



HS 285-51

African History Through Autobiography

An Honors Course that MWF at 12pm in AD 47

JOHN CARROLL UNIVERSITY

Course Description

This honors course introduces students to the history of modern Africa by examining the writings of both ordinary people and national figures. Over the course of the semester we will study autobiographical writing as a means for understanding the political, cultural, social, and economic contours of life in several post-colonial African nations. In particular, we will focus on the history of Rwanda, Somalia, Kenya and South Africa. As an “Issues in Social Justice” course, HS 285 will study social structures that have served to marginalize and oppress people, as well as look to the many ways in which diverse groups of Africans have fought against these systems of oppression. As such this course will address themes that include genocide, war, gender-based violence and reconciliation.

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Associate Professor of History

CONTACT

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OFFICE HOURS

Monday, 11am-12pm & 2pm-3pm

Wednesday, 11am-12pm

Friday, 11am-12pm

And by Appointment

Required Texts

- John Parker & Richard Rathbone, *African History*, ISBN: 978-0-19-280248-4.
- Paul Russesabagina, *An Ordinary Man*, ISBN: 978-0-14-303860-3.
- Fdumo Korn, *Born in the Big Rains*. ISBN: 978-155861578-6.
- Wangari Maathai, *Unbowed: A Memoir*. ISBN: 978-155861578-6.
- Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, ISBN: 978-0307275202.



Paul Russesabagina



Wangari Maathai



Fdumo Korn



Nelson Mandela



EXAMINATIONS**35% of course grade**

Students will sit for two unit tests during the regular semester, as well as a cumulative examination during finals week. Each of the two units tests is worth 10% and the final exam is worth 15% of the student's overall course grade. A student must provide documented evidence of a severe illness, personal emergency or religious observance IN ADVANCE of an examination in order to reschedule it.

SOCIAL JUSTICE TERM PROJECT**30% of course grade**

Over the course of the semester, students will prepare and implement a group project that addresses a social concern related to the history of modern Africa. Students are encouraged to pick a topic that personally interests them and research the history of this social injustice in a particular region of Africa. Student groups will then plan and implement a project that in some way addresses this concern. Project can take any form, and may be related to a student's academic major, personal interests, or professional aspirations. (For example, an education student might wish to create an educational module on Africa's Nobel Prize winners, while the Marketing major may choose to create a public awareness campaign about Human Trafficking, while the PJHR student conducts a direct-action consumer protest.) Each student group will be required to turn in an initial idea worksheet, project proposal, two status reports, and a finalized plan before having their ISJ project approved. The final project will be graded on its creativity, visibility, impact, research and degree of group collaboration. An oral summary of the project will also be presented before the entire class at the end of the semester.

QUIZZES**15% of course grade**

A quiz on the readings, map of Africa, and other course materials is given during the first five minutes of class each Wednesday. Students who are late or otherwise absent from class will not be permitted to take the quiz. Students who cannot regularly make it to class on time, for any reason, are not recommended to enroll in this course. Make-up quizzes will NOT be available. Only students who provide documented evidence of a severe illness, personal emergency, or religious observance IN ADVANCE of a quiz will be excused from taking it.

COURSE ENGAGEMENT**15% of course grade**

Active engagement in our course is an important component of succeeding in HS 285. Students are expected to attend all class meetings, participate in classroom discussions, and work collaboratively with their peers. Students will be evaluated on both the quantity and quality of their verbal participation in this course.

APPLIED-LEARNING ACTIVITIES**5% of course grade**

Students will participate in a series of applied-learning activities during some Friday course sessions. These activities are meant to give students experience evaluating historical arguments and debating contemporary social justice topics. Students who are late or otherwise absent from class will not be permitted to participate in these activities. Students who cannot regularly make it to class on time, for any reason, are not recommended to enroll in this course.



**COURSE
GRADING SCALE**

Grade	% Range
A+	97-100
A	94-96
A-	90 - 93
B+	87 - 89
B	84 - 86
B-	80 - 83
C+	77 - 79
C	74 - 76
C-	70 - 73
D+	67 - 69
D	64 - 66
D-	60 - 63
F	0 - 59

**TERM PROJECT
GRADING RUBRIC**

Component	Points
Project Pitch	5 points
Project Proposal	5 points
Update (1)	5 points
Update (2)	10 points
Project Plan	15 points
Final Project - Creativity	10 points
Final Project - Visibility	10 points
Final Project - Impact	15 points
Final Project - Collaboration	5 points
Research	10 points
Oral Presentation	10 points
Total	100 Points

Human rights are not things that are put on the table for people to enjoy. These are things you fight for and then you protect.

- Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize winner



COURSE SCHEDULE

	Monday		Wednesday		Friday
Week 1	Introduction to Course 08/31		Practice Quiz & Discussion African History p. 1-47 09/02		African Map Activity Links on Canvas 09/04
Week 2	No Class Labor Day 09/07		Quiz 1 & Discussion African History p. 48-90 09/09		ISJ Project Exploration Links on Canvas 09/11
Week 3	Lecture African History p. 91-113 09/14		Quiz 2 & Discussion African History p. 114-149 09/16		ISJ Project Pitches Links on Canvas 09/18
Week 4	Rwanda Lecture Rusesabagina, p. ix-28 09/21		Quiz 3 & Discussion Rusesabagina, p. 29-71 09/23		Film: Ghosts of Rwanda Rusesabagina, p. 72-114 09/25
Week 5	Review for Exam 1 Rusesabagina, p. 114-164 09/28		Quiz 4 & Discussion Rusesabagina, p. 165-204 10/30		EXAM 1 Essay & Short Answer 10/02
Week 6	Somalia Lecture Korn, p. 1-58 10/05		Quiz 5 & Discussion Korn, p. 59-104 10/07		Film: Girl Rising Korn, p. 171-179 10/09
Week 7	Lecture Final ISJ Project Plan Due 10/12		Quiz 6 & Discussion Korn, p. 105-171 10/14		No Class Fall Break 10/16
Week 8	Kenya Lecture Maathai, p. ix-28 10/19		Quiz 7 & Discussion Maathai, p. 29-72 10/21		Film Analysis: Taking Root Maathai, p. 73-118 10/23
Week 9	ISJ Small Group Meetings Maathai, p. 119-163 10/26		Quiz 8 & Discussion Maathai, p. 164-205 10/28		ISJ Project Work Day Maathai, p. 206-253 10/30
Week 10	Review for Exam 1 Maathai, p. 254-290 11/02		Quiz 9 & Discussion Maathai, p. 291-307 11/04		EXAM 2 Essay & Short Answer 11/06
Week 11	South Africa Lecture Film: Mandela (Frontline) 11/09		Quiz 10 & Discussion Mandela, part 1 (excerpts) 11/11		ISJ Project Work Day Mandela, part 2 (excerpts) 11/13
Week 12	Lecture: Effective Presentations Mandela, part 3 (excerpts) 11/16		Quiz 11 & Discussion Mandela, part 4 (excerpts) 11/18		Film: Mandela Mandela, part 5 (excerpts) 11/20
Week 13	ISJ Presentations Mandela, part 6 (excerpts) 11/23		Quiz 12 & Discussion Mandela, part 7 (excerpts) 11/24		No Class Thanksgiving Break 11/27
Week 14	ISJ Presentations Mandela, part 8 (excerpts) 11/30		Quiz 13 & Discussion Mandela, part 9 (excerpts) 12/02		Film: District 9 Mandela, part 10 (excerpts) 12/04
Week 15	Review for Final Exam Review all course readings 12/07		Quiz 14 & Discussion Mandela, part 11 (excerpts) 12/09		Reflection & Next Steps 12/11



Issues in Social Justice Term Project

	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Week 1	08/31	09/02	09/04
Week 2	09/07	09/09	ISJ Project Exploration 09/11
Week 3	09/14	Thur. Sept 17 @7pm in Kulas 09/17 Yes Men: “Laughtivism” Talk	ISJ Project Pitches 09/18 Idea Worksheet Due (5 pt)
Week 4	Project Proposal Due 09/21 (5 pt.)	09/23	09/25
Week 5	Progress Update (1) Due 09/28 (5 pt.)	10/30	10/02
Week 6	Project Update (2) Due 10/05 (10 pt.)	10/07	10/09
Week 7	Project Plan Due 10/12 (15 pt.)	10/14	10/16
Week 8	10/19	10/21	10/23
Week 9	Small Group Meetings with Prof. Any Final Revisions Due 10/26	10/28	In-class Project Work Day 10/30
Week 10	11/02	11/04	11/06
Week 11	(50 pt) PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION 11/09	PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION 11/11	In-class Project Work Day PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION 11/13
Week 12	PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION 11/16	PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION 11/18	PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION 11/20
Week 13	ISJ Project Presentations 11/23 (10 pt)	11/24	11/27
Week 14	ISJ Project Presentations 11/30	12/02	12/04
Week 15	12/07	12/09	12/11



NOTE ON INCLUSIVITY

John Carroll University is committed to fostering a learning and working environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and ethical and moral values consistent with Jesuit and Catholic traditions. The University seeks to provide an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment, including sexual harassment. If you have experienced sexual harassment/assault/misconduct based upon gender/sex/sexual orientation, and you share this with a faculty member, the faculty member must notify the Title IX Coordinator, Kendra Svilar, J.D., who will discuss options with you. She can be reached by email at ksvilar@jcu.edu or (216) 397-1559. For more information about your options and resources, please go to <http://sites.jcu.edu/hr/pages/resourcespolicies/title-ix/>.

If you have experienced bias or discrimination based on race, age, sex*, sexual orientation*, religion, ethnic or national origin, disability, military or veteran status, genetic information or any factor protected by law, you are encouraged to report this via the Bias Reporting System at <http://sites.jcu.edu/bias> to Dr. Terry Mills, Assistant Provost for Diversity and Inclusion, or at tmills@jcu.edu, or (216) 397-4455. For more information about the University commitment to diversity and inclusion, please see <http://sites.jcu.edu/diversity>.

NOTE FOR STUDENTS WHO USE THE SSD OFFICE

In accordance with federal law, if you have a documented disability (Learning, Psychological, Sensory, Physical, or Medical) you may be eligible to request accommodations from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Please contact the Director, Allison West at (216) 397-4967 or come to the office located in room 7A, in the Garden Level of the Administration Building. Please keep in mind that accommodations are not retroactive so it is best to register at the beginning of each semester. Only accommodations approved by SSD will be recognized in the classroom. Please contact SSD if you have further questions.

*I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it.
The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.*

- Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa

Course Goals, Objectives, & Outcomes

ACADEMIC DESIGNATIONS & LEARNING GOALS

The John Carroll University curriculum is intended to give each students a well-rounded liberal arts education. Whether you are studying under the outgoing or incoming core curriculum, this course can help you to fulfill your core requirements. HS 285 has been authorized as a Division II, Diversity (D), and Non-Western (R) course in the outgoing University Core. Additionally, this course satisfies the “Issues in Social Justice” requirement of JCU’s incoming Core Curriculum.

This course can also be used to fulfill the requirements of a major or minor in the History and will give students an introduction to the historical discipline. Students majoring in history take 39 credit hours in the major, much of which you may choose based upon your own interests so long as you enroll in at least two courses in each of the following geographical areas: United States; Europe; and Asia, Africa, or Latin America. Majors also must take at least two courses that concentrate in the pre-1800 period, and two in the post-1800 period. This course counts under the “Asia, Africa, or Latin America” and “post-1800” categories.

Regardless of why you enroll in HS 285, the successful completion of this course will allow you to:

- 1. Understand and evaluate the causes behind patterns of social injustice in the African past**
- 2. Understand the multiple strategies that diverse African peoples have used to dismantle social structures and systems of oppression that have historically marginalized them**
- 3. Use primary and secondary sources to fashion compelling historical arguments**

NOTE ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic honesty, expected of every student in every aspect of our course. Academic integrity is essential to the learning process and an essential part of the high ethical standards valued at a Catholic Jesuit University. Cheating of any form, including plagiarism, inappropriate use of technology, or any other kind of unethical behavior, will subject the student to severe academic penalties, including dismissal from the course. In HS 285 all work submitted for evaluation including, examinations, quizzes, and applied-learning activities must represent only the work of the student. In the case of the ISJ project, members must work collaboratively with one another, and as such all group members will be held responsible for integrity violations made by any individual member. In order to acquaint yourself with the full JCU policy on academic honesty, please refer to the *Undergraduate Bulletin*.

Course Goals, Objectives, & Outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOMES

While valuable in and of itself, exploring the contours of African history can also serve as a means to achieve larger educational ends. As an introductory history and “Issues in Social Justice” course, HS 197 will allow students to begin to develop the learning outcomes listed below through the successful completion of their course work. Each students’ development of our course learning outcomes relies upon their ability to complete all course assignments, finish all assigned readings and otherwise meet the requirements set forth in this syllabus.

Course Engagement

- Students will develop habits of critical analysis while engaging
- Students will learn to communicate skillfully in multiple forms of expression
- Students will develop skills in public speaking and oral presentation.

Issues in Social Justice Term Project

- Students will apply creative and innovative thinking
- Students will define what it means to act competently in a global and diverse world
- Students will begin to understand and promote social justice
- Students will apply a framework for examining ethical dilemmas
- Students will employ leadership and collaborative skills

Examinations & Quizzes

- Students will develop habits of critical analysis
- Students will apply creative and innovative thinking
- Students will learn to communicate skillfully in multiple forms of expression

Applied-Learning Activities

- Students will develop habits of critical analysis
- Students will apply a framework for examining ethical dilemmas
- Students will apply creative and innovative thinking

FINE PRINT

Life happens. As such, this syllabus is subject to change. While I make it my policy to follow this syllabus as closely as possible, there are certain things (such as snow storms, strep throat, and IT server meltdowns) that may cause our syllabus to be amended. Should this occur changes will be made in a way that attempts to preserve everyones sanity.

If you read all of the information on this syllabus, you might think that much of it is somewhat boring, legalistic, and full of jargon. I agree. However, the “syllabus gods” require that I give you all the information outlined above. If you actually read all of this I commend your studious efforts attention to detail. Congratulate yourself on getting the semester off to a good start. You rock.