
AFST 401-01
Topics in African Studies
Topic: Contemporary African Media
GFC Hours 3-0
Winter 2024

Prerequisite(s): African Studies 201 or 301; and 3 units from the Field of African Studies.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

While the liberalization of Africa's media landscape in the 1990s marked a significant turn in the history of the continent, many contemporary issues continue to shape and constrain news-making practices in Africa. This course explores some of the contemporary issues and trends within the African media landscape. Some of these include curtailed media freedom, state interference, limited resources for journalists to work with, poor salaries, among others. Although the proliferation of new media technologies, such as the mobile phone, presents new opportunities for the continent's media sector, local context factors shape these appropriations. Students in this course will therefore question, for example, how the proliferation of new digital technologies might (or not) be opening new spaces for journalistic practices in Africa. Through a variety of approaches such as reading group discussions, presentations, classes, and others, learners will explore and analyze some of the key issues impacting the media in Africa.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The Department of Anthropology and Archaeology is committed to student knowledge and skill development.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of issues affecting the media in Africa

- Identify and analyse how issues affecting the media in Africa impact on journalistic content
- Produce a well-researched output which critically explores some of the emerging trends and issues in the African media
- Engage in critical reading of scholarly articles and texts on journalism practices in Africa and appraise current trends in the media in Africa
- Conduct research on topical issues in the African media and present findings from same individually and as part of a small group

READINGS AND TEXTBOOKS:

There is no required textbook for this course. Relevant materials and resources will be posted on D2L. However, the following list contains recommended readings for this course.

Mabweazara, Hayes (2018) *Newsmaking Cultures in Africa: Normative trends in the dynamics of socio-political and economic struggles* London: Palgrave Macmillan

Ogola, George (2023) *The Future of Television in the Global South Reflections from Selected Countries* London: Palgrave Macmillan

Ogola, George (2017) *Popular Media in Kenyan History: Fiction and Newspapers as Political Actors* London: Palgrave Macmillan

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY and EQUIPMENT:

To successfully engage in their learning experiences at the University of Calgary, students in this course will need reliable access to the following technology: A computer with a supported operating system; a current and updated web browser; current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled; broadband internet connection, a word processor such as Microsoft Word and PowerPoint for assignments and presentations. Learners are expected to know how D2L works, please visit: <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/technology-requirements-for-students/>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENTS

Assessments	%	Due Date
Mid-term Test	20	Tuesday February 13, 2024
Reading Group Presentations	30	Beginning Week 8 until the end of the course
Final Essay	35	Tuesday April 9, 2024
Participation in reading group and class discussions (In-class and on D2L)	15	Ongoing throughout course (See below)
Total	100	

Mid-term Test 20%: Tuesday February 13, 2024, in-class, in-person. This is an in-class, in-person closed book test. The questions will be a mix of multiple choice, True or False and short answer question types. This exam will test your knowledge of the media of countries in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region. Some of these would have been discussed in class prior to the test. Knowing such details as capitals of the countries, will be added advantage.

Reading Group Presentations 30%: Beginning Week 8 until the end of the course.

Depending on the final number of students registered for this course, each reading group will comprise between 4 to 5 students. Each student in a particular reading group would be assigned one or two African countries from the first few weeks of the course. Students will research about each week's topic focusing on how these issues take place in their 'countries'. These findings would then be shared in class among members of the reading group. These in-class reading group engagements will provide an avenue for discussing the current issues affecting the media of the countries you have been assigned by the instructor. Presentations topics would be assigned to each group and every member of the group is expected to present findings in relation to their allocated countries. For example, a reading group of five students who have been assigned Rwanda, Guinea, Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe and Ghana would present on a topic such as "Ethical dilemmas of journalists in your 'country'" focusing on how journalists address media ethics in each of these countries. Presentations will take place during the second half of the class and should last no more than 40 minutes. There will be a question-and-answer session after each presentation and students' ability to answer the questions directed at their presentation will fetch them more marks. Presentation topics will be posted on D2L.

Participation in reading group and class discussions (In-class and on D2L) 15%

For this course, you will be part of a reading group. It is expected that you attend classes and participate in your pre-assigned reading group as it constitutes a part of your assessment. You will also practice presenting your ideas to your peers and receiving feedback which will be useful for the assessments. It is therefore useful that you keep a diary of your findings from the discussions every week. Since one of the best ways to learn is to teach others, participation in your reading group is very important. Beginning from Week 3, you will be required to post at least a paragraph of your findings for each week's topic on D2L, in addition to sharing in class, so that your colleagues have an opportunity to read and learn about your assigned countries. Please note that the maximum score for this 100%. As such, once this is reached, students can no longer earn additional points. Also note that you cannot shift the weight of this component to other assessments.

Reading group discussions begin in Week 3 (Tuesday January 23, 2024)

Final Essay 35%: 2,500—3,000-word limit due Tuesday April 9, 2024 via D2L

Dropbox latest by 11:59pm

Following the weekly reading group discussions, this essay should critically appraise and analyse how some or all of the issues we have discussed in this course shape the colouration of journalism practices in your assigned countries. Since this is an essay, academic essay writing conventions will apply. Rubric for this assessment will be posted on D2L.

Policy on late assignment submissions and missed tests

Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day, including weekends, and holidays without prior instructor approval. Instructor approval for a late submission must be sought and received no later than five business days before the assignment due date.

Missed examinations/tests cannot be made up without the approval of the instructor. Exams may only be deferred in the case of serious illness or medical emergency, religious observance, or domestic affliction (see: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred-final-exams>) Students who miss a test have up to **48 hours** to contact the instructor to ask for a makeup test. Students who do not schedule a makeup test/exam with the instructor within this 48-hour period forfeit the right to a makeup test/exam and will receive a mark of zero on the exam or assignment. Makeup tests will differ significantly in format and/or content from the regularly scheduled test. In this case, **the make-up exam will be strictly essay style**. Also note that with the instructor's approval the weight of missed exam may be transferred to remaining exams or assessments. Please note that this policy excludes the participation component of this course. Once approved by the instructor a makeup test/exam must be written within **two weeks** of the missed test/exam on a day/time scheduled by the instructor.

For written assignments: Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day, including holidays and weekends. All assignments must be submitted to the appropriate Dropbox folder on D2L.

Regarding documentation: Students may provide supporting documentation for an exemption/special request. This may include, but is not limited to, a prolonged absence from a course where participation is required, a missed course assessment, a deferred examination, or an appeal. Students are encouraged to submit documentation that will support their situation. Supporting documentation may be dependent on the reason noted in their personal statement/explanation provided to explain their situation. This could be medical certificate/documentation, references, police reports, invitation letter, or a statutory declaration, etc. The decision to provide supporting documentation that best suits the situation is at the discretion of the student. Students cannot be required to provide specific supporting documentation, such as a medical note. Falsification of any supporting documentation will be taken very seriously and may result in disciplinary action through the Academic Discipline regulations or the Student Non-Academic Misconduct policy.

NOTE: Should a request to defer term work exceed the end of the term, a Deferral of Term Work form must be completed and submitted to the Office of the Registrar. The deferral will be recorded on the student record. Deferrals are granted at the discretion of the Dean or designate and are normally granted for 30 days beyond the last day of the term. Should circumstances warrant, the maximum time that may be granted for a deferral of term work is one additional term. Approved extensions must be sent to the Office of the Registrar. Application information is available at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/student-centre/student-forms>

Reappraisal of Graded Term Work: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-2.html>

Reappraisal of Final Grade: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-3.html>

Department of Anthropology and Archaeology Grading Scheme:

A+	95 – 100%	B+	80 – 84.9%	C+	67 – 70.9%	D+	55 – 58.9%
A	90 – 94.9%	B	75 – 79.9%	C	63 – 66.9%	D	50 – 54.9%
A-	85 – 89.9%	B-	71 – 74.9%	C-	59 – 62.9%	F	< 50%

Please note that no extra credit or ‘make up’ work is available in this class. You do not need to pass each course component to earn a passing grade in the class.

Land Acknowledgement

The University of Calgary, located in the heart of Southern Alberta, both acknowledges and pays tribute to the traditional territories of the peoples of Treaty 7, which include the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprised of the Siksika, the Piikani, and the Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut’ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda (including Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations). The City of Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta (Districts 5 and 6).

Acknowledgment and Respect for Diversity

The Department of Anthropology and Archaeology views diversity of identity as a strength and resource. Your experiences and different perspectives are encouraged and add to a rich learning environment that fosters critical thought through respectful discussion and inclusion.

COURSE POLICIES

Respect is very crucial on this course. Viewpoints expressed during presentations should be done in a collegial manner. Harsh or hostile comments or insults are strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Findings shared during reading group discussions should also be done respectfully without necessarily portraying stereotypes about the countries you are studying. Remember that things are not always as they seem since there are many ‘taken-for-granted’ nuances that might not be obvious upon your initial ‘contact’ with these

countries. We therefore need to be wary of sweeping statements and generalizations that are not grounded in empirical findings.

Email Policy

I will make every effort to respond to your email within 24-48 hours. Please include your UCID and course code in the subject of your email when you contact me. Please note that formal email netiquettes apply when contacting me: “Dear Dr. Motilola” together with a well signed off greeting such as “Sincerely”, “Kind regards” etc, work best. If I have not responded after 48 hours, it might be that I have missed your email. Kindly send a follow-up message, forwarding your initial message. Thank you for your kind understanding.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit <https://live-ucalgary.ucalgary.ca/student-services/access>. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor or the Department Head. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Student-Accommodation-Policy.pdf>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Academic integrity is the foundation of the development and acquisition of knowledge and is based on values of honesty, trust, responsibility, and respect. We expect members of our community to act with integrity. The University Calendar includes a statement on the principles of conduct expected of all members of the university community (including students, faculty, administrators, any category of staff, practicum supervisors, and volunteers), whether on or off university property. This statement applies in all situations where members of the university community are acting in their university capacities. All members of the university community have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with the principles of conduct statement, which is available at: www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

The University of Calgary is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect.

Academic dishonesty is not an acceptable activity at the University of Calgary, and students are **strongly advised** to read the Student Misconduct section in the University Calendar at: www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-3.html. Often, students are unaware of what constitutes academic dishonesty or plagiarism. The most common are (1) presenting another student’s work as your own, (2) presenting an author’s work or ideas as your own without adequate citation, and (3) using work completed for another course. Such activities

will not be tolerated in this course, and students suspected of academic misconduct will be dealt with according to the procedures outlined in the calendar at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-academic-misconduct-procedure>

For students wishing to know more about what constitutes plagiarism and how to properly cite the work of others, the Department of Geography recommends that they attend Academic Integrity workshops offered through the Student Success Centre: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/learning/academic-integrity>

INSTRUCTOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Course materials created by professor(s) (including course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the professor(s). These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the professor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing. Information on Instructor Intellectual Property can be found at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/intellectual-property-policy>

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY ACT

Student information will be collected in accordance with typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-material-protected-copyright-policy>) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks, etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

SUPPORTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING, SUCCESS, AND SAFETY

Please visit the Registrar's website at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for additional important information on the following:

- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success Centre
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information

- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Safewalk

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

This might be subject to minor changes to accommodate relevant events that happen during the term.

Week	Date	Topic/Activity/Readings/Due Date
Week 1	T Jan 9	<p>Introduction: Class overview, discussion of course objectives and goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is news? Journalism practices in Africa <p>Read: Mabweazara, H.M (2018) "Reinvigorating 'Age-Old Questions': African Journalism Cultures and the Fallacy of Global Normative Homogeneity". In: Mabweazara, H. (eds) <i>Newsmaking Cultures in Africa</i>. Palgrave Macmillan: London.</p> <p>Nothias, T (2018) How Western Journalists <i>Actually</i> Write About Africa, <i>Journalism Studies</i>, 19:8, 1138-1159</p>
Week 2	T Jan 16	<p>Fake News and the Media in Africa</p> <p>Read: Wasserman, H and Madrid-Morales, D (2018) "Study sheds light on the scourge of "fake" news in Africa" <i>The Conversation</i></p> <p>Ogola, G. (2017) "Africa has a long history of fake news after years of living with non-truth" <i>The Conversation</i></p> <p>Reading Group Discussions begin next week</p>
Week 3	T Jan 23	<p>Historical background of the media in your allocated countries</p> <p>Reading Group Discussions begin today</p> <p>Reading sample for the media in Ethiopia: Abebe, M. (2020) The Historical Development of Media in Unconquered Africa, <i>Media History</i>, 26 (4), 373-390</p>
Week 4	T Jan 30	<p>Political structures and implications for media practice. How do the political structures in your 'countries' impact on the media?</p> <p>Read: White, R.A., and Mabweazara, H.M. (2018). African Journalism Cultures: The Struggle for Free Expression Against Neo-Patrimonial Governance. In: Mabweazara, H. (eds) <i>Newsmaking Cultures in Africa</i>. Palgrave Macmillan, London.</p>
Week 5	T Feb 6	<p>Media freedom in Africa: How is this happening in your 'country'? What guises are used to hamper media freedom in your 'country'? How is the media regulated in your 'country'? (self-regulation and statutory regulation)</p>
Week 6	T Feb 13	Mid-Term Test

Week 7	Feb 18-24	Term Break, No Classes
Week 8	T Feb 27	Media ownership trends in Africa: Who owns the media in your 'country'? How does ownership in your 'country' affect journalistic practice? Africa Speaker Series Event today. Presentations begin today
Week 9	T Mar 5	Media ethics in Africa: Discuss some of the ethical 'transgressions' and dilemmas of journalists in your 'country'
Week 10	T Mar 12	Changing technologies, changing news? How are new media technologies shaping journalism in your 'country'? Are new media technologies harbingers of change or do journalistic practices remain fairly unchanged? What are the implications of the rise of blogs and bloggers on the media in your 'country'
Week 11	T Mar 19	Where are the women? Gender (im)balances and diversity in the media. What is the ratio of women journalists to their male counterparts in your 'country'?
Week 12	T Mar 26	The role of radio in Africa. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private radio stations • Community radio Read: Diedong, Africanus & Naaikuur, Lawrence. (2013). Ghana's Experience in Participatory Community Radio. <i>Global Media Journal African Edition</i> . 6. 10.5789/6-2-106 Kellow, Christine and Steeves, Leslie (1998). The Role of Radio in the Rwandan Genocide. <i>Journal of Communication</i> , 107-128 Final opportunity to ask for feedback on final essay draft
Week 13	T Apr 2	Media and development in Africa: What is the media's role in relation to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals?
Week 14	T Apr 9	Course review, Final thoughts, Final Essay submission due latest 11:59pm via D2L dropbox
	April 12-23	Winter Final Exam Period

IMPORTANT DATES

M Jan 8	Start of Classes
R Jan 18	Last day to drop a class without a financial penalty
F Jan 19	Last day to add or swap a course
F Jan 26	Fee payment deadline for Fall Term full and half courses.
M Feb 19	Alberta Family Day No Classes.
Feb 18-24	Reading Break. No classes.
F Mar 29	Good Friday no classes
M Apr 1	Easter Monday no classes

T Apr 9	End of classes Last day to withdraw from half courses.
Apr 12-23	Fall Final Exam Period.
May 20-25	Exam period for Registrar deferred final exams

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-schedule.html#fall2017>