Most Americans have not had much of a chance to learn about Africa, and when stories flare up in the news—as they did last year with the World Cup in South Africa, or this year with the North African uprisings—they seem to come out of nowhere. This course is intended to help you understand Africa’s recent events, predicaments, and accomplishments by grounding them in Africa’s history. This means becoming familiar both with content—including colonialism, nationalism, and post-colonial developments in parts of Africa—as well as methods for research and analysis.

When non-Africans talk or think about Africa, generally they focus either on poverty (“Africans are poor”) or to ethnicity (“Africans operate through tribes”). These generalizations provide the analytical structure for this course. By the end of our term, you should have a historically informed answer to the question “What accounts for widespread poverty in Africa?” You should also have a sense of why “tribalism” has become important—sometimes violently—in African politics, and also why it looms large too large in outsiders’ interpretations of African developments.

More broadly, you should be better able to understand news stories about Africa. In order to gain and demonstrate this mastery, you will be asked by the end of the course to write a paper using historical sources and analysis to interpret an African current event. In groups, you will present to the class a multi-faceted explanation that draws on your individual interpretations. Activities over the course of the 3-week term will help you prepare for this assignment.

Format and Activities of the Course:

Our 3-hour class meetings will feature a mix of mini-lectures, discussions, activities, and films. We will watch period footage from the colonial and early-independence eras, dramas and documentaries about major developments since independence, and a recent feature film from Africa. We will also discuss a novel, which is intended to remind us that African life (like that everywhere) is about more than just political and economic developments—although these are widely influential.
Maymester courses are different from other courses. We will be meeting the same number of hours we would during a regular semester, but they take place over less than three weeks. That means:

• We will all become totally immersed in the course.
• Missing one day is the equivalent of missing one week during the regular semester. Missing one Maymester week would be losing one-half of the course. If you cannot attend every class, please reconsider taking this course.
• For the next 2 1/2 weeks, I will expect you to spend up to six hours every day outside class on this course. History courses generally require that students spend about two hours outside class for every hour in class. During the semester, then, five three-hour classes would mean a 45 hour work week. But this class is different. There are to be 40 hours of class time, requiring approximately 80 hours of time spent out-of-class. For these 2 1/2 weeks, History 130 will be the equivalent of a full-time job.
• There is not as much time to study things, but there is also not as much time to forget them.

COURTESY DURING CLASSES: It is disruptive to others to arrive late to class or to leave early. If you must do it (which I strongly discourage), please be unobtrusive. Also, please turn off all cell phones and other communication devices. Do NOT text in class—this is the height of discourtesy.

Laptop computers may only be used in class for taking notes or other specifically authorized activities. If you are checking your email, looking up sports scores, or shopping for shoes, your classmates who can see your screen will not be able to concentrate on our course (and neither will I). If I discover that you are using your laptop for any reason other than note-taking while in class, I will bar your laptop from our classroom for the rest of the term. I am serious.

Readings: You should come to class having done the assigned reading and assimilated it well enough to discuss it. Please bring the text(s) with you to class. Our discussions will be much more stimulating if you have substantive ideas, spurred by the reading material, to contribute.

The main textbook for the class is Kevin Shillington’s History of Africa (1998), which is long on facts and short on interpretation, so you’ll get interpretive material elsewhere. (This book has terrific maps, though.) We’ll also read The Joys of Motherhood, an engaging novel set in 1930s and ‘40s Nigeria by Buchi Emecheta, and an abridged, illustrated version of Nelson Mandela’s autobiography. These three books are on sale at Student Stores and on reserve in the Undergraduate Library.

In addition to these books, we will read articles and other documents available either on the internet or on the class Blackboard site. You can get to the internet documents on your own (see the addresses listed below) or via links provided on Blackboard version of this syllabus. The documents in Blackboard are in the “Course Documents” section, and are designated below as "BB."
Other Assignments:

1. Class participation: At a bare minimum this means attendance in class; it also includes active involvement in class discussion. When assigning your participation grade, I will ask these questions: Did it make a difference to the class that you were a member? Did you add something? Did you contribute a point of view, a set of commentaries, a disciplinary perspective, and/or an interpretive stance that was of value in our deliberations? Did you accept your share of responsibility for the success of this class? Were you merely an observer of everyone else’s endeavors? If you are uncomfortable speaking in class, please come to talk with me.

2. Homework: You can expect up to six hours of homework each day, although by the end of the course it will mainly center on your final paper and presentation. Daily homework will always include reading, and will generally include some kind of research or writing. The first homework assignment is a map exercise, which can be completed easily using the internet and other resources under “External Links” on Blackboard. It is intended to familiarize you with African place names and locations. Other assignments will ask you to find and post news items on Blackboard, comment on other people’s postings, and respond to readings and films. You’ll get more detailed instructions in class.

3. A 6-8 page paper interpreting a recent event, or set of events, in historical context. Your sources must include at least two produced by first-hand witnesses or participants (that is, primary sources). Papers must be grammatical, logically written, and double-spaced, with 1-inch margins and 12-point font. References should be in footnote form.

4. A 20-minute group presentation, based on information in group members’ individual papers, analyzing multiple aspects of a single event or phenomenon in contemporary Africa.

5. Final exam on May 27, covering the major themes and concepts from this course.

You should be aware that plagiarism will not be tolerated, and all suspected cases of plagiarism will be referred to the Honor Court for assessment. Remember that when writing, taking exams, or performing other assignments you are bound by the Honor Code. For details, see http://honor.unc.edu/honor/code.html and http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html.

For help with your writing and other academic skills, I strongly recommend UNC’s Writing Center (http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/about.html) and Learning Center (http://learningcenter.unc.edu/).

Overall grades will be determined as follows:

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<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
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<td>Homework</td>
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SCHEDULE

Before class on the first day, please take a look at the Shillington text, chapters 16, 18, and 20.

Tuesday, May 10: Introductions, 19th Century Trends, and Imperialism

- Introductions to the course and to each other
- Introduction to 19th century Africa, with maps
- Imperialism—watch excerpt from Basil Davidson’s documentary, *The Bible and the Gun*
- BB: Read and discuss the main provisions of the Berlin Conference (1885). (The full text of the Conference declaration is at [http://africanhistory.about.com/od/eracolonialism/l/berlinAct1885.htm](http://africanhistory.about.com/od/eracolonialism/l/berlinAct1885.htm), but this shorter version on Blackboard will do for our purposes.)
- Introduction to historical newspapers

*Homework:*

- Complete the map exercise (on Blackboard, under “Assignments”), due in class tomorrow
- Compare your map to maps made before and just after the Berlin Conference (see [http://alabamamaps.ua.edu/historicalmaps/africa/index1876-1885.htm](http://alabamamaps.ua.edu/historicalmaps/africa/index1876-1885.htm))
- Read Shillington, ch. 21-23
- Find a contemporary (that is, from the time it took place) news account of either the Berlin Conference or one of the colonial conquests described in the textbook and post it to the class discussion board, along with a 2-3 sentence summary of its content and tone. Also read other people’s postings and post at least one comment on someone else’s news article.

Wednesday, May 11: Early Colonialism

- How did Europeans conquer Africa? What were some African strategies?
- Discuss contemporary newspaper accounts
- Watch excerpt from Basil Davidson’s documentary, *The Magnificent African Cake*
- How did Europeans make money in the African colonies?
- How do people make money in Africa now?

*Homework:*

- Read Shillington, ch. 24
- BB: Read “Frederick Lugard instructs his officials on how to implement indirect rule (1913-18), from *Africa and the West*
• Find a newspaper article from April or May, 1994 about the Rwanda genocide and post it on the Blackboard discussion board, along with a short description of its contents and tone. Also, comment on an article posted by at least one of your classmates.
• Start reading (if you haven’t already) Buchi Emecheta, The Joys of Motherhood

Thursday, May 12: Tribalism and the Rwanda Genocide
• Early colonial administrations and indirect rule
• Indirect rule and Tribalism
• An example of using history to understand the news: Rwanda, 1994
• Watch first half of film: Sometimes in April, by Raoul Peck (2005, 140 mins.). A description, with reviews, is at http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/sometimes_in_april/.
• Introduction to online African newspapers.

Homework:
• Read the Prologue and Introduction of The Graves are Not Yet Full: Race, Tribe, and Power in the Heart of Africa, by Bill Berkeley (2001), pp. 1-19 and prepare answers to the questions listed under “Assignments” on Blackboard.
• Post on Blackboard an article from an African news source from 1994 about the Rwanda genocide, along with your own short interpretation of it. Comment on a posting by at least one of your classmates.
• Look at a current news website and browse the articles to get a sense of what the major events in Africa are these days. Choose one article and post it on Blackboard, along with a description of its contents and why you think it is interesting. Respond (with a comment or a couple of questions) to at least one of your classmates’ postings.
• Keep reading The Joys of Motherhood

Friday, May 13: Thinking Historically about African Events
• Continue and finish the video, Sometimes in April
• Discuss the Rwanda genocide, with news accounts from inside and outside Africa.
• Discuss the current news. What are the major issues? What does the press say about them? How else might you learn about them? Start choosing topics for final papers and presentations.

Homework:
• Read Emecheta, The Joys of Motherhood (whole book)
• See the discussion questions on Blackboard under “Assignments”
• Write a short, 2-3 page essay on the following questions: What are the joys of motherhood for Nnu Ego? What do they have to do with African history? Essays are due in Blackboard’s “Digital Dropbox” by class time on Monday.
• BB: Read “Colonial rule equals taxes and forced labor” (1934), “Colonial rule equals police harassment” (1920s-30s), and “Colonial rule equals censorship” (1936),” all from Africa and the West.
• Read Mandela, an Illustrated Autobiography, ch. 1-2
Monday, May 16: Life in Colonial Africa

- Discuss primary sources on colonial life
- Discuss *The Joys of Motherhood*
- Race and Capitalist Development in South Africa
- How was South Africa similar to and different from other parts of colonial Africa?

**Homework:**
- Read Shillington, ch. 25-26
- BB: Read “The impact of World War II” (1941-45), from *Africa and the West*
- Find and post on the Blackboard discussion board a news story, either from Africa or from elsewhere, about Ghana’s independence in March 1957. Add a 2-3 sentence description of its content and tone. Comment on a news story posted by at least one of your classmates.
- Find and post on the Blackboard discussion board a contemporary news story about Africa. Add a brief summary, and then pose a historical question (or more than one) about the story. (Your question should be some, more specific, version of: “How/why did this happen?”) Comment on—or suggest an answer to the question of—at least one of your classmates’ postings.

Tuesday, May 17: World War II and African Nationalism

- WWII and its aftermath in Africa
- Independence struggles in British and French Africa
- In-class video excerpt, Basil Davidson, *The Rise of Nationalism*
- Africa in the news today: What are the big issues/events?

**Homework:**
- Read Shillington, pp. 390-97
- BB: Read “The Cold War begins in earnest (1960),” “Patrice Lumumba writes his last letter to his wife (1961),” and “The final hours of Patrice Lumumba, Maurice Mpolo, and Joseph Okito (1961),” all in one pdf file, from *Africa and the West*
- Find and post on the Blackboard discussion board a news story, from an African or non-African source, reporting on some aspect of crisis in the Congo from June 1960 to the end of January 1961. Briefly summarize the article’s tone and contents. Comment on at least one article posted by your classmates.
- Think about what your paper topic will be.

Wednesday, May 18: The Congo Crisis and the Cold War in Africa

- In-class film: *Lumumba* (Raoul Peck, 2002, 115 mins.)
  See the description of the film at [http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/lumumba/](http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/lumumba/)
Discussion of the Cold War in Congo and more broadly
Recent conflict in the Congo: a legacy of history, or something new?

Homework:
- Read Shillington, pp. 402-406
- Read Mandela, ch. 3-7
- BB: Read “Hendrik Verwoerd explains apartheid” and “The Freedom Charter,” 1955, both from Africa and the West
- BB: Read Nadine Gordimer, “1959: What is Apartheid?” from Living in Hope and History
- Post your paper topic on Blackboard, along with at least two historical questions that your paper will address. Comment (raise questions, make suggestions) on at least two of your classmates’ projects.

Thursday, May 19: Apartheid in South Africa
- South Africa in the 1950s and ‘60s
- In-class video, Come Back Africa (Lionel Rogosin, 1960, 81 mins.)
  See http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/come_back_africa/# for more on the film.
- Discussion of paper topics and primary sources

Homework:
- Read Shillington, ch. 28
- BB: Kwame Nkrumah, Neo-Colonialism, the Last Stage of Imperialism (1968), read the Introduction and then quickly skim chapter 6
- BB: Read Frederick Cooper, “Development and Disappointment,” chapter 5 of his Africa Since 1940, pp. 91-118
- BB: Read excerpt from Chinua Achebe, A Man of the People (1966)
- BB: Read Julius Nyerere, "The Arusha Declaration" (1967)
- Start looking for primary sources for your papers

Friday, May 20: Post-Independence Hopes and Disappointments
- How independent was postcolonial Africa? Politics and development projects in the 1960s and ‘70s
- Crisis and Debt
- The “Gatekeeper State”
- Form groups for presentations

Homework:
- Read Mandela, ch. 8-12
- BB: Read “Nelson Mandela and a new Africa (1994)” from Africa and the West, and watch him give the speech at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=grh03-NjHzc
- Compare Mandela’s speech to independence speeches by Nkrumah (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xf5CPacHt4Q&playnext=1&list=PL99B0B054AD8E1175) and Lumumba (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DGdf7wX-E7g&feature=related)
• BB: Read “Jacob Zuma addresses the Solidarity Union National Congress (2008),” from *Africa and the West*
• Find and post on Blackboard a (fairly) recent political cartoon from South Africa. (Optional hint: google search “Zapiro.”) Also add a brief statement of your interpretation of the cartoon. Comment on at least one posting by your classmates.
• Post the titles and descriptions of your (at least) two primary sources for your papers. Comment (raise questions, make suggestions) on at least two of your classmates’ proposed sources.

Monday, May 23: The End of Apartheid and After
• Southern Africa in the 1960s and ‘70s
• Video excerpts, Basil Davidson, *The Rise of Nationalism*
• Crisis in South Africa in the 1980s
• South Africa since 1994

*Homework:*
• Read Shillington, ch. 29
• BB: Read “The problem with Africa (1980)” and “Structural adjustment in Ghana (1983-89)
• Work on your papers

Tuesday, May 24: Africa and the World Economy
• Discuss Structural Adjustment Programs
• In-class film: *Bamako* (2007, 2 hours) [http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/bamako/](http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/bamako/)

*Homework:*
• Write a short (1-page) reaction to the film *Bamako*, relating it to anything we have studied in this class, and submit it through Blackboard’s Digital Dropbox.
• Finish a draft of your paper and send it to the other members of your group.
• Prepare (that is, write down, in about 2 paragraphs) constructive comments on their paper drafts for the other members of your group.

Wednesday, May 25: Thinking historically about current African issues
• Work with groups on presentations and papers

Thursday, May 26: Presentations and review for final exam
• **Papers due in class**

Friday, May 27: Final Exam