Course Title:
Seminar in Economic Geography: Africa and the Global Economic System

Course Number:
GEOG 6230-106

Course Description:
This course examines the economic geography of Africa. Africa, essentially, is a supplier of raw materials and an importer of finished goods. Historically, much of Africa’s raw materials were exported to the United States and Western Europe. Today, however, that pattern is changing dramatically with the emergence of China. The dynamics by which this change has come about are most revealing. For example, following sanctions against the government of Khartoum in Sudan, most western oil corporations left the country paving the way for China to emerge as the single most important player in the oil industry in that country. This course will examine what this pattern portends for the future of Africa as well as America’s interests and influence on the economy of the region.

Additionally, although Africa is often portrayed (justifiably) as an economic backwater, economic growth in several countries has averaged near double the rate of growth in North America and Europe over the past several years. We will examine where these economic miracles are, what is driving them and we will look at the implications for Africa and the world as a whole, again paying particular emphasis to the United States of America and China.

To lay the groundwork for this discussion, the course provides a brief historical overview of the continent of Africa, explaining how its contemporary political and economic structure has evolved historically. Then, it uses case studies to examine current economic systems and patterns of interaction. Finally, we examine how global macro-economic drivers continue to shape Africa’s economic environment.

Class Dates, Location and Hours:
Dates: March 19-25, 2012
Hours: Mon-Fri 6:00 p.m.-9:30 p.m.; Sat 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sun 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: February 19, 2012

Site Director:
Phone: 703-418-4800; Fax: 703-418-2730; E-mail: apwashington@ou.edu.

Professor Contact Information:
Course Professor: Aondover Tarhule, Ph.D.
Mailing Address: Department of Geography, SEC 684
University of Oklahoma
Norman, OK 73019-1007
Telephone Number: (405) 325-0540
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E-mail Address: atarhule@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:**

Materials posted on the OU Desire to Learn (D2L) system: Access D2L at [http://learn.ou.edu](http://learn.ou.edu); enter your OU NetID (4+4) and password, and select course to access material. Please contact your local Site Director if you require assistance.

**Course Objectives:**

With globalization, continuing terrorist threats, and rapidly changing geopolitical alliances, it can longer be taken for granted that any part of the world is unimportant. For example, continuing instability in the Middle East coupled with Africa’s proximity to the United States makes Africa of strategic interest to the United States in terms of her demand for oil and many other natural resources. The expanding influence of China in Africa, the increasing influence of terrorists groups in failed countries all point to the need for the USA to take a greater interest in Africa. The formation of AFRICOM is evidence of one tangible response by the United States government but there is a need generally for Americans to understand the continent of Africa more broadly and meaningfully. This course provides an opportunity for doing so. It seeks to achieve three broad objectives:

1. To understand the geography, history, and economy of Africa
2. To examine Africa’s changing economic systems, challenges and opportunities
3. To explore the dynamics of Africa’s changing significance and relationship to the world, especially the United States of America.

**Course Outline:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon March 19</td>
<td>Introduction, Physical Geography of Africa</td>
<td>Cole and De Blij Chapters 1-2, 5-6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue March 20</td>
<td>Brief History of Africa since Colonialism</td>
<td>John Reader, Chapters 46, 48-53</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed March 21</td>
<td>Brief History and Impacts of Colonialism</td>
<td>John Reader, Chapters 46, 48-53</td>
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<td>Sat March 24</td>
<td>China’s emerging role in African Resources</td>
<td>Readings TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun March 25</td>
<td>Synthesis and Final Exam</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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**Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:**

There will be four assignments for this course; two are due after the first weekend of classes and the other two after the second weekend. Each assignment should be a maximum of 10 pages long, double spaced. This does not include diagrams and table. Note that the 10 page limit is a maximum not minimum. This means that your essay can be less than 10 pages if you believe you have covered all the required elements. Each assignment must also include a minimum of seven peer reviewed publications, using the APA referencing and citation style.
Assignment 1:

To what extent has the physical-environmental geography of Sub-Saharan Africa related to the distribution of human and economic activities? 25%

Hint: an efficient way to proceed is to first identify the types of human and economic activities you wish to discuss. These may include population distribution, agricultural, or manufacturing activities. Then examine a good map of Africa that shows the distribution of those activities. You may wish to have another map showing the physical environmental attributes of Africa and try to see which physical features appear to influence the human/economic activities.

This essay is due on Wednesday, March 21st, 2012.

Assignment 2:

Produce a table listing all of the countries of Africa under the European countries that colonized them. For each African country show its GDP per capita and its ranking in the world as well as its human development index. Comment on these indicators of measuring development, including their strengths and weaknesses. Explain the patterns of the table that you see e.g. Do the African countries colonized that were colonized by some European countries appear to be better off economically? If so why? If not, why? That is, could you comment as to the various ways in which the colonial policies of the various European countries brought about the present development status of the various African countries? 25%

Due on Friday March 22nd, 2012.

Assignment 3:

Citing the literature and relevant examples, critically examine the proposition that resources abundance is a curse in Africa. 25%

Due on Wednesday March 28th, 2012.

Grading: This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, D, or F.

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. 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 Honesty

Honesty is a fundamental precept in all academic activities and … [you] have a special obligation to observe the highest standards of honesty. Academic misconduct in any form is inimical to the purposes and functions of the University and is therefore unacceptable and is rigorously proscribed. Academic misconduct includes:

- cheating (using unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise), plagiarism, falsification of records, unauthorized possession of examinations, intimidation, and any and all other actions that may improperly affect the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement;
- assisting others in any such act; or attempting to engage in such acts.

All acts of academic misconduct will be reported and adjudicated as prescribed by the student code of the University of Oklahoma. All students should review the “Student’s Guide to Academic Integrity” found at http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity

Accommodation Statement

The College of Continuing Education [Advanced Programs] is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your 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.

Copyright

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
Aondover Tarhule, Ph.D.

Education
- Ph.D. Geography, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
- M.Sc. Geography, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
- M.Sc. in Environmental Resources Planning, University of Jos, Nigeria
- B.Sc. (Hons.) in Geography, University of Jos (Nigeria)

Current Positions
- Advanced Programs Professor since 2002
- Associate Professor of Geography, University of Oklahoma

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses
- GEOG 6240 Seminar in Resource & Environmental Geography

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest
- Hydrology
- Africa and Arid Lands
- Hydro-climatic Variability

Representative Publications and Presentations

Representative Honors and Awards Received
- Recipient: University of Oklahoma Scholar-Teacher Award for the College of Geosciences, 2005.
- Presidents Distinguished Faculty Mentoring Program, The University of Oklahoma, 2003 to present.
Major Professional Affiliations

- Association of American Geographers
- International Geographical Union
- International Association of Hydrological Sciences
- International Water Resources Association
- American Geophysical Union