This course is designed to inform students on not only the general schools of ethnic construction, but also Africa’s unique contribution to the development of the field. This course will begin with general themes in ethnic construction and cover pre-colonial ethnic constructions in Uganda, Southern Africa and Yorubaland. Later themes in this course will detail the forces of nation building, conflict and migration as important factors in ethnic construction. There will be several case studies given in the class.
which represent some of extremely varied African experiences with ethnicity. In this course you will receive a very general understanding of ethnic construction that can be used as a foundation for further inquiry. The class will test critical thinking, effective communication and reading comprehension. Knowledge of identity construction in the rest of the world is essential in understanding the conflicts that occasionally arise due to them, the diversity of this ever shrinking world and how we define ourselves.

**Required Readings**


Addition Course Reading will be on Blackboard and these books will be placed on reserve in Mudd Library.

**Recommended Readings**


**Course Requirements:**

Class Participation 40% (Participation 10%, Responses and Attendance 20%, Discussion Sessions 10%)

Two Review Essays (approx. 5 – 7 pgs.) 15% each

Research Paper 30%

Credit will not be given if all written work is not turned in.

**Explanation of Requirements**

**Papers:**

There are two essays and one research paper for this course. A handout will be provided explaining the requirements. The essay will be due a week after the sub unit is completed, the research paper on the last Friday of exam week. Late papers will be accepted with a 1/2 grade deduction for each day late.

**Research Paper and Presentation**

During the semester you will choose a school of ethnic construction and describe how it sheds light on ethnic construction in another part of Africa -or- how elucidates ethnic construction in another area of the world, including our own backyard. During the last week of the semester you will give an oral presentation (10-15 minutes) to the class (re)introducing the school of ethnic construction and briefly detailing the ethnic group you are focusing and explaining how this school helps us in understanding the
process of ethnic construction. Unlike the essays, **You must use and present at least two (2) primary sources.** If you are having trouble finding primary sources please come by my office and I will help you find appropriate primary sources. A handout outlining the requirements of the paper and presentation will be provided during the semester.

**Attendance**

Come to class on time. Class time is limited and tardiness not only distracts your classmates, but also increases the likelihood of missing important information. **Three (3) late arrivals = one (1) unexcused absence.**

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class and **three (3) unexcused absences will result in a one (1) letter lowering of your grade.**

**Participation**

In order to be successful in this course, you must actively participate in the section discussions. This includes reading all assignments (in the textbook, sourcebook and course website) and coming to class ready to discuss the assigned readings.

Good participation is displayed by comments or questions that are relevant to lecture or discussion session topics and are informed by the assigned readings.

You can also earn extra participation points by attending pertinent lectures that will be announced during class.

**Responses**

Throughout the semester a discussion question will be assigned and you will write and hand in a one (1) page response to a question given in class the week before by email. In addition, on occasion, using Blackboard (http://oncampus.oberlin.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp), a question will also be posted (Occasionally, during the weeks where there is not an assigned response paper, every student will prepare three (3) questions for discussion during the section. These questions will come from assigned readings and will relate to theoretical issues in the readings.

Even if you are absent from the session (excused or unexcused) you are still required to hand in these responses or questions by email **BEFORE** the session meeting (9:45am). If there is minimal oral participation during session meetings, there will be additional response paper assignments.

**Classroom Conduct**

During the section meetings, there will many opportunities for you to express yourself orally. In order to allow a fluid exchange of ideas, **everyone’s opinion will be respected.** You are welcome to disagree with your classmates’ views on certain issues; however, personal attacks, rude comments or disrespectful behavior of any type will not be condoned and will be detrimental to your participation grade.
Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

The Oberlin Honor Code applies to all assignment for this course. This code can be found through Blackboard → Lookup/Directories → Honor Code. On assignments and tests you turn in for this course, the honor pledge and your signature must be present. The pledge is as follows: “I affirm that I have adhered to the honor pledge in this assignment.” The essay and research paper are to be written without assistance, but as always you are encouraged to discuss your ideas with others.

Students with Disabilities

If you have specific physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities that require accommodations (such as a note taker or special testing arrangements), please let the instructor know early in the semester so your learning needs can be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to Ms. Jane Boomer, Coordinator for Services for Students with Disabilities. Her office is in Peters G-38A and her phone number is x58464.

Email Policy

I will respond to emails within 24 hours from Monday – Friday, and within 48 hours on the weekends. It is a requirement to check your email and blackboard for announcements for this class.

Schedule of Lectures and Assignments

Unit 1: Setting the Stage: Race and Ethnicity (Various Approaches)

Week One: Introductions to Ethnicity and “Race”


2/8 Introduction: Who Are You?
2/10 Defining Ethnicity (CH Chap 1 + 2)
2/12 Defining Race (CH Chap 1 + 2)

Week Two: Sociological Approaches to Ethnicity

Assigned Readings: Chap 3-4 in Cornell and Hartman

2/15 Race and Ethnicity (Redux) (CH Chap 3)
2/17 The Circumstantialist Approach (CH Chap 4)
2/19 The Constructionist Approach (CH Chap 4)

Choose Ethnic group for research presentation

Unit 2: Pre Colonial African Ethnic Construction of Ethnicity
**Week Three:** Theoretical Frameworks for Understanding Pre-Modern Identities (Acholi)

Assigned Readings: Barth, Chapter 5, 7

- 2/22 Barth’s Social Boundaries (Barth Reading Blackboard)
- 2/24 Factors from Within the Group (CH Chap 7)
- 2/26 Case Studies (CH Chap 5)

**Week Four:** The Roots of Ethnicity (The Acholi and the Chikunda) (2)

Assigned Readings: Roland Atkinson/ Isaacman Article

- 3/01 The Chikunda (Isaacman Article)
- 3/03 The Acholi (Acholi Article)
- 3/05 Comparing the Two/ Essay Overview/ Possible Overflow Day

**Unit 3: Construction of an Ethnic Group in the Age of Imperialism**

**Week Five:** The Case of the Yoruba

Assigned Readings: Chapters 1-4 in Peel’s *The Making of the Yoruba*

- 3/08 Ethnicity and African Empire Building (Peel Chap 1)
- 3/10 Ethnicity and the Slave Trade (Peel Chap 2-3)
- 3/12 Emancipation and Ethnic Change (Peel Chap 4)

**Week Six:** The Case of the Yoruba (2)

Assigned Readings: Chapters 5-8 in Peel’s *The Making of the Yoruba*

- 3/15 Religious Change and Ethnicity (Peel Chap 5-6)
- 3/17 Conversion and Ethnicity (Peel Chap 7-8)
- 3/19 Possible Overflow day/ FILM

**Week Seven:** Ethnicity as Invented Foreshadowing Modern Constructions

Assigned Readings: Peel’s *The Making of the Yoruba* and Selections from Werner Sollors’ *The Invention of Ethnicity*

- 3/22 The Making of the Yoruba (Peel 9+10)
- 3/24 Sociological Cases Studies and the Invention of Ethnicity (Sollors)

**BOOK REVIEW DUE ON THURSDAY**

- 3/26 DISCUSSION: Who are you now?
Spring Recess 3/27-4/04

Unit 4: Modern African Ethnicities and the Factors that Create them

**Week Eight**: Ethnicity as Government Controlled

Assigned Readings: Chapter 6 and selections from the *Invention of Tradition* and *Imagined Communities*

4/05 Governmental Factors in the Making of Ethnicities (C+H Chap. 6)
4/07 Inventing Cultures (Hobsbawn/Ranger Articles)
4/09 Inventing Communities (Anderson Article)

**Week Nine**: Ethnicity as Created through Conflict

Assigned Readings: Mamdani *When Victims* Part 1 (Chapter 2-4)

4/12 The Origins of the Ethnic Crisis (Chap 2)
4/14 Colonialism and Race/Ethnicity Construction (Chap 3)
4/16 Decolonization and Ethnicity (Chap 4)/ Possible Class Cancellation

**Week Ten**: Consequences of Oppression and Genocide

Assigned Readings: Mamdani *When Victims* Part 2 (Chapters 5-8)

4/19 Independence and Ethnicity (Chap 5-6)
4/21 The Snowballing of Ethnic Conflict in the Great Lakes Region (Chap 7)
4/23 Civil War and Genocide (Chap 8)

Unit 5: Global African Ethnicities

**Week Eleven**: Selections from Marilyn Halter’s *Between Race and Ethnicity*

4/26 African Ethnicities in the 19th century Americas (Introduction and Chap 3)
4/28 African Ethnicities during Jim Crow (Chaps. 4+5)

**BOOK REVIEW DUE THURSDAY**

4/30 African Ethnicities in the Age of Black Power **FILM**

**Week Twelve**: Selections from *The New African Diaspora*

05/03 West African Immigrants in Europe and America (Tayki)
05/05 Concluding Remarks about the Black Atlantic (Andemoyo)
05/07 The New Africans – Post Jim Crow African American Identities (**FILM**)
Week Thirteen: Ethnic Construction in Africa and Around the World

TURN IN DRAFTS OF RESEARCH PAPERS WHEN YOU PRESENT YOUR RESEARCH

05/10 Presentations
05/12 Presentations
05/14 Presentations

Week Fourteen:

TURN IN REWRITTEN RESEARCH PAPER BEFORE FRIDAY MAY 21st 5pm