The University of Oklahoma  
College of Continuing Education  
Advanced Programs – Course Syllabus

Course Title:  
African Post-Colonial Contexts

Course Number:  
CAS 5970-229

Course Description:  
This course explores the connections and intersections between postcolonial studies and West-African cinema after Independence. The beginning of African filmmaking coincided with and chronicled the processes of decolonization and nation building. The career of Ousmane Sembene of Senegal, often called the “Father of African Cinema,” spanned forty-some years, from the early 1960s till his death in 2007. We will focus on several of his and his contemporaries’ films that give us insights into what challenges newly independent African countries faced. Film in West Africa follows in the tradition of “orature,” and filmmakers are the modern descendants of traditional storytellers or “griots.” We examine film as a means to cultural and political self-expression in the postcolonial context, what Achille Mbembe calls the “postcolony.” We read critical texts on filmmaking in Africa and discuss a variety of films made by West African directors from the 1960s through the present.

Class Dates, Location and Hours:  
Dates: September 29-October 4, 2015  
Location: Mildenhall, England. See Site Director for classroom location.  
Hours: Tuesday - Friday 6:00-9:30 pm; Saturday and Sunday 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.  
Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: August 31, 2015

Site Director:  
India Pearson. Phone: DSN 238-4172; CIV 44-1638-54-4172. DSN Fax: 238-4172; E-mail: apmildenhall@ou.edu

Professor Contact Information:  
Course Professor: Dr. Rita Keresztesi  
Mailing Address: Department of English  
University of Oklahoma  
760 Van Vleet Oval, Rm. 113  
Norman OK 73019  
Telephone Number: 405/388-7604 (cell)  
E-mail Address: ritak@ou.edu  
Professor availability: The professor will be available via e-mail to students before and after the class sessions. On-site office hours are half an hour before and after each class session, by appointment.

Textbook(s) and Instructional Materials:  
Student materials are available at the OU Follett Bookstore located at 1185 Asp Avenue; Norman, OK, and can be ordered online, by phone, by email, or by fax. Ordering online at http://www.bkstr.com/oklahomastore/home is strongly recommended – students can track the status of their order within 48 hours. If an order has not been shipped within three days, students can contact the Follett textbook manager by phone (405) 325-3511, (800) 522-0772 (toll-free) or email 0831mgr@fheg.follett.com. Phone orders (ask for the textbook manager and identify yourself as an Advanced Programs student) can be placed 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
on Friday; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday (CST). Summer hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday (CST). Fax orders can be placed 24 hours a day at (405) 325-7770. Text prices are available online.

7. Materials posted on the OU Desire to Learn (D2L) system: Access D2L at http://learn.ou.edu; enter your OU NetID and password, and select course to access material. Please contact your local Site Director if you require assistance.

Note: Follett is the Advanced Programs contractual textbook provider. Should text changes become necessary after publication of the course syllabus, Advanced Programs will facilitate text returns/refunds only for texts purchased through Follett.

**Supplemental Materials and Resources:**

**Maps**

**News Online**

**Films (selections)**
- *In Search of Africa* (Manthia Diawara, 1996): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t1DGdi55wPw&list=PLfinD8avIg12k_KaV23Cgmi3ojVw-H_L3&index=4
- *Diaspora Conversations from Goree to Dogon* (Manthia Diawara, 2010): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t1DGdi55wPw&list=PLfinD8avIg12k_KaV23Cgmi3ojVw-H_L3&index=4
- *Borom Sarret* [Cart Driver] (Ousmane Sembene, Senegal 1962, 20m): http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2QBfCG0Q7E0
- *La Noire de . . .* [Black Girl] (Ousmane Sembene, Senegal 1966, 60m)
- *Xala* [The Curse of Temporary Impotence] (Ousmane Sembene, Senegal 1974, 2h3m) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t-a15ZLKxjM
Course Objectives:

This class will provide students with important skills for understanding West African cultures against stereotypes and media representations. Students will gain insights into African narratives of decolonization through storytelling, film and music. While our perspective is historical, we will also update our references as political, social and cultural events unfold in the present, such as in the case of Burkina Faso or the Ebola epidemic. The class will facilitate interdisciplinary learning across literature, film studies, postcolonial studies and African/African Diaspora studies. Integrating materials from these fields provides unique insights into the essential role of culture for better understandings of self and other.
Course Outline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Readings + Papers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 29</td>
<td>Introduction to the class: Ousmane Sembene</td>
<td>Gugler, <em>African Film</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading Response #1</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 30</td>
<td>African Cinema: Djibril Diop Mambéty</td>
<td>Thackway, <em>Africa Shoots Back</em></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Reading Response #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1</td>
<td>Traditions: Idrissa Ouédraogo</td>
<td>Erdman, <em>Nine Hills</em></td>
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<td>Reading Response #3</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2</td>
<td>Modernity: Moussa Sene Absa, Jean-Pierre Bekolo</td>
<td>Diawara, <em>In Search of Africa</em></td>
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<td>Reading Response #4</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 3</td>
<td>Immigration and stereotypes: S. Pierre Yaméogo</td>
<td>Diawara, <em>We Won’t Budge</em></td>
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<td>Reading Response #5</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 4</td>
<td>Under/Development: Ousmane Sembene, Thomas Sankara</td>
<td>Piot, <em>Nostalgia for the Future</em></td>
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<td>Reading Response #6</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 4</td>
<td>Afro-pessimism/Afro-optimism: Hip Hop and Reggae</td>
<td>Final Exam Paper and</td>
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<td>Presentation</td>
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Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:

**Pre-Class and Class Assignments**

1. Finish reading all six texts before the course begins.
2. Write a Reading Response on each of the six texts. For the Reading Response you will write a short (about 4 pages or 1000 words) discussion/review of each book. The paper should contain a mix of summary, discussion and critical assessment. Focus on a central theme to organize your argument and make sure you support your points with textual references. Use MLA or Chicago Style of citation and bibliography. All writing assignments are to be turned to the designated D2L dropbox. Please give your file a name (for each assignment) that includes your last name, like “Smith-ReadingResponse.docx”. Turn in a paper copy also on the day we are discussing the book.

3. Be prepared to discuss the books and your Reading Responses in class.
4. All Reading Response papers are due, in revised version based on class discussions, by or before **October 25, 2015**

**Final Exam Paper (open book)**

For this assignment, you will critically analyze a film from the list in this syllabus; inform your argument by the texts we have read and the information gained in class discussions. Your essay should be about 3-5 pages (750-1250 words) long, a thoughtful synthesis and application of the themes and concepts of this course. The essay will require research based on class readings only, with citations and bibliography. This assignment is to be turned in to the designated D2L dropbox, along with a paper copy in class. You will present your paper to the class on the final day of this course, Sunday, October 4. The final exam paper is due by or before **October 25, 2015**
Grading:

This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, D, or F. There are 1000 points total for this class. Final Grades will be computed as follows:

- 900 – 1000  A
- 800 – 899   B
- 700 – 799   C
- 600 – 699   D
- Below 600   F

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<tr>
<th>Graded Assignments</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>All class sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Response #1</td>
<td>Tuesday, September 29</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Response #2</td>
<td>Wednesday, September 30</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Response #3</td>
<td>Thursday, October 1</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Response #4</td>
<td>Friday, October 2</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Reading Response #5</td>
<td>Saturday, October 3</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Response #6</td>
<td>Sunday, October 4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam Paper and Presentation</td>
<td>Sunday, October 4</td>
<td>300</td>
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Notice: Failure to meet assignment due dates could result in a grade of I (Incomplete) and may adversely impact Tuition Assistance and/or Financial Aid.
POLICIES AND NOTICES

Attendance/Grade Policy

Attendance and participation in interaction, individual assignments, group exercises, simulations, role playing, etc. are valuable aspects of any course because much of the learning comes from discussions in class with other students. It is expected that you attend all classes and be on time except for excused emergencies.

Excused absences are given for professor mandated activities or legally required activities such as emergencies or military assignments. It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. Unavoidable personal emergencies, including (but not limited to) serious illness; delays in getting to class because of accidents, etc.; deaths and funerals, and hazardous road conditions will be excused.

If you are obtaining financial assistance (TA, STAP, FA, VA, Scholarship, etc.) to pay all or part of your tuition cost, you must follow your funding agency/institution’s policy regarding “I” (Incomplete) grades unless the timeline is longer than what the University policy allows then you must adhere to the University policy. Students who receive Financial Aid must resolve/complete any “I” (Incomplete) grades by the end of the term or he/she may be placed on “financial aid probation.” If the “I” grade is not resolved/completed by the end of the following term, the student’s Financial Aid may be suspended make the student ineligible for further Financial Aid.

Students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of Tuition Assistance and Veterans Assistance. See the education counselor at your local education center for a complete description of your TA or VA requirements.

Academic Integrity and Student Conduct

Academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Academic assignments exist to help students learn; grades exist to show how fully this goal is attained. Therefore all work and all grades should result from the student's own understanding and effort.

Academic misconduct is any act which improperly affects the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement. Misconduct occurs when the student either knows or reasonably should know that the act constitutes misconduct. Academic misconduct includes: cheating and using unauthorized materials on examinations and other assignments; improper collaboration, submitting the same assignment for different classes (self-plagiarism); fabrication, forgery, alteration of documents, lying, etc...in order to obtain an academic advantage; assisting others in academic misconduct; attempting to commit academic misconduct; destruction of property, hacking, etc...; intimidation and interference with integrity process; and plagiarism. All students should review the Student’s Guide to Academic Integrity at http://integrity.ou.edu/students_guide.html

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. All students should review policies regarding student conduct at http://studentconduct.ou.edu/

Accommodation Statement

The University of Oklahoma is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your local OU Site Director.

Course Policies

Advanced Programs policy is to order books in paperback if available. Courses, dates, and professors are subject to change. Please check with your OU Site Director. Students should retain a copy of any assignments that are mailed to the professor for the course. Advanced Programs does not provide duplicating services or office supplies.

Any and all course materials, syllabus, lessons, lectures, etc. are the property of professor teaching the course and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and are protected under applicable copyright.

For more information about Advanced Programs, visit our website at: http://www.goou.ou.edu/
INSTRUCTOR VITA
Dr. Rita Keresztesi

Education
Ph.D. Literature, University of California at Santa Cruz, 1999

Current Positions
- Advanced Programs Professor, 2014
- Associate Professor, Department of English, University of Oklahoma
- Graduate Director, Department of English, OU

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses
IR/CAS 5970 African Post-colonial Contexts

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest
- Critical Race Studies
- West Africa and African Diaspora in the U.S. and the Caribbean
- Literature in the U.S.: Ethnic Modernism; The Harlem Renaissance; Black Arts/Black Power
- Film and Cultural Studies: U.S., West Africa, and the Caribbean

Representative Publications and Presentations
- The Western in the Global South, edited by MaryEllen Higgins, Rita Keresztesi, and Dayna Oscherwitz (forthcoming in 2015, Rutledge)

Representative Honors and Awards Received
- Fulbright Scholarship Award, Burkina Faso, University of Ouagadougou, 2010-2011

Major Professional Affiliations
- African Studies Association
- Caribbean Studies Association
- Modern Language Association