

Women of Africa
Sociology 3030-1 (GH/WI)
Political Science 3030-1 (GH/WI)
Women's and Gender Studies 3030-1 (GH/WI)
Spring Semester 2022

Professor Ellen Hauser
Email: ehauser@carthage.edu
MWF 10:30-11:35

Robin Holmes
Email: rholmes@carthage.edu

Course Description:

The study of the countries of Africa has frequently focused on public events as experienced and/or dictated by men: colonialism, political change, war, government actions, and the formal economy. In recent years, researchers have begun to explore in more depth how women's lives are impacted by these events and how women in Africa are active participants in the different sectors of their societies.

This course will look at life in various African countries through the eyes of women and will examine how women of Africa actively engage in and are affected by political, cultural, and economic events both domestically and internationally. Themes will include: the effects of colonization on African women and their statuses; the effects of war on women; human rights issues of African women; the impact of modernity and tradition on women's lives; economic hardship and survival techniques; cultural issues surrounding marriage and motherhood; and women's participation in the public spheres of their countries.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- 1) Students will demonstrate understanding of the major issues regarding women in African countries during the pre-colonial and colonial periods
- evaluated through oral assessment in class discussion and essays
- 2) Students will demonstrate understanding of how African women are affected by national and international economic policies
- evaluated through oral assessment in class discussion
- 3) Students will demonstrate knowledge of African feminism and women's movements -
evaluated through oral assessment in class discussion
- 4) Students will demonstrate ability to research and write a paper on a topic relevant to the course - evaluated through research paper

Required Readings:

- 1) *African Women: Early History to the 21st Century*, by Kathleen Sheldon (2017)
- 2) Readings on Schoology

Grading Scale

A 93-100; A- 90-92; B+ 88-89; B 82-87; B- 80-81; C+ 78-79; C 72-77; C- 70-71; D+ 68-69; D 62-67; D- 60-61; F 59 and below

Attendance/Participation -I will use your participation in class discussion as a form of assessment to determine whether you have done the readings and how well you have

understood the material. In order to participate well in class you need to regularly attend class. Quality class participation includes the following: asking good questions, listening to your classmates and professor, making insightful comments on the readings, willingness to respectfully engage in classroom discussions on the issues. This class will be much more useful and interesting if there is a high quantity and quality of student participation. However, in order to participate well students need to have read the material thoroughly before coming to class. We will likely also break out into Zoom groups for small group work. Please be a responsible and active member of those groups. When class is on Zoom you need to have your camera on and be in the camera unless you have contacted Dr. Hauser and Dr. Holmes with the reason why this is not possible and we have given permission for this.

Late Assignments

All assignments, exams, etc. are to be completed and turned in by the date and time assigned. Late work will receive a lowered grade. My usual grade penalty is 1/3 percentage point lower for EACH HOUR (including nights and weekends) you turn something in. If you have health issues or extenuating circumstances, please contact me ASAP to let me know so we can work out a solution.

General Policies

It is your responsibility to pay attention to announcements in class and to find out what information you missed if you are late for class or miss class. If you are not in class on the day you are scheduled to give a presentation, you will receive an automatic 0 as your grade. Unless otherwise stated, all assignments are to be typed, using academic margins, font size, and format. In fairness to the students who turn in their papers on time, late papers will be graded 1/3 percentage point lower for each hour the paper is turned in late. I assume that you agree with and are abiding by Carthage's policy on academic honesty. You cannot pass this class without turning in serious efforts on the papers for the course in a timely fashion.

Office Hours

Because there will be two professors teaching for the first several weeks, please contact Prof. Hauser or Prof. Holmes with any questions, concerns, or if you need to set up a Zoom meeting. Our emails are at the top of the syllabus.

COVID Issues

It is my expectation that you are doing everything within your power to stay healthy. That means avoiding group gatherings/events, parties, as well as wearing a mask whenever you are around people not in your family/household. However, I do realize that there is a risk that someone will become ill during the semester. Please contact the appropriate college authorities if you become ill so that I receive information about this. If you are experiencing a personal hardship during this time, please be in touch with me so I know what is going on.

Learning Accommodations

Carthage College strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers due to your disability (including mental health, learning disorders and chronic medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, you also need to register with Diane Schowalter in Learning Accessibility Services (dschowalter1@carthage.edu).

Grading Criteria:**Active Participation in Class – 15%**

Please see section above for what is required for positive participation in this class.

Map Test – 5% In order to understand the continent of Africa and engage in academic conversations about the continent, students need to know the countries of Africa. It is important that you pass the test in order to have a better understanding of the continent.

Discussion Posts – 20%

For various assigned readings and videos you will be asked to write a thoughtful and well-organized response to an assigned question or set of questions in Schoology.

Essay on Women in Pre-Colonial and Colonial Africa – 20%

Using the course materials, you will compare life for African women in pre-colonial and colonial Africa. You will choose a theme (agriculture, religion, family structure, etc) or a political group (Igbo, Benin, etc) and describe specific examples of continuities and changes.

This essay should be: 5 pages of text, double-spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 pt font, Times New Roman. You will be graded on the presence and strength of your thesis, evidence, organization and citation. Use correct Chicago Style citation format whenever using information from the book, not just when giving a quotation. Not citing the information you use will result in the grade of an F, following Carthage's policy on academic plagiarism. You are not required to do additional research for this paper. If you choose to use outside sources they must pass the CRAAP test.

Paper on Contemporary Issue – 25%

You will pick an African country to focus your paper on. Research important contemporary topics for women in your country. Write an 8-10 page paper presenting in academic written format a discussion and analysis of a contemporary issue using academic sources on the chosen topic.

Oral Presentation on Contemporary Paper – 15%

Students will give a 8- minute presentation on their research paper. You should use PowerPoint or some similar format to present your topic. Please rehearse your presentation so it is the appropriate length – shorter presentations will receive lower grades, and longer presentations risk being cut off due to time. Remember you are teaching us about your topic. Be prepared to answer class questions about your topic.

Course Schedule (subject to change):

READINGS SHOULD BE DONE BY CLASS TIME ON THE DATE THEY ARE LISTED

Feb. 2 – Introduction to class

“How the Word ‘Africa’ Came to Be”

“How to Write About Africa”

Schoology (video): “The Danger of a Single Story”

Feb. 4- Varieties of Experiences; Women’s Agency

African Women (AfW) - Intro (pp. xi & xii)
Schoolology – “Under Western Eyes,” by Chandra Mohanty

Feb. 7 - Intersectionality; African Concepts of “Gender”

Schoolology - “Conceptualizing Gender,” by Oyeronke Oyewumi
Schoolology (video) – Kimberle Crenshaw - Intersectionality

Feb. 9 – African Women Pre-Colonial Period

AfW– Ch. 1 –pp. 1-16

Feb. 11 – African Women Pre-Colonial Period

AfW– Ch. 1 – pp.16-34
Discussion Post #1 due in Schoolology

Feb. 14 – African Women in Pre-Colonial Period

AfW – Ch. 2
Map Test Due

Feb. 16 – African Women in Pre-Colonial Period

AfW - Ch. 3

Feb. 18- 19th Century Africa – Religion and Slavery in Africa

AfW - Ch. 4 – pp. 92-114

Feb. 21 – African Women and Colonialism

AfW - Ch. 4 – pp. 114-130
Discuss Women in Pre-Colonial/Colonial Africa Paper

Feb. 23 – African Women and Colonialism - no class

Schoolology (video): Africa: Episode 6 – The Magnificent African Cake, dir. By Basil Davidson
Discussion Post #2 in Schoolology

Feb. 25 - African Women and Colonialism

Schoolology: “Sitting on a Man: Colonialism and the Lost Political Institutions of Igbo Women,”
by Judith van Allen

Feb. 28– Women’s Resistance to Colonialism –

AfW - Ch. 5 pp. 132-167

March 2 – Resistance to Colonialism - Schoolology: “African Women’s Role in Resistance”

March 4 – Paper on Women in Pre-Colonial/Colonial Africa Due at 10:30 AM

March 7–

Pick country for paper and presentation – Turn in 3 possible countries, ranked

March 9 – Liberation and Early Independence

Schoolology (video): “Africa: States of Independence – the scramble for Africa”
AfW – Ch. 6 pp. 169-188

March 11 – Liberation and Early Independence

AfW – Ch. 6 pp. 188-205

March 14-18 – Spring Break!

March 21 - Effects of International Debt and Development on African Women

Schoology – “ ‘Men-streaming’ gender? Questions for gender and development policy in the twenty-first century,” by Sylvia Chant and Matthew C. Gutmann, in *Progress in Development Studies* 2002 2:269.

March 23 – African Women and Poverty

Schoology –

“Poverty Among Women in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Review of Selected Issues,” by Hazel M. McFerson

Write discussion response #3 in Schoology

March 25 - African Women – 1970s-1990s – Work – no class

Schoology (video) – The Asante Market Women

Video – With These Hands (Produced by Chris Sheppard, Filmmakers Library, 1987) – available through Hedberg Library online access – Alexander Street

Discussion Post #4 in Schoology

March 28 - African Women and Work

AfW – Ch. 7, pp. 207-219

List of Important Issues of Women in Chosen Country/Potential Paper Topics Due

March 30 – Chris Grugel on finding good research sources

April 1 - African Women – 1970s -1990s – Education and Family/Sexuality

AfW – Ch. 7, pp. 219-235

April 4 - Meet with professor about final papers

Come prepared to meeting with research done for your final paper

April 6– Meet with professor about final papers

Come prepared to meeting with research done for your final paper

April 8– Meet with professor about final papers

Come prepared to meeting with research done for your final paper

Start reading *AfW* – Ch. 8 pp. 246-269 (**African Women Politicians**)

April 11– African Women Politicians

AfW – Ch. 8 pp. 269-285

April 13 - African Women Politicians – no class

Watch “Iron Ladies of Liberia” – through Hedberg Library access link

MAKE SURE YOU WATCH THE FULL 52 MINUTE VERSION

Write Discussion Post #5 in Schoology on movie

April 15-18 – Easter Break

April 20 – African Women and Human Rights/CEDAW

Schoology – Look over CEDAW document link – see what issues the document addresses.
What rights do the signatory countries promise to give women?

April 22 – African Feminism – no class

Schoology (video) – We Should All Be Feminists
Schoology (video) – Know Your African Feminists – Sylvia Tamale
Schoology (video) – Know Your African Feminists – Awa Fall Diop
Write discussion response #6 in Schoology

April 25 – African Feminism

Schoology –
“Neoliberal Feminism in Africa,” by Yemisi Akinbobola
“A Theoretical Exposition of Feminism and Womanism in African Context,” by Maxwell Z. Shamese

April 27 – African Women and the Future

AfW – Ch. 9

April 29 – Oral Presentations

May 2 - Oral Presentations

May 4 – Oral Presentations

May 6 - Oral Presentations

May 9 - Oral Presentations

May 11 – Oral Presentations

May 13 - Course wrap-up
Research Papers Due