Course Title:
Special Topics/Seminar: Social Change, Cultures and Development in Africa

Course Number:
SOC 5970-221

Course Description:
This seminar focuses on social change and cultures of Africa. More than 800 million people live in 45 countries in Africa south of the Sahara. Tremendous changes have been wrought as the most outlying parts of Africa have become integrated into the global economy 60 years after independence for most countries. We will consider how the discipline of Sociology, with its toolbox of theory and methods, can explain African social issues, social change, and economic development. We will examine Africa’s present social problems and cultural challenges through the lens of colonialism and post-colonial events. We will consider Africa’s integration into the global political economy and read the leading books published in this area in order to understand how culture, society, and structural position come together to shape life chances on the African continent.

Class Dates, Location and Hours:
Dates: March 24 - April 18, 2014 (4-week course)
Location: Online format
Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: February 23, 2014

Site Director:
Carla Miller. Phone: CIV 011-49-9662-83-2069; DSN 476-2069; Fax: 011-49-9662-83-3113 or DSN Fax 476-3113; E-mail: apvilseck@ou.edu

Professor Contact Information:
Course Professor: Loretta Bass, Ph.D.
Mailing Address: Department of Sociology
780 Van Vleet Oval, KH 331
University of Oklahoma
Norman, OK 73019
Telephone Number: 405-325-1751
Fax Number: 405-325-7825
E-mail address: Lbass@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. Orders can be placed online at www.oklahoma.bkstr.com. Faxed orders may be placed 24 hours a day at (405) 325-7770. Representatives are available by phone at (405) 325-3511 or (800) 522-0772 (toll-free) or E-mail at 0831mgr@fheg.follett.com from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday; and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday (CST). Summer hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday (CST). (Text prices are available online.)


4. Materials posted on the OU Desire to Learn (D2L) system: I will post other required reading and detailed instructions for the class presentation assignment (due during our first class meeting). Questions to direct our discussions will also be posted two weeks prior to the first class meeting. 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. Once you reach the page for our course, look under the link “Content” at the top of the page. You will need Acrobat Reader on your computer for your browser to open the link. Please contact your local Site Director if you require assistance.

5. Additionally, I will assign TED talks, documentaries and other online resources each week to augment the academic research assigned.

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.

**Objective:**

This course has three objectives:

1. understand the foundations of African cultures and societies today, considering the influences of colonialism and post-colonialism;
2. apply theories of social change and economic development; and
3. comprehend how an African country’s structural positions in our world shapes local culture, politics and life changes.

**Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:**

The course will feature a combination of lecture and discussion in a seminar-like format. Please be prepared to discuss the topics and questions raised in the readings.

**Essay & Online Posted Presentation**

Due on the first week of class is a 5-7 page essay that requires you to do research on a social issue involving human disadvantage within a sub-Saharan African country of your choice. Use C. Wright Mills’ “sociological imagination” presented in *The Promise* (posted to Learn) to understand the social issue. Describe how this social issue as it may represent diminished life chances at the individual and societal levels. Are there structural causes for what may appear to be individual-level problems or failings? Is the “sociological imagination” useful to understand disadvantaged social position in this particular case? If so, explain how this is the case. As an example, one could examine a social issue of public health concern, such as HIV/AIDS in Kenya, first framing the spread of HIV/AIDS on the individual level (e.g., individual truck drivers passing HIV to women) and then the societal level (e.g., government slow to educate and provide public health services for people resulting in a high rate of HIV/AIDS in the population).

I would like for you to do independent research and critical thinking, and I would like for you to present your findings on the first night of class in a short presentation. For your presentation, you may wish to create a one-page outline or a Power Point presentation that can be posted to Learn. I am not looking for “correct interpretations” in your essay, but an honest approach. If you would like feedback on your outline, please send it to me by email prior to March 1, 2014.

Please double space your paper, title your paper, and use 1-inch margins. Do not worry about citation styles [a format such as (Kane 1995, 26) is fine], but do provide a bibliography.

**Quizzes and Final Exam**

Starting on the first week of class, we will take a quiz online within Learn (D2L). The first quiz will be taken on a map of the African continent, which will be taken on Friday, March 28. See Content in Learn
for details and a map to study. After the first quiz (i.e., map exam), quizzes will cover the major ideas in the readings and discussion from the material that has been covered. Each week on Monday, I will let you know what material will be tested in that Friday’s quiz. Each quiz should take about 20 minutes to complete.

The final exam will consist of essay style questions asking you to elaborate on themes from the course. You will be given two hours online to answer the final exam questions. You will have some choice as to which questions you may want to answer.

Class Schedule:

Week 1: March 24-28, 2014

1) Introduction of course & to sociology - What is sub-Saharan Africa and why study it? What are useful questions, approaches, and methods of the discipline of sociology?
2) C. Wright Mills. 1959. The Promise (on Learn)
4) Student online presentations: African Social Issue Profile & Online Presentation
5) Questions leading discussion posted to Learn, Discussion due by Thursday 11:59 p.m., GMT
6) Quiz over African map, Friday, March 28

Week 2: March 31-April 4, 2014

1) Questions leading online discussions posted to Learn, Discussion due by Thursday 11:59 p.m.
2) Charles Piot. 2010. Nostalgia for the Future, West Africa after the Cold War (Excerpt on Learn)
5) Quiz over major concepts within material covered to date

Week 3: April 7-11, 2014

1) Questions leading discussions posted to Learn, Discussion due by Thursday 11:59 p.m.
7) Quiz over material for this week

Week 4: April 14-18, 2014

1) Questions leading discussions posted to Learn, Discussion due by Thursday 11:59 p.m.
2) Ian Taylor. 2008. China's New Role in Africa
4) Jeffrey Sachs. 2006. The End of Poverty (Excerpt on Learn)
5) Quiz over week’s readings taken on Thursday, April 17 (anytime)
6) Final exam, taken Friday, April 18 Online

Note: If you cannot make an assignment due date due to a scheduling conflict, please discuss this with me before the class begins. I will be flexible if it can still work with the class.
**Grading:**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay &amp; online presentation</td>
<td>First week, March 24-28</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four quizzes &amp; class participation</td>
<td>See schedule</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online essay final exam</td>
<td>April 18, 2014</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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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 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.

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.

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
Loretta Bass, Ph.D.

Education
- 1998 Ph.D. University of Connecticut, Sociology
- 1996 University of Michigan, ICPSR Statistical Institute in Quantitative Methods
- 1993 M.A. University of Connecticut, Sociology
- 1990 B.A. Economics and B.S. Journalism, University of Kansas, with honors

Current Positions
- Associate Professor & Graduate Director, Department of Sociology, University of Oklahoma
- Associate Professor, Women’s Studies, University of Oklahoma
- Advisor, African Studies Minor, International and Area Studies, University of Oklahoma

Representative Publications and Presentations

Books:

Refereed Publications:


Book Chapters, Reviews, & Professional Publications:


Technical Reports and Papers:

- Tuition Assistance for Faculty, Spouses, & Dependents, 2009. L. Bass, A. Reeves Stearns. This report prepared for the Faculty Senate Executive Committee provides background information on peer schools and assesses the possibility that OU can provide a tuition benefit to the spouses and dependents of faculty. http://www.ou.edu/admin/facsen/tutionwaiverprop.htm
- Demographic, Health & Communities Survey, Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, 2009. Technical assessment of the health and community needs of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes” peoples using the OU POLL (University of Oklahoma Public Opinion Learning Laboratory) to collect data of a sample 521 adults within the total enrolled population of 12,232 living within (i.e., nine counties in Oklahoma) and outside the tribal service areas.
- Sociology Graduate Program: Overview, Requirements and Rules, August 2008. This technical document provides an overview of the rules and the processes involved with earning a graduate degree from the OU Department of Sociology.
• Sociology Graduate Program Assessment, 2006-07. Technical evaluation of curriculum, training, and research of University of Oklahoma graduate study using survey of recent graduates. Submitted to Oklahoma Regents of Higher Education.


External Research Funding:

• U.S. Department of State, 2010. Public Affairs Project – Entrepreneurialism at the University of Lomé. Consultant supervisor and project assessment. Students work in teams to learn the experience of entrepreneurs from their respective disciplines in the five regions of Togo, and will then present their findings at a conference. This is the first phase of a project to create a Maison Entrepreneurial or entrepreneurial institute. ($2,500)

• Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribal Government. 2008-09. Project: Demographic Assessment of Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes living in eight Oklahoma counties. Sponsored Research Agreement FY09-ORA1-21. Use of OU POLL and two part-time graduate teaching assistants (GTA) students. ($43,748)


• Penn State University. 2005. Survey Research Center, Fellow in longitudinal methods workshop. ($1,500)

• U.S. Department of State. 2004. International Center for Peace. Invited to lead workshop to develop comparative research design for a rural needs assessment across six villages in Syria, Iraq, and Turkey. Informed methods and facilitated consensus among scientists of the three countries. ($4,000)


• Center for Children & Childhood Studies. 2003-04. Junior Fellow in Seminar. Rutgers Univ. ($3,000)

• Joint Center for Poverty Research, 2000-2001. Awarded federal funding (HHS/U.S. Census Bureau) for research on child wellbeing since the 1996 Welfare Reform legislation. ($40,000)

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest:

Research:

• Child Labor and Public Policy
• Labor Markets; Informal Sector Work
• Public Policy and Child Well-Being
• Electoral Behavior of Native-born and Naturalized Citizens
• Demographic Processes that Impact Public Policy

Teaching:

• Sociology of the Family
• Sociology of Africa
• Inequality in a Global Perspective
• Demography
• Graduate Seminars: Social Stratification; International Comparative; Family Demography and Inequality in a Global Perspective.

Representative Honors and Awards Received:

• Good Teaching Award. University-wide selection process to two awardees each academic year. 2010.
• Outstanding Faculty Mentor. President’s Distinguished Faculty Mentoring Program. University-wide award selected by faculty committee based on course materials and student feedback. 2005.
• Oklahoma Educators’ Leadership Academy, Outstanding Professors. 6 workshops. 2005-06. Nominated by Dean of College of Arts and Sciences.
• Rothbaum Outstanding Assistant Professor in the College of Arts and Sciences, University of Oklahoma, 2004. Selected by faculty committee.
• Faculty Inductee, Golden Key Honor Society, 2001. Selected by students.
• Outstanding Leader Award, OU Young Women Leaders Program, 2001. Selected Instructor