Colonizing Processes and the Politics of Race in Southern African History

This course examines the complex nature of southern African history from the seventeenth-century to a contemporary era. The region’s past is fraught with racial, social, and political tensions. Memories of an apartheid era, for example, remain fresh in the minds of many South Africans who endured policies of segregation and brutal repression of dissent. Likewise, peoples in the modern nations of Zimbabwe and Namibia, among other countries in the region continue to reconcile past injustices with contemporary situations. This course examines the complex nature of the region’s history from the seventeenth-century to a contemporary era, paying specific attention to developing an understanding of how Africans adapted, responded, and ultimately resisted varying processes of colonization before the dismantling of colonial regimes in the latter part of the twentieth century. In doing so, we will compare and contrast notions of race and race consciousness in southern Africa from a historical perspective by assessing the origins, nature, and forms of racialized categories between black, white, ‘coloured,’ and Asian communities, and we will shed light on how people worked together to play active roles resisting oftentimes brutal colonial policies in laying the groundwork for decolonization and independence.

We will devote roughly half of the course to examining contacts between Africans and Europeans, discussing early colonizing processes, investigating African adaptations and responses to colonial encounters up to the dawn of the twentieth century, and assess in more critical depth Africans’ mobility and associated political and social changes. In the latter half of the class, we will pay specific attention to investigating the roots of apartheid in South Africa and examine race relations throughout the southern African region from 1900 onward. Although we will place much of our emphasis on historical change in what has become the Republic of South Africa, we will devote some time to discussing other areas of southern Africa, as well.

Class participation and writing assignments will determine a significant portion of your grade. In addition to completing a writing assignment in the first month of the semester, you will take five quizzes on selected readings, turn in five short written assessments of additional secondary source reading assignments, complete a ten- to twelve-page paper, and write a take-home final exam.
Required books (available at UWM.ecampus.com):


Note: I have placed required books on reserves in the library. In addition to the readings above, I have posted a selection of articles and book chapters on the course Canvas site.

Course Requirements and Grading:

1. One 750- to 1,000-word writing assignment on assigned selections from *Digging Through Darkness* due on Canvas on 9/26 by 11am — (20%)
2. Five in-class quizzes on selected assigned readings. (See below for assignments and dates). Each quiz constitutes 4% of your overall grade — (20%)
3. Five 250- to 300-word written assessments on assigned secondary source readings due on Canvas. (See below for assignments and dates). Each assessment constitutes 3% of your overall grade — (15%)
4. One 2,500- to 3,000-word final paper due on Canvas on 12/12 by 11am — (25%)
5. Take home final exam due on Canvas by 12/19 at noon — (10%)
6. Participation — (10%)

Course Expectations:

- Reading is a necessary element of this class. Comprehension and writing cannot flow without reading the material. You must read all the assigned readings for each week. You should read carefully, placing emphasis on themes and historical change. The assessments in this class will feature names, places and dates, but the emphasis will be on your understanding of historical change. If you have any difficulty completing or understanding the readings, please tell me.
- Writing also constitutes an important component of this course. Clear, original, intelligent, and coherent writing is a useful skill. This means that academic honesty is essential. Plagiarism is unacceptable. Citations are required for all written assignments.

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1 Please note you may also access this book free of charge at ProQuest’s ebook central Website via the UWM library.
Office hours are provided for you to raise questions and discuss class materials and your individual projects. They also provide me with an opportunity to assess your progress in the class and suggest improvement.

The course will be available online on Canvas. Please visit the site regularly for updates to the syllabus and information about assignments.

This is a three-credit course. As such, I expect students to devote an average of 9 hours per week (135 hours over the course of what amounts to 15 weeks of the semester) attending class, completing assigned readings, working on assignments, and studying for and writing the final exam.

Course Policies:

- **Attendance:** Attendance at all classes is mandatory. Likewise, participation constitutes a key component. Please remain attentive and turn off your cell phones. I ask you to be respectful to your classmates and me. Please note that students will receive a 2% reduction in their overall grade for each unexcused absence.

- **Late Assignments:** In general, I do not grant extensions on assignments and exams. Exceptions may be made for those on official university business, sporting engagements, or a medical condition, provided I am informed before the event and/or in written form from the relevant authority. Otherwise, all assignments must be turned in on time. I WILL NOT ACCEPT LATE ASSIGNMENTS.

- **Safety Policies:** The university is dedicated to creating a caring environment where individuals are free to learn, teach, and work without fear of intimidation or exposure to potentially harmful/disruptive situations. I expect students to treat each other and me with dignity and respect at all times.

- **Make-up Policies:** Should you miss an assignment due to any of the circumstances listed above, please contact me. We will discuss make-up dates and times.

- **Incomplete Policies:** I generally do not allow students to receive an incomplete grade for this class. I realize, however, there may be circumstances where students might want to request this as an option. Please contact me directly in class, office hours, or by email, and we can discuss your situation and gauge whether an incomplete grade is appropriate. Should you receive an incomplete grade, you will have one year from the end of the semester to submit/complete remaining required assignments.

The campus conditions for awarding an incomplete to graduate and undergraduate students can be found at the following: http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S31.pdf
Other Campus Policies: [http://uwm.edu/secu/syllabus-links/](http://uwm.edu/secu/syllabus-links/)

- **Students with Disabilities**: Verification of disability, class standards, the policy on the use of alternate materials and test accommodations can be found at the following: [http://uwm.edu/arc/](http://uwm.edu/arc/)
- **Religious Observances**: Policies regarding accommodations for absences due to religious observance are found at the following: [http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S1.5.htm](http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S1.5.htm)
- **Students Called to Active Military Duty**: For accommodations for absences due to call-up of reserves to active military duty please see: [http://uwm.edu/active-duty-military/](http://uwm.edu/active-duty-military/)
- **Discriminatory Conduct (such as sexual harassment)**: Harassment, abuse of power, and the reporting requirements of discriminatory conduct are found at the following: [https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discriminatory_Policy.pdf](https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discriminatory_Policy.pdf)
- **Academic Misconduct**: Policies for addressing students cheating on exams or plagiarism can be found at the following: [http://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/facultystaff/policies/academic-misconduct/](http://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/facultystaff/policies/academic-misconduct/)
- **Complaint Procedures**: Students may direct complaints to the head of the academic unit or department in which the complaint occurs. If the complaint allegedly violates a specific university policy, it may be directed to the head of the department or academic unit in which the complaint occurred or to the appropriate university office responsible for enforcing the policy. [http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S49.7.htm](http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S49.7.htm)
- **Grade Appeal Procedures**: Procedures for student grade appeal appear at the following: [http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S28.htm](http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S28.htm)
- **Final Examination Policy**: Policies regarding final examinations can be found at the following: [http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S22.htm](http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S22.htm)

**Academic Advising in History:**

All L&S students have to declare and complete an academic major to graduate. If you have not yet declared a major, you are encouraged to do so, even if you are at an early stage in your college education. If you are interested in declaring a major (or minor) in History, or if you need academic advising in History, please visit the Department of History undergraduate program web page at [http://www4.uwm.edu/letsci/history/undergrad/](http://www4.uwm.edu/letsci/history/undergrad/) for information on how to proceed.
SECTION ONE: A COMPLICATED PAST

Week One (9/3 and 9/5): Culture, Place, and Notions of Race

Week Two (9/10 and 9/12): Apartheid, An Introduction


   NOTE: Quiz on selections from *Born a Crime* at the beginning of class on 9/10

SECTION TWO: ENCOUNTERS AND COLONIZATION IN THE 17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES

Week Three (9/17 and 9/19): The Dutch East India Company and Early Settlement Patterns


Week Four (9/24 and 9/26): African Responses and Reading Against the Colonial Grain


   NOTE: 750-to 1,000-word writing assignment on *Digging Through Darkness* (Chapters 1 through 5) due 9/26 on Canvas by 11am

Week Five (10/1 and 10/3): Movement, Misrepresentations, and Agency


   NOTE: Quiz on “The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee” at the beginning of class on 10/3
SECTION THREE: A SHIFTING COLONIAL TERRAIN IN THE 19TH CENTURY

Week Six (10/8 and 10/10): Contact, Mobility, and Tension

No assigned readings this week, although I encourage you to start reading *A Living Man From Africa* by Roger S. Levine

Week Seven (10/15 and 10/17): Opening the Land (Mining, Movement, and Consolidation)


**NOTE:** Quiz on *A Living Man From Africa* at the beginning of class on 10/17

SECTION FOUR: THE 20TH CENTURY, APARTHEID, AND THE POLITICS OF RACE

Week Eight (10/22 and 10/24): The South African War and the Union of South Africa

No assigned readings this week, although I encourage you to start reading *Mine Boy* by Peter Abrahams

Week Nine (10/29 and 10/31): Policies of Segregation and African Responses

10/31: **READING**  *Mine Boy* by Roger S. Levine (published originally in 1946): pp. 1-184

**NOTE:** Quiz on *Mine Boy* at the beginning of class on 10/31
Week Ten (11/5 and 11/7): Life Under Apartheid

- “Introduction,” pp. 3-11 (on Canvas)
- “Reflexes: 1967-78,” pp. 470-496 (on Canvas)

Selections from *Starving on a Full Stomach: Hunger and the Triumph of Cultural Racism in Modern South Africa* by Diana Wylie (2001):
- “Introduction: Hunger and Ideologies of Exclusion,” pp. 1-6 (on Canvas)
- “Denial and Coercion: The State Response to the Malnutrition Syndrome, 1940s to 1960s,” pp. 203-235 (on Canvas)

NOTE: Two 250-to 300-word writing assignments on selected chapters from *The Seed is Mine* and *Starving on a Full Stomach* due 11/7 on Canvas by 11am.

Week Eleven (11/12 and 11/14): Resisting Apartheid (Factions and Faces of Resistance)

11/14: READING Selection from *Apartheid’s Festival: Contesting South Africa’s National Pasts* by Leslie Witz (2003):
- “Introduction: Journeys, Festivals, and the Making of National Pasts” pp. 1-29 (on Canvas)

NOTE: 250-to 300-word writing assignment on selected chapter from *Apartheid’s Festival* due 11/14 on Canvas by 11am.

Week Twelve (11/19 and 11/21)²: Resisting Apartheid (March, 1960)

- “Voices from a Massacre” pp. 1-27 (on Canvas)
- “The Sharpeville Shootings,” pp. 74-109 (on Canvas)
- “The Anti-Apartheid Movement,” pp. 234-279 (on Canvas)

NOTE: 250-to 300-word writing assignment on selected chapters from *Sharpeville* due 11/21 on Canvas by 11am.

² Please note we will not meet as a class on Thursday, 11/21, but you do have a short writing assignment due on the assigned readings.
Week Thirteen (11/26): Resisting Apartheid (Education and Adaptation)


NOTE: 250-to 300-word writing assignment on “Two Stories About Art, Education, and Beauty in Twentieth Century South Africa” due 11/26 on Canvas by 11am

Week Fourteen (12/3 and 12/5): Resisting Apartheid (Mobilization)

12/5: READINGS  Selections from *I Write What I Like* by Steve Biko (2002):
- “Black Souls in White Skins?” pp. 19-26 (on Canvas)
- “The Definition of Black Consciousness,” pp. 48-53
- “Fear – an Important Determinant in South African Politics,” pp. 73-79 (on Canvas)
- “Let’s Talk About Bantustans,” pp. 80-86 (on Canvas)
- “The Righteousness of Our Strength,” pp. 120-137 (on Canvas)
- “On Death,” pp. 152-153 (on Canvas)

NOTE: Quiz on selections from *I Write What I Like* at the beginning of class on 12/5

SECTION FOUR: INDEPENDENCE

Week Fifteen (12/10 and 12/12): Balancing Hope, Turbulence, Truth, and Reconciliation

NOTE: 2,500-to 3,000-word final paper due 12/12 on Canvas by 11am

TAKE HOME FINAL EXAM: DUE Thursday, December 19th: Submit on Canvas by noon