresa Barnes, *We Women Worked so Hard*
- ✓ Yvonne Vera, *Butterfly Burning*
- ✓ Tsitsi Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*

✓ Laretta Ngcobo, *And They Didn't Die*

Week 07 – Feb. 24-28: Werewere Liking, translation by M. de Jager, *The Amputated Memory*

Monday: Liking, *The Amputated Memory*

Wednesday: Liking, *The Amputated Memory*

Week 08 – Mar. 03-07: Teresa Barnes, *We Women Worked so Hard*

Monday: Barnes, *We Women*

Wednesday: Barnes, *We Women*

ANALYTICAL ESSAY 3 DUE WEDNESDAY, MARCH 05, 2014

WEEK 09 – MARCH 10-14: SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES. ENJOY YOUR R&R

Week 10 – Mar. 17-21: Laretta Ngcobo, *And They Didn't Die*

Monday: Ngcobo, *And They Didn't Die*

Wednesday: Ngcobo, *And They Didn't Die*

Week 11– Mar. 24-28: Yvonne Vera, *Butterfly Burning*

Monday: Vera, *Butterfly Burning*

Wednesday: Vera, *Butterfly Burning*

Week 12 – Mar. 31-Apr. 04: Tsitsi Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*

Monday: Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*

Wednesday: Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*

ANALYTICAL ESSAY 4 DUE WEDNESDAY, APRIL 02, 2014

PART III – FEMINISM, ECONOMICS, ENVIORNMENT (Map Quiz #2)

✓ Mamphela Ramphele, *Across Boundaries*

✓ Wangari Maathai, *Unbowed: A Memoir*

Week 13 – Apr. 07-11: Mamphela Ramphele, *Across Boundaries*

Monday: Ramphele, *Across Boundaries*

Wednesday: Ramphele, *Across Boundaries*

Week 14 – Apr. 14-18: Wangari Maathai, *Unbowed: A Memoir*

Monday: Maathai, *Unbowed: A Memoir*

Wednesday: Maathai, *Unbowed: A Memoir*

Week 15 – Apr. 21-25: Writing Workshop (**REFLECTION & PROPOSAL DUE ON WEDNESDAY**)

Monday: Team workshop

Wednesday: Individual Workshop

Week 16 – Apr. 28-May 02:

Monday: **Recap**

Wednesday: **Final Papers Due** at 3:00pm.