

Department of Geography
Geography 403: Geography of Sub-Sahara Africa

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Office Location: GU 234

Office Hours: 8:00-8:50 am MW, 1:00-1:50 am W, 8:00-8:50 am TR or by appointment

Lecture Hours: TR 2:00 - 3.15 pm

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Course Description

The cultural, economic, physical, and political potentials of sub-Sahara Africa. The complex spatial patterns that define the Sub-Sahara African landscape are examined.

Institutional Learning Goals

1. Liberal knowledge and skills of inquiry, critical thinking and synthesis: Students will be required to use different methods in gathering and evaluating information on sub-Saharan Africa. Specifically, students will be required to review and provide critical analysis on scientific publications on sub-Saharan Africa.
2. Core Skills: Individual country project provides students the opportunity to comprehend and interpret information in written and oral form on sub-Saharan Africa
3. Acquisition and application of specialized knowledge: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the historical and cultural factors affecting present geopolitical issues of sub-Saharan Africa.
4. Values and Social Responsibilities: Students will demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of environmental issues in sub-Saharan Africa.
5. Appreciation of cultural identities: Students will demonstrate respect and tolerance for sub-Saharan African culture and traditions.

Specific Course Objectives

By the end of the class students should be able to:

1. Provide an understanding of the spatial patterns of the social, cultural, political and economic processes in sub-Saharan Africa.
2. Examine the problems and prospects of development in the sub-region by investigating the intra-regional factors affecting sub-Saharan Africa.
3. Analyze past and present geopolitical issues in sub-Saharan Africa

4. Examine the opportunities and constraints of the physical environment to sub-Saharan African development.
5. Analyze contemporary global political economy on sub-Saharan African development.
6. Examine the measures of promoting regional economic development in sub-Saharan Africa.

Required Text

1. Aryeetey-Attoh, S. (2010) Geography of Sub-Saharan Africa. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is defined to include any form of cheating and/or plagiarism.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- Stealing or altering testing instruments;
- Falsifying the identity of persons for any academic purpose;
- Offering, giving or receiving unauthorized assistance on an examination, quiz or other written or oral material in a course;
- Falsifying information on any type of academic record

Plagiarism is:

- The presentation of written or oral material in a manner which conceals the true source of documentary material; or
- The presentation of materials which uses hypotheses, conclusions, evidence, data, or the like, in a way that the student appears to have done work which s/he did not, in fact, do.

In cases involving academic dishonesty, a failing grade or a grade of zero (0) for an assignment and/or a course may be administered. “Students expelled or suspended for reasons of academic dishonesty... shall not be admissible to any other University of Maryland System institution if expelled, or during any period of suspension” (*Bylaws, Policies & Procedures of the University System of Maryland*, Section III).

Disruptive Behavior

The University will not tolerate disorderly conduct which substantially threatens, harms, or interferes with university personnel or orderly university processes and functions. All students are expected to be reasonable and respectful to fellow students, guest speakers, and me. See *The Pathfinder* at <http://www.frostburg.edu/clife/ses/pathfinder.pdf> for a description of disruptive student behavior and its consequences.

Note: Your instructor has the right to require a student to leave the classroom when his/her behavior disrupts the learning environment of the class. A student found responsible for disruptive behavior in the classroom may be administratively withdrawn from the course.

Students with Learning or Physical Disabilities

If you have a documented disability, please contact the Director of Disability Support Services at 301-687-4483 or stop by 150 Pullen Hall to set an appointment. We want to be sure you receive appropriate accommodations as soon as possible.

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse/Gender Based Harassment and Misconduct

Frostburg State University and its faculty are committed to maintaining a safe learning environment and supporting survivors of violence. To meet this commitment and comply with federal and state law, FSU requires all faculty and staff (other than the confidential employees in CAPS and Brady Health) to report any instances of gender-based harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, or stalking against students. This means if you share your or another FSU student's experience with gender-based harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, or, stalking, I have a duty to report the information to the University's Title IX Coordinator. The only exception to my reporting obligation is when such incidents are communicated during class discussion, as part of an assignment for a class, or as part of a University-approved research project.

Faculty and staff are also obligated to report allegations of child abuse and neglect to University Police and to Child Protective Services. This obligation extends to disclosures of past abuse even if the victim is now an adult and the abuser is deceased. My duty to report suspected child abuse and neglect extends to disclosures that are made as part of classroom discussions and in writing assignments.

If you or someone you know has experienced an incident of harassment or violence, please go to www.frostburg.edu/titleix to find information on reporting options and the resources and services available for support.

Canvas

To facilitate effective communication between the instructor and students, the course is available on Canvas. You are required to visit the site frequently to check on announcements and due dates of assignments and tests. Course outlines and assignments are also posted on the site. You can also check your grades and current average from the grade book.

Policy

Students are expected to attend classes regularly and participate actively during class discussions. To participate actively in class, students are required to read assigned materials on the course outline prior to class. Attendance will be recorded and failure to

attend classes will result in loss of marks. Your attendance grade will be based on the total number of days present over the expected number of days multiplied by 20. For example, if you were required to be in class for 24 days in the semester, and you were present for 24 days, your attendance grade will be $(24/24) \times 20 = 20$ points. Students are responsible for informing the instructor about their presence when they arrive in class after attendance has been taken.

Class assignments and term project are to be submitted promptly on the due day. Late submission of term projects carries a penalty of 20 points per day for a maximum of 5 days. No essays will be accepted after the 5th day without a reasonable cause. A reasonable cause is defined as serious illness (doctor's report required) or tragedy within the family (a note from family member required).

It is expected that all written work will conform to high standards of grammar and style. Bad grammar and style will be penalized in the grading of written work. The Writing Center in Pullen Hall will be willing to review your work before you submit it to the instructor.

Cell phones and pagers

Cell phones and pagers should be turned off when you come to class. Answering cell phones or checking text messages in class is disrespectful to me and your fellow students. Exception is given to a certified EMT or fire responder. Please inform me ahead of time if you need to have your beeper active all the time because of your profession or special circumstances.

Grading

All tests including the final examination will consist of short questions and essays. The tests are designed to examine your comprehension of material covered in class and textbook. Your ability to think critically and offer convincing arguments of issues raised in the questions will also be examined. Prior approval is required for missing an examination. No make-up examination will be granted if you fail to seek prior approval.

The final grade will consist of the following. These dates are tentative and subject to change except the final examination.

Class Participation through current events (4)	= 40 points
Class assignments (2) (9/20 and 10/18)	= 100 points
Map quiz (9/6)	= 50 points
Country Project proposal (11/13)	= 25 points
Final Country Project (11/29)	= 75 points
Test 1 (9/27)	= 100 points
Test 2 (10/30)	= 100 points
Final examination (Friday 12/17, 11:15 am-1.45 pm)	= 100 points

You are strongly encouraged to use office hours or set up an appointment to discuss your grades with me during the semester. Your final grade will be determined based on the total points accumulated over 590. The scale of your final grade is as follows:

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

F < 60%

Important Dates to Remember:

Map quiz: September 6

Assignments

Assignment 1: September 20

Assignment 2: October 18

Dates of current events: 9/13, 10/4, 11/8, 11/29.

Country Project Proposal

November 8

Final Country Project

November 29

Tests

Test 1: September 27

Test 2: October 30

Final Exams

Friday December 17 – 11:15 am-1.45 pm

Class assignments (Article Review)

Each student will be required to review and provide critical comments on two controversial issues on Africa. Personal comments about the articles are strongly recommended. There will be a class discussion on the day the review is submitted.

The award of marks for the review will be determined by the quality of the review. The criteria will include a demonstrated understanding of the issue, critical appraisal, logic and clarity.

1. Is sub-Saharan Africa experiencing a deforestation crisis?

Yes: Kevin M. Cleaver and Gotz A. Shreiber, from *Reversing the Spiral: The Population, Agriculture, and Environment Nexus in Sub-Saharan Africa* (The World Bank, 1994)

No: Thomas J. Bassett and Koli Bi Zueli, from “Environmental Discourses and the Ivorian Savanna,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* (March 2000)

2. Are abundant mineral and energy resources a catalyst for African Development?

Yes: Oliver Maponga and Philip Maxwell, from “The fall and rise of African Mining,” *Minerals and Energy* (2001).

No: Sunday Dare, from “A continent in crisis: Africa and globalization,” *Dollars and Sense* (July/August 2001).

Current events

To promote class participation and discussion, students are required to participate in current event assignments. You are required to report on a current issue reported in the news media within the past two weeks prior to the date of your submission on sub-Saharan Africa. Oral presentation is required to earn 10 points on your current event. Non participation in oral presentation will lead to loss of 5 points. You are required to follow the format presented below to write out your current event and submit to the instructor on the day of the current event. You need to provide very detailed response to the questions below.

1. When and where did the event occur?
2. Which news media reported the event?
3. Give a summary of the event (2-3 paragraphs).
4. Why do you consider this event important?
5. What are your personal reflections on the event, that is, what impact is this event on you and the society?
6. Suggest possible recommendations in dealing with this event in the future.

LECTURE SCHEDULE (Tentative and subject to change)

1. Introduction: The size and locational dimensions of sub-Saharan Africa. The regions of sub-Saharan Africa.

Reading: Chapter 1

2. Understanding Africa in a Global Context

Regional Geography: Then and Now, The concept of Scale, Is globalization good or bad for Africa?

Reading: Chapter 2

3. The Physical Environment: Physical Landscapes: The Plateau Continent, The Rift Valley, Climate, Vegetation and Soils.

Reading: Chapter 2

4. Human-Environmental Impacts: Deforestation in Sub-Saharan Africa. Definitions, Issues and trends. Desertification in SSA. Definitions and spatial coverage.

Reading: Chapter 3

5. Historical Geography of Sub-Saharan Africa: Opportunities and Constraints. Indigenous heritage of sub-Saharan Africa, Islamic and western influence.

Reading: Chapter 4

6. Culture, Conflict and Change in Sub-Saharan Africa: Elements of African culture, Religion and Language, Family and kingship relations, Land tenure, Diffusion of non-African culture, Ethnic Conflicts, Modernization and cultural conflicts.

Reading: Chapter 6

7. The Political Landscape of Sub-Sahara Africa: Sub-Saharan Africa prior to the early 1990s. Causes of political instability in sub-Saharan Africa.

Reading: Chapter 5

8. Population Geography of Sub-Saharan Africa: General population trends, population density and distribution. Dynamics of population change in SSA, Africa and the demographic transition, Internal Migration and Refugee issues, Population control, government policy and family planning

Reading: Chapter 7

9. Geography and Development in SSA: Defining and Measuring Development in SSA, Economic dimensions of development, Human dimensions of development, Technological dimensions of development. Development Strategies.

Reading: Chapter 8

10. Transportation and communication in Sub-Saharan Africa

Transportation systems in Africa, road transportation, rural transportation, urban transportation, The Pan-African highway, Railways, West Africa, Congo basin, East Africa. Air transportation.

Reading: Chapter 9

11. Urban Geography of Sub-Saharan Africa

Historical evolution of African Cities: Pre-colonial cities, current urbanization trends, Consequences of urban growth, Solutions to urban problems.

Reading: Chapter 10

14. Agricultural Development in SSA: Traditional farming systems, Cash crop and commercial farming. Problems of agricultural production in Sub-Saharan Africa and Increasing Productivity in SSA, Policy Options.

Reading: Chapter 13

13. Medical Geography of Sub-Saharan Africa: Disease ecology of sub-Saharan Africa.

Reading: Chapter 12

13. Geography and Gender in SSA, Women and development in Africa, Gender inequality, African women as agents of change. Gender Relations in Africa: Women as wives, mothers, economic persons, and unequal partners.

Reading: Chapter 11

Map quiz

Study the following locations and geographic sites in Africa for a map quiz.

1. Lake Chad
2. Lake Albert
3. Lake Rudolf
4. Lake Victoria
5. Lake Tanganyika
6. Lake Nasser
7. Tombouctou (Timbuktu)
8. Dakar
9. North Sudan
10. Lagos
11. Accra
12. Gulf of Guinea
13. Ethiopia
14. Nigeria
15. Addis Ababa
16. Eritrea
17. Mogadishu
18. Somalia
19. Mozambique Channel
20. Lesotho
21. Cameroon
22. River Niger
23. Volta Lake
24. Benin
25. Zambia
26. Congolian Rainforest
27. Mali Civilization
28. Axum Civilization
29. Nupe Kingdom
30. Wolof Kingdom
31. Congo
32. Chad
33. Gambia
34. Senegal
35. Dakar
36. Cape of Good Hope
37. Rwanda
38. Burundi
39. Congo River
40. Cape Town
41. Kenya
42. Tanzania
43. Togo
44. Sierra Leone
45. Liberia
46. Burkina Faso
47. Zambia
48. Lusaka
49. Port Elizabeth
50. East London
51. Conakry
52. Freetown
53. Monrovia
54. Mombasa
55. Nairobi
56. Sahelian shrubland
57. Nubia Civilization
58. Karanga Civilization
59. Lozi Kingdom
60. Mende Kingdom
61. Kano
62. South Sudan
63. Equator
64. Tropic of Capricorn
65. Kalahari Basin
66. Fouta Djallon Highlands
67. Northeast Trade Winds
68. Southwest Trade Winds
69. Orange River
70. Equatorial Guinea
71. Mount Kilimanjaro
72. Kalahari Desert
73. Equator
74. Cape Town
75. Seychelles
76. Madagascar
77. Lake Nyasa
78. River Benue
79. Angola
80. Blue Nile
81. Namibia
82. Limpopo River
83. Eritrea
84. River Gambia
85. Mali
86. Noh Civilization
87. Kush Civilization
88. Ashanti Kingdom
89. Moshi Kingdom
90. Kuba Kingdom