INTL 447/547 SYLLABUS
Comparative Tribalisms: U.S. Cultural Politics in African Perspective
Spring 2012

MW 2:00-3:20  Pacific Hall 16

Instructor: Ana E. Schaller de la Cova  GTF: Lizzy Miskell
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Office Hrs: MW 3:30-4:30 + by appt.  Office Hrs: MW 12:30-1:30 + by appt.
PLC Hall 306  Location TBD

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

What is tribalism?  What could “tribe” mean in this era of globalization, new electronic media technologies, and the “war against terror”?  This course critically examines ideas of culture and of ethnic, tribal, racial, and national identity in a comparative world context.  It looks at why certain conceptions of self and other have become dominant and how political discourse legitimates and normalizes these notions, making them appear natural and timeless.  It engages cultural and identity politics from the colonial period on up to the contemporary moment, drawing from a range of disciplinary work (anthropology, history, political science, and cultural studies), as well as a diverse selection of feature films and fiction.  The goal of the course is for students to cultivate a more critically-informed understanding of the dynamics of cultural identity at home and abroad.

TEXTS:

All readings are posted on the course’s Blackboard page.  Hard copies of most course books and films are also on reserve at the library.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

Class participation and attendance represent 20% of students’ final grade.  Attendance will be taken each day.  Students are expected to come to class having carefully read the day’s reading and be prepared to discuss it.  Students will be asked to provide discussion questions and participate in short group presentations at various times throughout the semester.

Students are required to write two short reaction papers, which together comprise 30% of their total class grade (15% each).  Undergraduate papers should be 3 pages, double-spaced.  Graduate papers should be 5 pages.

An open-book in-class midterm will count for 20% of students’ class grade.  It will be comprised of short essay questions.  Students should bring a new blue book to class for the exam.
A **final paper** will count for 30% of the class grade. Undergraduate papers should be 10 pages, double-spaced. Graduate papers should be 15 pages.

Papers are due at the beginning of class. Reaction papers will be graded down ½ of a grade for each day they are late. Late final papers will not be accepted.

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and abide by University of Oregon standards of academic conduct at all times. The entire text of the Honor Code as it relates to academic conduct can be found online at http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/AcademicMisconduct/tabid/248/Default.aspx.

Plagiarism, as well as giving, seeking, obtaining or using unauthorized assistance and/or information on class assignments and exams constitutes academic misconduct and is unacceptable. Non-academic use of laptops and smartphones in class is not allowed and offenders will be asked to leave the classroom.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

**Week 1**
Monday, April 2: Course Introduction
Syllabus distributed.

Wednesday, April 4: Nation-States and National Communities
- Renan, Ernst. 1882. “What is a Nation?”; 9 pgs.

**Week 2**
Monday, April 9: Nation-States and National Communities

Wednesday, April 11: Imperialism and Identity
**Reaction Paper #1 assignment distributed.**

**Week 3**
Monday, April 16: Imperialism and Identity
**Film—Chocolat, Claire Denis (1989, 105 min.)**
Wednesday, April 18: Imperialism and Identity
Film—Chocolat, Claire Denis (1989, 105 min.)

Week 4
Monday, April 23: The Politics of Tradition
Reaction Paper #1 due.

Wednesday, April 25: Race and Ethnicity
Final Paper assignment distributed.

Week 5
Monday, April 30: Race and Ethnicity

Wednesday, May 2: Globalization
Open-Book Midterm

Week 6
Monday, May 7: Deterritorialization and Diaspora
Reaction Paper #2 assignment distributed.

Wednesday, May 9: Consumption and Identity
Week 7
Monday, May 14: U.S./Mexico Borderland

Wednesday, May 16: U.S./Mexico Borderland
**Reaction Paper #2 due.**
**Film—Lone Star**, John Sayles (1996, 134 min.)

Week 8
Monday, May 21: Violence
**Film—Lone Star**, John Sayles (1996, 134 min.)

Wednesday, May 23: Violence

Week 9
Monday, May 28: No class. **Memorial Day holiday.**

Wednesday, May 30: Post 9/11 World

Week 10
Monday, June 4: Post 9/11 World **Last day of class.**

Thursday, June 14: **Final Papers due at 3:15 p.m.**