Course Description

This course will explore representations of the body in literature and critical theory of 20th and 21st century Africa and African Diaspora. Beginning with an understanding of the complex—fetishized, fantasized, sensationalized, not to mention exploitative—role of African bodies in Europe and America’s cultural imaginary, we will then consider representations of body by African writers, whose concerns include: counter-narratives to Western fantasies; homosexuality and “African identity”; psychological trauma and colonization; AIDS; the body as a center of modern, urban existence; and, the relationship between the body and the body politic and/or national narratives.

Course Materials

BOOKS:

Season of Migration to the North, Tayeb Salih [Sudan]
Maps, Nuruddin Farah [Somalia]
The River Between, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o [Kenya]
Sister Killjoy, Ama Ata Aidoo [Ghana]
*Mating Birds, Lewis Nkosi [South Africa]
Welcome to Our Hillbrow, Phaswane Mpe [South Africa]
In Another Place, Not Here, Dionne Brand [Trinidad/Canada]

*Your texts are at the college bookstore, with the exception of Mating Birds; I will loan each of you a copy of this book, since it is currently out of print.

FILMS:
The Life and Times of Sara Baartman (1998, Zola Maseko) [South Africa]
Moulaadé (2004, Ousmane Sembene) [Senegal]
Dakan (1997, Mohamed Camara) [Guinea]

OTHER REQUIRED READINGS:
Many of your readings (poetry, critical essays, etc.) are available through the Sandor Teszler library E-Reserves. Simply follow the link on the library website to “course reserves” and search under “Rostan” or “English 497A”. [http://www.wofford.edu/sandorteszlerlibrary/]

NOTE: On your reading schedule, Electronic Reserves = ER.
Course Requirements/Grade Percentages

- **(Limited Research) Essay 1:** 20% ~ due by March 17th
- **Precis and Analysis Essay:** 10% ~ due-dates vary. For this paper, you will write a short summary and contextualized analysis (2-2½ pages) of one of the critical essays in this course, due on the day we discuss it in class—so be looking ahead!!
- **Researched Proposal:** 10% ~ due by April 21st
- **(Research) Essay 2:** 30% ~ due by May 8th
- **Final Exam:** 15% ~ exam date TBA. We will discuss the exam later during the course; it will be a take-home consisting primarily of a 2 pages essay on one of the extra/optional readings listed on the syllabus, or another of your choosing.
- **Participation and Attendance:** 15%

Grades are represented on a one hundred-point scale, but you can convert them to a letter grade according to the following:

- 93-100=A;
- 90-92=A-;
- 87-89=B+;
- 83-86=B;
- 80-82=B-;
- 77-79=C+;
- 73-76=C;
- 70-72=C-;
- 67-69=D+;
- 60-66=D;
- 00-59=F

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. After two absences (excused or unexcused), I am required to alert the Dean. If I notice you have more than two unexcused absences, each absence beyond three will lower your final grade by ½ a letter grade. You may also lose points from your participation grade for absences.

If you know already that you plan to be absent at some point in the semester, please try to save your absences for these occasions. If you have extenuating circumstances—prolonged illness or an athletic commitment, I will need you to keep me consistently informed of your schedule and supplied with the appropriate letters from the Dean. Sometimes we have emergencies and I will accommodate your circumstances when appropriate—please consider me a resource when you need help in that regard.

- If you enter class after I have checked the roll, you are late, and it is your responsibility to see me immediately after class to be certain that I count you as present.
- If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you have missed from a reliable classmate.
- If you are ill, it’s in your best interest to go to the doctor; if you an absence to be excused, you must have a signed note from a doctor for that day when you return to class.

Policies:

All work submitted must be your own. Cases of suspected plagiarism and cheating may be handled by Wofford’s Honor Council, as per [Wofford College’s Honor Code]. Plagiarism is defined as:

1) the verbatim repetition, without acknowledgement, of the writings of another author;
2) borrowing without acknowledging the source;
3) paraphrasing the thoughts of another writer without acknowledgement; or
4) allowing any other person or organization to prepare work which one then submits as his or her own.