African Philosophy—Syllabus
(AFST 3390*CRN: 26351; WS 3383*CRN 27727; POLS 4344*CRN 27789; CHIC 4350*CRN 27796)
*This syllabus is subject to change during the semester. Double-check Blackboard for updates.

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Office hours by appointment on Zoom (Wed 1 pm to 3 pm)

This is a hybrid online course.
We meet synchronously online twice a week from 1:30pm to 2:50 pm every Tuesday on Zoom
Zoom Link: Join URL: https://utep-edu.zoom.us/j/83335153691
Zoom ID: 833 3515 3691

Course Description
This course invites students with a foundation in Continental/Western philosophy to explore the lesser-known field of African Philosophy. Understanding the latter as a contemporary off-shoot of ethnophilosophy and Western continental philosophies. Students are introduced to the tenets and principles of African Philosophy while investigating the question “What is Philosophy?” from an African perspective. The course is about the directions and discourse philosophy is exploring in Africa, even the complexities of conceptualizing African Philosophy. We discuss the scholarly undertakings in African Philosophy and situate it in the wider field of world philosophy. The class also serves to undo common misconceptions concerning classical African epistemologies. The intimate yet often contested relationship between religion/spirituality and philosophy in African Studies is pervasive on and off the continent- various versions of Ethno-philosophy and Universalist philosophy. Keeping these differences in mind, the course investigates the “four waves” of the evolution of the philosophical discourse on Africa, particularly on the role of African religious concepts in African philosophy. In a non-linear fashion, we explore possible new directions in the discourse embraced by African philosophers, such as Innocent Asouzu, Appiah, Hountondji, Hampate Bâ, and Ada Agada. We will engage with texts, viewings, and various media to also answer the question, “What does philosophy do?” All the while, the course relates this and other inquiries to contemporary global issues and applies it to the participants’ lived experiences. Finally, with the use of multidisciplinary methods (scholarly and creative writing, visual and performance art, discussion, participant-observer ethnography, etc.) students are encouraged to then tease out the possibility of an embodied philosophy and other categories that help us understand that philosophy, from an Africana perspective, is also lived. That it is here and now.
Course Learning Objectives
The Goals of the course are:

1. Learn the histories, principles, and conceptualizations of African Philosophy.
2. Confront and correct popular misconceptions and prejudices of Africana peoples.
3. Investigate the evolution of philosophical thought on the African continent.
4. Explore meaning in African religious and spiritual traditions.
5. Apply relevant African thought systems to contemporary experience.
6. Apply African Philosophy to contemporary global issues to enable participants to appreciate the role of philosophy in understanding ourselves, our purpose, and our role in the world.

Learning Goals
At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify key figures and scholars in African Philosophy.
2. Describe individual and collective contributions to the historical development of African Philosophy.
3. Explain the impact of historical events, social circumstances, and political landscapes on the field of African Philosophy.
4. Demonstrate how different philosophers reflect or challenge social and cultural norms and ideals.
5. Integrate tools for readings, describing, and assessing discourse to critically evaluate various thinkers.
6. Apply the philosophical concepts of “complementarity” and “consolation” to contemporary global issues.
7. Locate and access appropriate textual and non-textual source materials using library databases and research tools.
8. Evaluate the credibility and appropriateness of source materials for a final research project.

Expected Learning Outcomes
Arts and Humanities

1. Students develop abilities to be informed observers of, or active participants in, the visual, spatial, performing, spoken, or literary arts.
2. Students develop an understanding of the foundations of human beliefs, the nature of reality, and the norms that guide human behavior.
3. Students examine and interpret how the human condition and human values are explored through works of art and humanistic writings.

Cultures and Ideas

1. Students develop abilities to analyze, appreciate, and interpret major forms of human thought and expression.
2. Students develop abilities to understand how ideas influence the character of human beliefs, the perception of reality, and the norms that guide human behavior.

This course works towards these outcomes through close readings and viewing of specific scholarly and intermedia works as cultural representations that reflect and contribute to individual subjectivities, group identities, historico-political interactions, and societal assumptions and beliefs in the United States.

Social Diversity in the United States
1. Students describe the roles of such categories as race, gender, class, ethnicity, and religion in the pluralistic institutions and cultures of the United States.
2. Students recognize the role of social diversity in shaping their attitudes and values regarding appreciation, tolerance, and equality of others.

Required Texts
There are no texts to be purchased for the course. All reading, listening, and viewing assignments can be found on Blackboard under the Content tab. Most are in PDF files: please make sure the computer you will be using has appropriate software. You are not required to print the readings, but we will discuss them in class, and you are expected to complete the readings by the date under which they are listed. A full bibliography appears on Blackboard. I will administer pop quizzes as necessary to ensure readings are completed.

Technology Requirements
You will need to have access to a computer/laptop. There are laptops available for loan at no cost at the UTEP Library. You will need to download or update the following software: Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat Reader, and Zoom. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course including media viewing materials.

If you do not have word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs (including Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, and more) for free via UTEP's Microsoft Office Portal. Click the following link for more information about Microsoft Office 365 and follow the instructions.

IMPORTANT: If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the UTEP Help Desk as they are trained specifically in assisting with the technological needs of students. Please do not contact me for this type of assistance. The Help Desk is much better equipped than I am to assist you!

Assignments and Grading

Grading Scale: (out of 400 points)
90-100%       A
80-89%        B
70-79%        C
60-69% D
59 – 0% E

Attendance: 20 pts.
Attendance to weekly synchronous Zoom class times every Tuesday. for this class is imperative for successful completion as dialogue, debate, and rhetorical analyses will deeply impact participants’ learning. In addition to the information delivered in class through lectures, we will be viewing many visual representations of the dance styles under consideration. The viewing of this material and the collective, in-class analysis that follows will enable you to complete the course objectives and succeed in the various assignments. Except for death in the family, exceedingly poor health, and documented religious observance, after three (3) absences, your grade will be lowered by half a letter for each subsequent absence.

Participation: 20 pts.
During class meetings we will have full class and small group discussions on your reactions, perceptions, and analyses of visual material and assigned readings. Please be prepared to give your opinion and ask questions. This is also a time that you can contribute to the learning of the class by discussing any dance experience you might have. Use of cell phones in any capacity during class time will not be tolerated, nor will non-class-related computer use. Throughout the term, we will learn the physical elements of the dances we have studied. This accesses kinesthetic learning methods and can help identify differences between styles. If you have a specific prohibition against dancing in public, please e-mail me to discuss an alternate assignment, which will involve observing and writing about the dance lessons. Participation is assessed on presence, engagement, contributions, and professionalism.

Reflection & Discussion Posts: 100 pts.
5 Discussion Posts: 10 pts. each
500 words minimum. Topics there are under the Discussion tab on Blackboard. For each assigned post, you are required to post one response to a question of your choice, to comment on the post of another student, and to answer questions on yours. Please answer all aspects of the prompt you choose. You may of course post and respond more frequently. Please also read the posts of other students; Blackboard automatically keeps track of the number of posts written and read.

3 Reflection Guidelines: 10 pts. Each
500 words minimum
- Reflect, question, and bring in new opinions and information; do not just summarize what has been said in class; do not repeat what others have posted
- Include personal experience when possible
- Give examples and counterexamples from what you have seen or read
- Mechanics: Use spell check; read post before submitting; fill out subject line
- When replying to a classmate’s post: agree, disagree, question; be polite but interesting
Discussion and reflection posts are graded as follows:
- 10=well written post and responses
- 8=good post and responses
- 6=not all aspects completed satisfactorily
- 4=not all aspects completed
- 2=only one post completed
- 0= no posts

1 Oral History Discussion Post: 20 points
(750 words minimum) You will write one medium-length Blackboard Discussion post based on your interview with a family member about their “philosophy”, epistemologies, and experiences. In addition, you will comment on at least 1 of your classmates’ observations and respond to questions on yours (5 pts). Turned in on Blackboard Discussion Board.

**Quizzes: 60 pts.**
Each of the three quizzes (20 pts each) will be available on Blackboard. Once you begin you will have one hour to complete the quiz. Quizzes will cover information and analysis from class lectures, viewings, discussions, and assigned readings, and include a video portion. Contact the instructor immediately if you have technical problems taking the quiz.

**Essays: 60 pts.**
2 essays will be assigned with specific topics and questions. Each will be a minimum of 1000 words. Grading rubrics are available on Blackboard under “Rubrics, Guidelines, Templates”.

**Reading Notes (RNS) and Column Notes (CNS): (10 pts each)**
We will have a clearly defined approaches to RNS and CNS that we will use to help us understand our readings and media. They will also be useful as notetaking tools. Templates are available on Blackboard under “Rubrics, Guidelines, Templates”

**Self-designed Final Project: 40 pts.**
You will be expected to design your own final assignment. Parameters will be discussed in class and more information will be given at the time.

**COMMUNITY INTEGRITY SUPPORTY INFORMATION**

**Excused Absences and/or Course Drop Policy**
According to UTEP Curriculum and Classroom Policies, “When, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his or her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor may drop the student from the class with a grade of “W” before the course drop deadline and with a grade of “F” after the
course drop deadline.” See academic regulations in the UTEP Undergraduate Catalog for a list of excuse absences. Therefore, if I find that, due to non-performance in the course, you are at risk of failing, I will drop you from the course. I will provide 24 hours advance notice via email.

**OR**

I will not drop you from the course. However, if you feel that you are unable to complete the course successfully, please let me know and then contact the Registrar’s Office to initiate the drop process. If you do not, you are at risk of receiving an “F” for the course.

A reminder that such policy is in place to guarantee consistency among courses and foster accountability and consistency for our students. It contains the necessary flexibility to account for possible students' needs. Specific situations can be handled on a case-by-case basis, and discussed collectively in our meetings or with me and/or Hide, Melissa. Please, abide by this to avoid confusion among students.

In a course that meets two times a week, a student is allowed a maximum of 4 absences in an entire semester, two of which require no justification and result in no penalty. A student can use these absences based on personal necessity. The 6th, 7th and 8th absences will result in a drop of ½ a letter grade each in the student’s overall grade. At the 9th absence, regardless of the student’s current course standing or grade the student will automatically fail the course.

**Exceptions:**
- In the event of international bridge closures, exceptions may be made, and make-up work may be assigned.
- In case of an injury or extended illness, it is the student’s responsibility to meet with their instructor to discuss possible solutions for course continuation or to consider dropping the class.
- In the event of highly unusual or extenuating circumstances, a student may petition the course instructor and department chair for permission to continue in a course.
- In case of injury, a student who is able to be present in the studio may observe class and complete alternative and equivalent assignments to be negotiated with the instructor.

In a course that meets twice a week, a student is allowed a maximum of 4 absences in an entire semester, 2 of which require no justification and result in no penalty. A student can use these absences based on personal necessity. The 3rd and 4th absences will result in a drop of ½ a letter grade each in the student’s overall grade. At the 5th absence, regardless of the student’s current course standing or grade, the student will automatically fail the course.

**Incomplete Grade Policy**
Incomplete grades may be requested only in exceptional circumstances after you have completed at least half of the course requirements. Talk to me immediately if you believe an incomplete is warranted. If granted, we will establish a contract of work to be completed with deadlines.

**Make-Up Work**
Make-up work and Extra credit work will be given only in the case of a documented emergency. Note that make-up work may be in a different format than the original work, may require more intensive preparation, and may be graded with penalty points. If you miss an assignment and the reason is not considered excusable, you will receive a zero. It is therefore important to reach out to me—in advance if at all possible—and explain with proper documentation why you missed a given course requirement. Once a deadline has been established for make-up
work, no further extensions or exceptions will be granted.

**Alternative Means of Submitting Work In Case of Technical Issues**
I strongly suggest that you submit your work with plenty of time to spare in the event that you have a technical issue with the course website, network, and/or your computer. I also suggest you save all your work (answers to discussion points, quizzes, exams, and essays) in a separate Word document as a backup. This way, you will have evidence that you completed the work and will not lose credit. If you are experiencing difficulties submitting your work through the course website, please contact the UTEP Help Desk. You can email me your backup document as a last resort.

**Course Communication: How we will stay in touch with one another.**
Because some of the courses are online, we may experience a mix of seeing each other: during class time, small group meetings, and office hours. However, there are several ways we can keep the communication channels open:

- **Office Hours:** We will be able to meet on campus and in person if you choose, but my office hours will be held on Zoom during the following times: Mondays and Wednesdays: 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Mountain Time; **by appointment only**.
- **Blackboard Messages & Email:** Blackboard messages are the best way to contact me. I will make every attempt to respond to e-mails within 24-48 hours of receipt. My UTEP e-mail (rtchabikwa@utep.edu) is the alternative in case of emergency. When emailing me, be sure to email from your UTEP student account and please put the course number in the subject line. In the body of your e-mail, clearly state your question. At the end of your e-mail, be sure to put your first and last name and your university identification number.
- **Help Board:** If you have a question that you believe other students may also have, please post it in the Help Board of the discussion boards inside of Blackboard. Please respond to other students’ questions if you have a helpful response.
- **WhatsApp/GroupMe#** student groups. This is similar to the help board. The instructor will NOT be in these groups, but you can help each other more quickly there.
- **Announcements:** Check the Blackboard announcements frequently for any updates, deadlines, or other important messages.

**Netiquette:**
We will meet weekly on Tuesdays via Zoom for discussion seminars. These meetings are vital to solidifying your understanding of the assigned content. Everyone is highly encouraged to attend these meetings and to fully participate in them too. Participation in these will also be added to your final point score in the class. Below are the expectations concerning online conduct and how we want to behave and treat each other when we are online.

**Remember:** When you are on the Zoom calls, you will ALWAYS be expected to be on a laptop and visible on camera. Be sure to find a quiet space so you can give full attention to our learning community. Make prior arrangements with the instructor should this be a challenge for you to achieve.
As we know, sometimes communication online can be challenging. It’s possible to miscommunicate what we mean or to misunderstand what our classmates mean given the lack of body language and immediate feedback. Therefore, please keep these netiquette (network etiquette) guidelines in mind. Failure to observe them may result in disciplinary action.

- **Always consider audience.** This is a college-level course; therefore, all communication should reflect polite consideration of other’s ideas.
- **You are expected to be visible during all virtual calls/meetings unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor.**
- **Respect and courtesy must be shown to classmates and to the instructor at all times.** No harassment or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.
- **When reacting to someone else’s message, address the ideas, not the person.** Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation.
- **Blackboard is not a public internet venue; all postings to it should be considered private and confidential.** Whatever is posted on these online spaces is intended for classmates and professor only. Please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, blog, social media or other space.
- **When we are on virtual video calls for class rooms, lectures, or other class context you are expected to always have your camera on.** We would like to keep our virtual interactions as engaged and human-centered as possible. If there is an absolute need to have the camera off, you will need to make a prior arrangement with the instructor. If you fail to fulfill this requirement you may be removed from the call.

**Policy on Sensitive Subject Matter:**
The humanities have a power to stir strong emotions, or possibly touch on subjects you might not feel comfortable seeing or experiencing. If you have concerns about viewing or discussing specific subjects that may trigger specific emotions, please see me as soon as possible to discuss possible accommodations. As I will respect your individual’s
rights to choose what performances and topics you can engage with, I expect all our discussions and reflections to be conducted in a respectful and professional matter.

**Emotions, Thought and Feelings:**
This course requires that you engage in deep contemplation and occasionally, meditation with regard to thoughts feelings and emotions. We discuss subject matter that is emotionally triggering, or sensitive. As humanities scholars we must cultivate the capacity to address challenge topics and material as they are relevant to the worlds we live in. Our learning community abides by principles of non-violent communication and deep listening. It will be important that participants cultivate awareness of their thoughts and emotions throughout the process and use this awareness to facilitate constructive discussions, debates, and conversations. Cultivating a habit of describing our experience will be central to our process. This is part of the reason for our process of our check-in and check-out in each class. To be able to find agency through verbal articulation of experience. Below is a tool to help catalyze the process. While incomplete, the Feelings Wheel (below) is a useful place to begin this endeavor. It will be referenced frequently throughout the class.

![Feelings Wheel](image_url)

*Feelings Wheel—based on nonviolent communication concepts by Marshall Rosenberg, Ph.D.*

**Accommodations Policy:**
The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff,
faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Students who become pregnant or have parenting responsibilities may also request reasonable accommodations. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. The UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) will process requests for accommodations based on a disability, pregnancy, or parenting. Students requesting an accommodation based on a disability must register with the UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, or email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal.

Where You Can Go for Help … Campus Resources:
It’s important to know where to reach out whenever needed during your university experience. If you feel you cannot address matter or an issue with your instructor directly never hesitate to reach out the chair, other faculty, student committees and to the university itself. Your safety and agency are very important to your educational experience. All resources you need are available online at the Student Resource Hub link below: https://www.utep.edu/advising/student_resources/student-success-resource-hub.html

You can also use the Student Resource Hub QR Code below:

UTEP provides a variety of student services and support: academic, personal, technology, individual, mental health, spiritual, and many more. Below a just a few of them. Always feel free to communicate your needs to your facilitator. They may have access to services you’re not aware of in the university.

• Dr. Michael Williams: Director of African American Studies Program; mvwilliams@utep.edu; 915-747-7822
• Student Services: studentaffairs@utep.edu; (915) 747-5076
• Help Desk: Students experiencing technological challenges (email, Blackboard, software, etc.) can submit a ticket to the UTEP Helpdesk for assistance. Contact the Helpdesk via phone, email, chat, website, or in person if on campus.
• UTEP Library: Tessy Torres; mtorres3@utep.edu; (915)747-5066
Contact Ms. Urbina for any questions concerning difficulties accessing the viewing material for the course, finding
reading resources.

- **University Writing Center (UWC):** Submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, or tutor for help and explore other writing resources.
- **RefWorks:** A bibliographic citation tool; check out the RefWorks tutorial and Fact Sheet and Quick-Start Guide.
- **Military Student Success Center:** Assists personnel in any branch of service to reach their educational goals.
- **Center for Accommodations and Support Services:** Assists students with ADA-related accommodations for coursework, housing, and internships.
- **Counseling and Psychological Services:** Provides a variety of counseling services including individual, couples, and group sessions as well as career and disability assessments.
- **Student Success Helpdesk** [https://www.utep.edu/advising/student_resources/student-success-helpdesk.html](https://www.utep.edu/advising/student_resources/student-success-helpdesk.html)
- **Miner Learning Center** [https://www.utep.edu/mlc/](https://www.utep.edu/mlc/)
- **Counseling and Psychological Services:** Students are encouraged to speak with professionals from UTEP’s CPS on a walk-in basis from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday in Union Building West, Room 202. In addition, the Miners Talk Crisis Line at 915-747-5302 is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- **UTEP Title IX (Anti-Sexual Harassment and Anti-Sexual Violence) Office:** [https://www.utep.edu/titleix](https://www.utep.edu/titleix)
- **UTEP Food Pantry:** Non-perishable food items are available to students who are currently enrolled in classes. Bring a Miner Gold Card to Memorial Gym, Room 105, Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Course Copyright:**
All the materials—written, audio, and visual—shared within this course remain within this course. To store, post, or share by any means and/or for personal use or public consumption any course material (assigned or produced within and for the course) without explicit authorization by the subjects involved is illegal. Make sure to ask for permission in case. You can share on your social media your own materials if the only person who appears or the only author is you. If you want to share content that includes or is co-authored with other classmates, you need to contact them and the instructor via e-mail (utilizing the UTEP account) to discuss the authorization.

**Policy on Copyright and Fair Use:**
Some of the materials in this course are copyrighted. Copying of textbooks is not “fair use” under the Copyright Act. Your cooperation is expected. The University requires all members of its community to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under university policies.

**Class Recordings**
Occasionally we may record/film class to allow you to have access to revise new choreography, class lectures, group discussions, and so on in the event you miss a synchronous or in-person class meeting due to illness or other extenuating circumstances. Our use of such technology is governed by the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and UTEP’s acceptable-use policy. A recording of class sessions will be kept and stored by UTEP, in accordance with FERPA and UTEP policies. Your instructor will not share the recordings of your class activities outside of course participants, which include your fellow students, teaching assistants, or graduate assistants, and
any guest faculty or community-based learning partners with whom we may engage during a class session. You may not share recordings outside of this course. Doing so may result in disciplinary action.

**Scholastic Integrity**

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing informant to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as ones' own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more, please visit [HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline](#).

**Plagiarism Detecting Software**

Some coursework and assessments may be submitted to SafeAssign, a plagiarism-detecting software. SafeAssign reviews assignment submissions for originality and helps you learn how to properly attribute sources rather than paraphrase. We are also aware of software such as ChatGTP that can be used to generate text for you. We will also conscientiously learn how to mobilize technologies such as these to our advantage as a learning community as needed.

**COPYRIGHT STATEMENT FOR COURSE MATERIALS**

All materials including PowerPoints, recorded lectures, and presentations used in this course are protected by copyright law. The course materials are only for the use of students currently enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further disseminated.

**LEARNING MODULES**

This course is designed using a modular format—that is, each two-week period is “packaged” as a single module so that all the materials, lecture notes, submission areas, and discussion posts are in one area for a given week.

**Module One: Introducing African Philosophy**

**Goals:**

Defining Philosophy as: practice, process, discourse, particular, universal.
Readings:
Janz, “African Philosophy”
Ogunkaike, “African Philosophy Reconsidered.”
Segun, “The Prefix ‘African’ and its Implication”

Kant, “On the Use of Teleological Principles in Philosophy”
Hume, “On National Characters”
Hegel, “Lectures on the Philosophy of World History”

Listen:
Podcast (28min): Interview with Dr. Nkiru Nzwegu - Australia Broadcast Network (ABC)
https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/philosopherszone/africa/11725826

Questions:
What is Philosophy?
What are some of the problems of defining “African Philosophy”? 

Quests:
- Research for yourself: “What is a personal philosophy?”
- Write a first draft of your personal philosophy statement. (500 words)

Assignments
Discussion Post #1 due Sunday at 11:59 pm (First draft of your “Statement of personal Philosophy”)
Reading Notes #1

Module Two: Epistemology & Ethnophilosophy

Goals:
Defining ethnophilosophy. Understanding philosophy as: practice, process, discourse, particular, universal.

Readings
Janz, “The Geography of African Philosophy”
Afoyalan, “Rethinking African Philosophy in the Age of Globalization” (read only the Introduction from page 1 onwards)

Viewings:
Music video (5min) – “DNA” – Kendrick Lamar
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NLZRYQMLDW4
Listening:
Podcast (40min) – “Dissect S5E4 DNA. (Part 1) by Kendrick Lamar”
https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/city-scout/dissect/e/64760072

Questions:
What is epistemology?
What is ethnophilosophy?
What is Africa (in “African” Philosophy)?
What is the “first wave” of African Philosophy?

Quests:
- Investigate your personal epistemology
- Observe, document, and elaborate constructions of blackness in your world
- Social media survey: go online, search “African Philosophy” make a list of sites/digital platforms and summarize key ideas of what popular culture believes African Philosophy to be (e.g. #africanphilosophy on Instagram, or Facebook etc.), see what other hashtags or resources are associated with African Philosophy.
- Choose one music video that you will speak about (or dissect) for ten minutes in class as an example of epistemology.

Discussion Post #2 Due Sunday at 11:59pm (Observation/ Mindfulness Assignment/ Personal Epistemology)

Module Three: African Wisdom Traditions

Goals:
Body, Space and Time in African cosmologies and ontologies.

Readings (*choose one during class to present*)
Gillies, “The Bantu Concept of Time”
Myers, “The Deep Structure of Culture”
Gyekye, “The Akan Concept of a Person”
Abiodun, “Understanding Yoruba art and Aesthetics: The Concept of Asé”
Brodnicka, “The world as a Manifestation of Spirit”
Vega, "The ancestral sacred creative impulse of Africa and the African diaspora: Asé, the nexus of the Black global aesthetic."
Viewings
Film (25min): On Ancestors. - Malidoma Somé
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKDvTRcMW8s&list=PL9yyclin1d-p-RxXSNoOu22-izsKv0X&index=99&t=0s
Film (11min): Foli/Rhythm
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lVPLIuBy9CY&list=PL9yyclin1d-p-RxXSNoOu22-izsKv0X&index=86

Questions:
- From the viewings of Malidoma Somé’s interviews and the readings, how would you characterize Africana relationships to, and conceptions of the body, the world, and human-being?
- Discuss some of the sociopolitical implications of these conceptual systems in modern global society with particular attention to ideas about ecology/the environment, gender, race, sexuality, war, human rights, family and friendship.
- What are “Wisdom Traditions”?
- What do we mean by the “deep structure” of culture?

Discussion Post #3 Due Sunday at 11:59pm (Oral History Reflection on another person’s personal philosophy)

Quests:
- Allow yourself 20min to 30min of free-flow, stream of consciousness writing about the purpose of your life and the nature of your “being-in-the-world”.
- Conduct a 5 to 10min timed silent meditation in which you simply observe your thoughts in the moment. Afterwards, take note of what you notice.

Module Four: Toward an African Philosophy

Goals:
The concept of rationality; the concept of emotionality. Africa in the minds of others.

Readings (*choose one during class to present*)
Eze, “Ubuntu/Botho: Ideology or Promise”
Karade, “Handbook of Yoruba religious concepts (Chapter 2: Orunmila and the Ifá Corpus) a
Myers, “Understanding an Afrocentric Worldview”
Viewings:

Questions:
What is the value of ethnophilosophy?
What is the relationship between emotion and reason?

Quests:

Discussion Post #3 Due Sunday at 11:59pm

Module Five: Consolation & Complementarity

Goals:

Readings
Agada, “Consolation Philosophy” (introduction and chapter 1)
Agada, “Consolation Philosophy” (chapter 2)

Viewings
Film (45min): Movement (R)evolution Africa
http://www.cultureunplugged.com/documentary/watch-online/play/3963/Movement-Revolution-Africa

Questions:
What is African Philosophy?
What is consolation philosophy?
How does one apply African philosophy to contemporary realities?
What is my personal epistemology and how does it shape my perceptions of the world and the choices I make?
Quests:

- **African Philosophy in Social media**: conduct a survey of representation and ideas surrounding “African philosophy” on social media and popular digital platform (e.g. Instagram, Facebook, Tik Tok, blogs, news etc.) Be prepared to discuss “What is African Philosophy?” from all these varied perspectives in class.

- **International Conflict & Current Affairs** through and African Philosophy lens: 1) Pick a country of your choice (or choose one of the following: Venezuela, Israel/Palestine, Brazil, India, South Africa, Nigeria), 2) research and be prepared to give the context of a particular conflict of your choice (political oppression, discrimination, environmental destruction, child abuse, war etc.) 3) be prepared to discuss this conflict from the perspectives of African Philosophy we have learnt in the class thus far.

- Add vocabulary of your choice to the course vocabulary Google document, and thus contribute to the collective knowledge of the class. (use the following link: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1WhJbu5kACe6DY05amFndTJHliby29TH3eSUDoXWGTbM/edit?usp=sharing)

Discussion Post #4: Personal Epistemology Reflection Draft #2, Due Sunday at 11:59pm (Profile of African-born Pop culture artist)

**Module Six: Personhood (Purpose, Race, Gender, Sexuality)**

*Goals:*

*Readings*
Tshivhase, “Personhood: Social Approval or Unique Identity” (p119 – p140 in *Quest Journal 2011, vol 1-2*)
Oyewumi, “The Invention of Woman”
Du Toit & Coetsee, “Gendering African Philosophy”
Somé, “Intimacy”


Viewings:
Film (45min): How to be a Man. - Malidoma Somé
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLSvUZrxLCo&list=PL9yyclin1d-p-RxSXSnOu22-izsKlvoX&index=99
Film (25min): Embracing Your Gifts. - Sobonfu Somé
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6RwkD5vnVs

Questions:
What does it mean to be human?
What is personhood?
How does personhood inform the personal and the political in our daily life?

Quests:
- Write a brief observation-based statement on the way in which people around you conceive of personhood?
- Revisit your Personal Philosophy Statement to include your understanding of personhood?

Final Project Preparation

Discussion Post #5 Due Sunday at 11:59pm (Body and Self: Reflection on embodied experience of societal body schema)

Module Seven: Human Ecologies (Politics, Economics, Environment)

Focused Readings and Viewing Assignments Due to be completed for discussion/presentation in class i.e. be prepared to give a ten-minute presentation on your assigned work and to connect it to things you have been thinking about based on our class encounters. Also send me an email if you have issues with any aspect of the assigned work. I have done my best to cater to some of you expressed interests from earlier in the summer. All readings are available on Blackboard. Be sure you can access them.
Individual Student Assignments based on expressed academic/career interests:

**Group 1**

Agada, “Is African Philosophy Progressing?”
Cossa, “Humanism and Ubuntu”

**Viewings:**

Film/Listening (90 min): A Special Evening with Dagara Elder Malidom Somé

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uSAfGiJ0K7Q&list=PL9yyclin1d-p-RxXSNoOu22-izsKlvoX&index=92

**Group 2**

**Readings:**

Myres, “Belief Systems Analysis Scale”
Quest Vol. XX., No. 1-2, 2006 “African Feminisms” (*pick any one article from the journal*)

**Viewings:**

Film (25min): An interview with Dr. Myers

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IhoUEhZ1Jk&list=PL9yyclin1d-p-RxXSNoOu22-izsKlvoX&index=76

Film (19min): Nora Chipaumire at TEDx:Black African Female Body

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNpPQvupacM&list=PL9yyclin1d-p-RxXSNoOu22-izsKlvoX&index=115

**Group 3**

**Readings:**

West, “Philosophy and the African American Experience”
Fanon, “The Lived Experience of a Black Man”

**Viewings:**

Film (55min): Cornel West and MM McCabe on Philosophy in the Public Sphere

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2CjIwtxzT_0

**Group 4**
Readings:
Baldwin, “African (Black) Psychology and issued of synthesis”
Myers, “Understanding the Afrocentric Worldview” (*pages 1 to 15 only)

Viewings:

Group 5
Readings:
Lorde, “Uses of the Erotic”
Oyewumi, “Colonizing Bodies and Minds”, Chapter 4 in *The Invention of Woman*

Viewings:
Film (90 min): Nikki Giovanni & James Baldwin interview
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZmBy7C9gHQ&list=PL9yycl1d-p-RxXSNoOu22-izsKlvoX&index=135

Group 6
Readings: (*pick any TWO; feel free to read all three if you wish*)
Brodnicka, “The world as a Manifestation of Spirit”
Jude, “Seselelame: Feelings in the Body”
Karenga, “Restoration of Husia” from Kemet and the African Worldview

Viewings:
Film (45min): Somé, “The forgotten Art of Drowning”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mHbmbTk9-IY&list=PL9yycl1d-p-RxXSNoOu22-izsKlvoX&index=153