Getting Started:

This syllabus is designed to give you clear instructions on how to get started. It provides you with a list of requirements, a course description, course goals and objectives, module-level objectives, instructional methods and a grading policy. It also provides the following sections: Academic Integrity, the American Disabilities Act, the Writing Center, and Possible Changes in the Syllabus.

Your syllabus comes in two parts, this word file and an excel spreadsheet. For your convenience, I have included the excel spreadsheet that can be used as a quick glance or calendar of events for this class. Holidays, homework assignments, exam dates, and lecture themes are listed by date on this calendar. I recommend posting this timetable in a convenient place so that you can prepare for exams and remember due dates.

In addition, your syllabus will be available throughout the semester in the Content section under your class on Blackboard. Homework instructions, online assignments, and handouts will also be uploaded to the Content section. Any changes in the syllabus, cancellations due to weather, or other announcements will be posted in Blackboard under the Announcement section.
Once we meet in class, you will also be asked to introduce yourselves to your professor and to each other. Forming study and work groups early on will help you succeed in the course. Often times, discussing some of the topics, concepts and case studies with your peers can help you retain the information.

**Required Texts:**

The following texts have been adapted because other professors who teach this course at Howard also use them. The purpose of these instructional materials is to give you a general overview of the cultural, political, and economic forces that have shaped contemporary Africa. They cover a variety of perspectives and topics related to Africa. Chapters from each of these texts will be assigned according to the weekly lecture themes. References to your readings will be discussed in class. Questions about your readings will appear on quizzes and exams and on occasion we will discuss and debate some of the themes (e.g., human rights issues and polygamy) in class.

**Khapoya, Vincent B.**  
2013 *African Experience*, 4/E. Pearson. SKU 9780205851713

**Gordon, April A. and Gordon, Donald L., eds.**  

**Required Technologies:**

To supplement course readings and provide current instructional materials, as well as significant classic and timeless materials, audio and visual components have been added to this course.

Since this course uses technologies such as audio and visual components, you must have access to a computer and the internet. Computers for your use are available at the University iLAB, located in the Technology Center, 2301 Georgia Ave, Second Floor.

Please refer to: http://www.howard.edu/technology/services/labs.html

Many short audio clips and videos will be assigned in this course. Links will be listed under your class in the content section on Blackboard, so you need to be able to access Blackboard on a regular basis. Students who are registered for this course are automatically enrolled in Blackboard. Others need to see me so that I can add you to the list of participants.

*Why Use Blackboard?*

The purpose of using Blackboard is to “flip” the class into a more interactive learning experience and to be able to make more effective use of class discussion. This course is a partially "flipped" course, which means that 30% of the course will include online content. The purpose of flipped content is to offer a look at Africa that is difficult to achieve with lecture material alone and to
increase your engagement in class. Once you view the online videos and answer the homework questions, we will be able to use class time to explore themes in more depth.

In addition, to make more effective use of the classroom, much of the background information for the course is located in various sections of this Blackboard site. If you have questions about the structure of the course, dates of exams, or homework, please consult this Blackboard site first before asking questions in class. Blackboard will be the place to check-in for any updated announcements or resources (e.g., study guides).

On occasion, optional materials will be recommended. They include videos that are longer in length or articles that are interesting, yet tangential to the core directions of this course curriculum. Some materials may be posted to draw your attention to current events or information that we will cover at different times throughout the semester. Required materials on the other hand are directly related to the weekly lecture themes that are outlined in the excel file of this syllabus.

Course Description, Purpose, and Structure:

Africa is a vast continent with immense geographic, political, and cultural diversity. This diversity continuously transforms over time, as Africans respond to their environment, deal with challenges, create new beliefs and ideological systems, and organize their various societies and political structures in different ways. African societies are dynamic, as seen in their cultural traditions, behaviors, and responses to colonial legacies and globalization. To gain a better understanding and appreciation of the people of Africa, this class will look at a sample of contemporary African issues from an anthropological perspective. We will take a cross-cultural and comparative approach and make attempts to explain and understand cultural differences and similarities between Africans. We will also take an international approach by looking at the African World and reviewing how African cultures compare to other cultures, relate to different countries, and are affected by these relationships.

Specifically, this class will introduce you to an array of topics from how Africa is perceived in the media to its role in globalization. We will begin the semester by looking at the impact of colonialism, slavery, and early trade and exchange. We will look at the effects of the Mineral Revolution or the discovery of diamonds, gold, and platinum. Many of these events shaped the contemporary Africa that we see today.

Once a foundation is established for understanding how Africans responded to colonial challenges and rebuilt their communities in new ways, we will focus on contemporary cultural traditions. I will introduce you to the diversity amongst African people. We will discuss the differences between urban and rural areas and developments in art, music, and dance. You will learn about initiation rites, gender roles, sexuality, and family. The class will also cover religious differences, disease and illnesses, and problems that stem from poverty. As we explore the diversity of Africa through these topics, students will be asked to
consider why Africans created these traditions and responded with particular strategies in certain circumstances.

Towards the end of the semester, we will cover conflict, war, development, and globalization. We will spend a concentrated time on genocide and Apartheid, and discuss the impacts of these transformative events. The class will finish the semester with a lecture on the role of Africa in the global world and an overview of central themes that help students better understand the complexity, richness, and diversity of the continent.

The course objective is to provide students with a basic understanding of select issues in some countries on the African continent. It is hoped that by the end of the course students will have a greater appreciation for African culture, politics, societies, problems and contributions to our global society. This course is an introduction to various issues affecting the African continent and African people, not a comprehensive overview of all issues facing Africa. Nor is this course a history course on Africa. The African continent is quite vast, with many cultures, ethnic groups, and a deep history. While we will cover many highlights pertaining to Africa, we will only cover a small sample of the contemporary issues that face the people who live there.

Prerequisites and Permission from Instructor:

No prerequisite knowledge in the discipline or competencies are required to register for this class. If the class is full, you will need permission from the instructor to enroll. If you would like to audit the course, you will also need permission from the instructor. Permission will be granted on a case-by-case basis.

Minimum Technical Skills Required:

You will need to type all of your homework assignments, thus you will need to know how to use a word processing system (e.g., Microsoft Word). You will also need to know how to use the internet and Blackboard. Video and audio assignments will be based on resources available through YouTube. It is recommended that you become familiar with scholarly search engines such as JSTOR and EbscoHost. Rather than relying solely on Google, it is recommended that you become extremely familiar with the library at Howard. Also, it is recommended that you take advantage of our proximity to the Library of Congress.

If you need technical support, please come see me during office hours or contact me through email. If you have problems with Blackboard, you can also contact Blackboard System Administrator, Mr. Umesh Giri, at ugiri@howard.edu (202-806-2834). If you have other computer problems, you can also seek assistance in the Department of Enterprise Technology Services. See http://www.howard.edu/technology/faq.html#support.

Course Learning Goals and Objectives:
1. Students will be able to list, summarize, and recognize cultural traditions in Africa.
2. Students will be able to summarize, classify, and clarify anthropological concepts as they pertain to different peoples throughout Africa.
3. Students will be able to compare and contrast African societies.
4. Students will be able to compare and contrast African societies to other cultures and people around the world, and in particular, to African Americans and others in the African Diaspora.
5. Students will be able to conduct research, use anthropological methods, and report on findings. They will read related literature on their research topic, describe observations, discuss their positions and arguments, and interpret cultural characteristics. They will explain their interpretations and conclusions.
6. Using critical thinking skills, students will be able to analyze African cultural models such as those used in studies of kinship and descent.
7. Students will be able to interpret different explanations regarding the differences and similarities behind cultural expression in Africa (i.e., To investigate how issues such as class, race/ethnicity, religion, gender, medical issues, war, conflict and globalization are expressed in different parts of Africa).
8. In their writings, students will be able to apply anthropological theories and concepts to their analysis of African cultural traditions.
9. Students will be able to identify, describe, and explain the cultural significance behind the arts, visual expressions, advertising, marketing, TV, and movies in Africa.
10. Students will be able to interpret the traditions and behaviors of African people from a culturally relativistic perspective. They will be able to deconstruct their own biases to examine, debate, and explain the similarities and differences between African cultures, others throughout the world, and their own everyday lives.

Module-level Objectives:

**Module 1: Introducing Africa and an Anthropological Perspective**
1. Students will be able to define anthropology and culture.
2. Students will be able to read about and describe typical misconceptions of Africa and the African people. Students will discuss their conceptions of African people in comparison to their own everyday lives.
3. Students will be able to recite and describe the geography of Africa, an overview of the general history of Africa from the immediate years before colonialism to the present, and the environmental, political and social conditions that have led to problems in Africa.
4. Students will be able to describe, discuss, and compare African peoples to acquire and reflect upon the diversity throughout Africa.

**Module 2: How did contemporary Africa come to be?**
1. Students will be able to describe four models of survival strategies in Africa (i.e., how people make a living, obtain food, or adapt different subsistence patterns).
2. Students will be able to identify, describe, and discuss the impact of colonialism, slavery, and missionaries on Africa.
3. Students will be able to list, describe, and explain how environmental conditions have impacted how Africans organize themselves – socially, economically, and politically.
4. Students will be able to describe, define, and explain how Africans responded to the end of colonialism and the beginning of political independence.

Module 3: Culture
1. Students will be able to cite different scholars who specialize in expressive culture, gender studies, and research on marriage, family, religion, and health.
2. Students will read about different African cultural traditions and will be able to identify, define, describe, and discuss specific case studies.
3. Through online examples of different cultural practices, students will be able to recognize, describe, and explain traditions. They will be able to apply anthropological theories to these events in order to explain why they occur or change over time.
4. Students will be able to compare and contrast cultural traditions such as initiation rites of passage, marriage patterns, and traditional healing practices. They will be able to discuss, analyze, and interpret similarities and differences between behaviors in Africa to others around the world, and thus they will be able to explain why people do the things that they do (i.e., they will be able to determine if behaviors are due to environmental changes, political challenges, or scarcity of resources).

Module 4: Conflict, War, and Violence
1. From lecture content, videos, and readings, students will be able to record information about major conflicts in Africa (e.g., genocide in Rwanda and Darfur, South African Apartheid, and child soldiers in Liberia).
2. Students will be able to identify key participants and leaders, recite the details of each conflict and explain the impacts and results of the conflicts.
3. Students will be able to employ anthropological concepts, terms and theories in order to examine the conflicts in more detail and to analyze why they have occurred over time.
4. Students will also be able to discuss and explain the aftermath of each conflict and the advantages and disadvantages of certain African responses in a post-conflict era.

Module 5: Development and Globalization
1. As we end the semester, students will be able to identify, describe, and discuss, different roles of local and international development agencies and nonprofits in Africa.
2. Students will be able to read about major problems and challenges in Africa, as well as successful solutions.
3. Since students should now have a basic understanding of how Africans survive, adapt to environmental conditions, and deal with economic, social, and political problems, they will be able to analyze, debate, critique, and evaluate development programs and policies. They will be able to employ anthropological concepts, terms, and theories to help them determine, rank, and rate local and global solutions to African problems such as river blindness, poverty, and environmental and cultural/heritage management strategies.

4. Students will be able to identify different careers or roles that they can take in order to contribute positively to Africa.

5. Students will be able to discuss, explain, and analyze the role of Africa in the global world. Through their readings and discussions in class, they will be able to describe how African policies, products, and people make invaluable contributions to many parts of the rest of the world.

Instructional Methods, Course Requirements and Grading Policy:

Refer to: http://www.howard.edu/academics/standing.htm to see the grading system typically used at Howard and adapted for this course.

Students will be able to meet the learning objectives listed above if you complete the homework assignments on time, come to class on time and regularly, review your class notes and readings before each class, and adequately prepare for the exams by reviewing all course content at least one week prior to the exam.

Assessments of your progress in the form of quizzes, graded homework assignments, class discussions, group exercises, and regular exams will provide an indicator of your status in the class. They are scheduled at sequenced and varied times so that you have multiple opportunities to measure your own learning progress. As soon as your progress begins to dip or drop, you should come see me, double the time that you spend studying on quizzes and exams, and work more intensely with your study partner. You should make sure that you are doing all of the reading assignments as well as studying your lecture notes.

Requirements for this class include three exams, a cumulative final exam, weekly homework assignments, and participation in class discussions. Quizzes make up 10% of your grade, each exam makes up 20% of your grade, the class project and presentation makes up 15%, and homework, attendance, performance and discussion in class makes up the remaining 15% (see breakdown below). Preparation for this class entails reading the assignments before class and critically thinking about them in the context of the weekly themes.

- Quizzes – 10 points each for a total of 100 points (10%)
- Exam I – 100 points (20%)
Exam II – 100 points (20%)
Exam III – 100 points (20%)
Class Project, Presentation, and Term Paper – 50 points (15%)
Class Performance, Homework (including online and reading assignments), and Participation
(i.e., attendance, discussion and contributions during in-class interactive exercises) (15%)

Refer to: http://www.howard.edu/academics/standing.htm for university policies on attendance.

Each quiz is worth 10 points. Points will be added together at the end of the semester and multiplied by 10% to calculate your final quiz grade.

Class performance and participation are based on class attendance and homework assignments. Your grade is determined by the quality of your homework, the number of days present and on time, and the quality of discussion (appropriate and thought provoking questions and responses directly related to class material).

For each class and homework, you will receive points ranging from 1-10 depending upon the scope of the assignment. The points that you may earn will be indicated on the homework instructions. At the end of the semester, your points will be tallied and factored into your Class Performance, Homework and Participation grade.

Promptness is an indicator of class participation. If you are late to class or leave early, you are not participating. For each class period that you are late and homework turned in after the due date, you will receive half a point deduction. All the points will be added at the end of the semester and divided by the total number of points earned in the semester. Points will be awarded occasionally based on consistent, relevant, and courteous discussion in class (as determined on a case by case basis by the instructor). The final score will account for your participation grade, 15% of your final grade.

The opportunity to earn extra credit may be offered to the class based on the discretion of the instructor. It is not a guaranteed policy.

Class Etiquette and Netiquette

When you miss an exam, homework, or project deadline, it is your responsibility to contact me immediately. If you do not contact me within 2 days of the deadline, you will receive a non-negotiable automatic “0” for that exam, homework, or project. If you miss an exam or fail to turn in your project, you must have a written excuse. Proper documentation includes a signed medical excuse, letter from a supervisor, or letter from an appropriate official. If you need to make up an exam and have a documented excuse, you must take a make-up within a week from the date of the original exam.

If you have an official excuse that documents your inability to complete the requirements of this course before the end of the semester and you have contacted the instructor within a week from
the due date of the course material, you can request an “I” for the course. I do not recommend that you opt for an “I” and I only offer this option when strong and compelling documentation warrants your case.

- You must be respectful of your professor and fellow classmates (i.e., no eating, sleeping, texting, reading newspapers/magazines during lectures, doing homework for other classes, or engaging in other disruptive behaviors).

- You must use a professional demeanor in class. Do not talk out of turn. Do not talk when your instructor is lecturing. Raise your hand if you have a question or would like to contribute to class discussions.

- Make sure your cell phone is turned off before coming to class. Do not bring distracting newspapers, magazines, or puzzles that are irrelevant to course material to class.

- Do not upload your notes to your cell phone in order to access them during quizzes and exams. This is considered cheating and you will receive a “0” on the quiz or exam if you are discovered using your phone for this purpose.

- No assignments will be accepted over email or if slipped under the main office or my office door. Assignments will only be accepted in class when you hand them to your professor or graduate assistant (unless otherwise directed).

- Use cordial and professional language in class and in emails. Correspondence over email should include complete sentences and words, proper grammar, and correct spelling. Do not use texting slang.

Institutional Policies: Academic Integrity and Penalties

Refer to: [http://www.howard.edu/academics/standing.htm](http://www.howard.edu/academics/standing.htm) for a statement on academic integrity and [http://www.howard.edu/policy/academic/student-conduct.htm](http://www.howard.edu/policy/academic/student-conduct.htm) for definitions of academic infractions.

Please read the “Academic Code of Conduct,” which is published in the *H-Book* or *Directory of Classes*. If you are suspected of cheating, you will receive a “0” for the assignment, term paper, or exam. If you are caught a second time, you will receive a “0”, an “F”, in the course. All exams are closed book – this means that you may not access your notes in any form. Plagiarizing is also cheating. Properly cite all sources in your homework assignments, term paper, and any other projects or works produced for this class.

More severe penalties, such as suspension from the University may be imposed depending upon the nature and extent of the infraction(s).

**American Disabilities Act (ADA)**
Please refer to Disabled Student Services at:
http://www.howard.edu/specialstudentservices/DisabledStudents.htm

Howard University is committed to providing an educational environment that is accessible to all students. In accordance with this policy, students who need accommodations because of a disability should contact the Office of the Dean for Special Student Services (202-238-2420), as soon as possible after admission to the University or at the beginning of each semester. If you need a special accommodation required by the American Disabilities Act, please document and discuss your disability with me during the FIRST TWO WEEKS of classes.

The University Writing Center

Please refer to: http://www.coas.howard.edu/writingcenter/

This class entails writing homework assignments, a report, and short answer questions on quizzes. You will receive instruction from your professor, however if you need additional assistance with your writing skills, visit HEC 1024 (M-TH, 9-5 pm) or Locke 100 (see posted hours). Tutors from the Department of English can also provide one-on-one or computer-assisted instruction.

Possible Changes in Syllabus

This syllabus is a general guide to the format of this course. The instructor reserves the right to modify course content, schedule of requirements (exams, homework, and projects), and course design. Possible changes may occur when the instructor assesses the classes’ previous knowledge of lecture material, their abilities to absorb and comprehend complex concepts, unscheduled educational opportunities or guest lectures, and level of interest in particular areas. Although considerate recommendations on the part of students will be considered, changes in the course will only be made by the professor. The instructor has the final say in the course design.