

GEOG/AAAS 351 = Africa's Human Geographies = Spring 2006 = Dr. Garth Myers

Times: We will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30-10:45 in Lindley 317.

Contacts: Office Hours: W+F 9-10, T+Th 11-12, Lindley 201. Failing that, we can arrange an appointment time. My email is gmyers@ku.edu, wherever I am in the world.

Explanations: This is a course that examines the diverse and rich human geography of the African continent. We will look at the continent as human geographers would, emphasizing the key sub-fields of the discipline. This means we will explore and analyze Africa's historical geography, population geography, cultural geography, development geography, urban geography, rural geography, and political geography, with a slightly larger focus on the last one. No prior coursework in AAAS or GEOG is required, but you will want to develop a basic familiarity with the African continent's features and the geography discipline's emphases right at the beginning of the term.

Texts: Our main textbook is Robert Stock (2004), *Africa South of the Sahara: A Geographical Interpretation*, 2nd edition, New York: Guilford. Other readings may be placed on e-reserve or handed out as the term goes on. Please pay attention to the pages on the list of weekly readings below. You are also expected to read the novel, *Links*, by Nuruddin Farah, over the course of the term, and to write a 4-5 page (double-space, typed) review/reaction paper about it.

Expectations: I begin with the same expectation in every class – you will want to be here every Tuesday and Thursday morning to learn about the subject matter. I do not take formal attendance, but I can say the evidence is simply overwhelming that regular attendance correlates with better grades in my classes. The more formal expectations by which I will grade you are as follows: There will be

Three tests worth 25% of the final grade each = **75%** of the final total

Three small projects worth 5% of the final grade each = **15%** of the final total

A **Book review** [of *Links*] worth 10% of the final grade = **10%** of the final total

The tests will have a mix of question types (matching, fill-in, short-answer, and essay). The final exam is not totally comprehensive but will have a few questions from the first two tests. The projects are in-class and take-home exercises tied to learning more about key themes of the class. I have suggested below the weeks when these will happen.

Topics: I have detailed here below the set of lecture and discussion topics for each day. I generally try to stay as close to this as I can. Readings are listed by the week.

January 24 Introduction to the Course and to Africa
 26 The Map of Africa
 Stock: 3-27

February 31 Images of Africa
 2 Africa's Cultural Geographies I
 Stock: 28-55

February 7 Africa's Cultural Geographies II
 9 Africa's Historical Geographies I
 Stock: 101-116
Project 1

14 Africa's Historical Geographies II
 16 Africa's Historical Geographies III
 Stock: 117-146

21 Population Issues in Africa
 23 Migration and Mobility
 Stock: 149-191

March **28 Test 1, February 28**
 2 Urban Geographies I
 Stock: 310-322

7 Urban Geographies II
 9 Health Issues
 Stock: 241-267

14 Urban Geographies III
 16 African Women and Development
 Stock: 268-296

Spring Break: No Class, March 21 and 23

28 Agricultural Development I
 30 Agricultural Development II
 Stock: 195-238
Project 2

April 4 Development Geographies I
 6 Development Geographies II
 Stock: 367-393

April 11 Development Geographies III
13 Test 2, April 13
 Stock: 394-405

18 Introduction to Africa's Political Geographies
20 Political Geographies: East Africa I
Stock: 451-453

25 Political Geographies: East Africa II
27 Political Geographies: Southern Africa I
Stock: 437-448

May 2 Political Geographies: Southern Africa II
4 Political Geographies: Central Africa I
Stock: 423-436

May 9 Political Geographies: Central Africa II
11 Political Geographies: Western Africa
Project 3
Stock: 409-422

15 Final Exam: 7:30-10 a.m. Monday May 15

And, finally, just so you know....

Things I Hate: Hearing cell phones that ring in class. Finding cell phones on in class, or newspapers being read in class. Hearing conversations going on and on in class that are not about African human geography, while I'm talking. Reading book reviews that I can google in five seconds. Seeing people cheating in a test. Having people not respecting one another in my class. Having people ask what they can do to improve their grade... on May 12, on their first visit to my office during the term. The Missouri Tigers, or any team from Texas or Florida in any sport.

Things I Like: A full classroom. Students who ask questions. Students who have real live opinions on things. Students who even laugh at my bad jokes. Students who write argumentative book reviews. Students doing well on my tests – especially the second and third tests – and doing their own work. Students who get together to study for this class. Students who learn a lot about Africa. Students who show good teamwork on projects. Students becoming friends in this class – so far, two marriages in eleven years started here, but just plain friendships are countless. Having a lot of students visiting me in my office hours. The Jayhawks, and any team from California, Pennsylvania, or Maine (except if they are playing KU).