

AFST--: Women and the Environment in Africa

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Synopsis

Images of Africa in the popular media are those of inhospitable deserts, high levels of poverty, disease, all kinds of epidemics and catastrophes, wars and conflicts, refugees, overpopulation and all kinds of threats to human existence. Women are depicted as poor, illiterate, overburdened, ignorant and with many children. This course will examine the sources of such perceptions, and through cultural-historical lens, we will examine the challenges these popular images, stereotypes and beliefs have on women as they live their lives in the context of social and natural environment.

Course Description:

This course offers an overview of the empirical evidence and interpretive models of the position of African women in global society with reference to environment. We will use concepts and events such as slavery, colonialism, post colonialism, imperialism, and post modernity to understand their impact on natural environment and the experiences of women as they live their lives, as custodians of food, fuel, and water and as producers and consumers. Emphasis is given to significant role of women in natural environment in Africa. Specific topics for discussion include: The role of women in managing natural resources in Africa (and in other developing areas); armed conflicts and environmental degradation; implications of climate change in Africa; ecology and feminism; eco-feminism and third world environmental activism.

Objectives

The objectives of the course are: 1) To gain understanding of the broad themes of environmental issues in Africa; 2) To improve critical thinking skills by analysing arguments, narratives and sources used in the explanation of environmental issues in Africa and the role that women play; 3) To apply the ideas and theories of the field of education, history, sociology and anthropology to question environmental issues in Africa and the role of women; 4) To improve research, writing and analytical skills.

Prerequisites:

While there are no formal course prerequisites, it will be assumed that students have basic knowledge of Africa/or have taken a course that covered some aspects of Africa. Having taken at least one previous course with African content will be helpful but is not required.

Learner outcomes:

After completing this course students should be able to:

- 1) Identify the major environmental issues discussed in the fields of anthropology, education, history and sociology
- 2) Use appropriate lens to debate and discuss environmental issues and the role of women
- 3) Ability to make distinction between the role of African women in the environment in relation to the role of men and to other women worldwide
- 4) Make distinctions between eco-feminism and Third World feminism

IV Required Text

<http://www.acts.or.ke/pubs/books/docs/promisesrealities.pdf>

Blackboard website: The website below is the home of this course and you will use your university password to log in. I will monitor your participation in this course on the discussion board. Make sure you visit the site as regularly as you can for announcements, assignments and other tasks. You can access copies of the syllabus, assignments, and your course grades by going to the class web page through Blackboard at <http://www.dl.utoledo.edu/> If you encounter any difficulties while trying to access the course web page, please contact Toll Free: 866.886.5336; Local Phone: 419.530.8835; Fax: 419.530.8836 Web site: http://www.utoledo.edu/dl/helpdesk/hlp_index.html

NB: University of Toledo policies and state and federal laws inform and support the following class policies, protocols and practices. They are considered obligatory and compulsory for all students enrolled in this class:

Equal Educational Opportunity/Special needs: although this is an online course where there will be no physical contact, it will be conducted according to rules and regulations governing classroom etiquette of the University of Toledo. This course will provide reasonable accommodations for all individuals with disabilities. Students with disabilities that affect their ability to participate fully in class or to meet all course requirements are encouraged to bring this to my attention so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged. Accommodations are intended to minimize the functional limitations of a disability and provide the student equal access to the educational process. If accommodations are needed, please contact Writing Center: 1400 Snyder Memorial Phone number: 419.530.4981; Web site: <http://student-services2.utoledo.edu/accessibility/> so that I may better assist and support you. I am willing to allow for extra time on exams and provide other accommodations for confirmed needy cases.

Discrimination, Intimidation, & Harassment: It is the right of all students to have equal access to course content in an environment free of prejudice, discrimination, and harassment. The nature of the course requires that each student be treated with respect, dignity, and sensitivity. This will be respected and upheld in this course. Hate, racist or sexist message or dialogue are illegal, will not be tolerated on the discussion board and will be reported to the proper university authorities.

Integrity and Professionalism:

All students are responsible for actively participating in all assigned activities in this course in a positive, sensitive, and contributory manner. All students' professionalism will be evaluated and graded based on their adherence to established class norms, expectations and professional participation.

Scholastic dishonesty: Scholastic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) cheating on assignments, plagiarizing (misrepresenting as one's own anything done by another), submitting the same or substantially similar papers for more than one course without consent of all instructors concerned, depriving another of necessary course materials, sabotaging another's work and lifting material from online sources and presenting them as yours. All acts of misconduct in this course will be reported to the relevant high authorities. My general policy is to assign an "F" for the course to students found guilty of academic dishonesty. Be careful when using material from the Internet, and ensure that you cite the sources appropriately!! At this level, you are not allowed to use encyclopaedic sources such as 'Wikipedia' and other online encyclopaedias that are regarded as too general and non-scholarly/academic. It is recommended that you access journal articles through <http://www.jstor.org/> and <http://muse.jhu.edu/> and that you use books for your assignments. Be warned that I will do everything to verify your sources.

Attendance Policy: Online on World Wide Web. Log on Blackboard at least three times per week.

Class Responsibilities: Log on Blackboard. Complete the assigned readings. Participate in discussions on Blackboard. I will provide lecture notes besides power point slides on Blackboard.

Late Policy: I do not accept late assignments unless you make prior arrangements with me. I will deduct five points from your grade on the term paper downwards for each day after the deadline. Therefore, late assignments will adversely affect overall percentage of your overall course grade. Also, note that no late assignment will be accepted after the assignment is graded and returned to the rest of the class, except by my special permission.

My office hours and consultation: Only online. I will respond to e-mails on a daily basis (Monday-Friday). You can contact me through eswai@utoledo.edu or swaiev@gmail.com

Assignments:

1. Two short paper (4-5 pages double space).
2. 3 Reading quizzes (15 multiple choices). These quizzes will focus on your knowledge of the topics covered to gauge your conceptual skills and your keeping up with the readings.
3. Analytical Paper:

This is your major paper, which will require some research – library work (including books, journals and encyclopedia) for theoretical discussion. I will post topics from

which you may choose and develop a strong thesis that argues for a particular position. Information for the web sites will be useful but books or journal articles should support such information.. You can also suggest a topic to explore which I must approve. Write a paper (8-12 pages double spaced no bigger than font size 12).

DETERMINATION OF FINAL GRADE

Class Participation	20 points total
Three Reading Quizzes, 10 points each:	30 points total
Two short papers:	20 points total
Analytical Paper	30 points total

Total possible course points: 100

THE GRADING SCALE IS AS FOLLOWS:

A= 95 - 100%
A-= 90-94%
B+ = 85-89
B= 80 - 84%
B-= 75-79%
C= 70 - 78%
C-= 65-69%
D= 60 - 68%
F=Less than 60%.

Supplementary texts (not required, copies available on-line)

- 1 <http://www.africafiles.org/atissueezine.asp#art1>
2. <http://www.africafiles.org/atissueezine.asp#art2>
3. <http://www.africafiles.org/atissueezine.asp#art3>