

Conflict & Civil War in the Congo

c. 1200 – Today

History 6685-02

W 5:30-8:00

Instructor:

Dr. McCullers

TLC 3225

Office Hours: MW 2 – 4

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Course Objectives:

- Analyze the roles globalization, imperialism, & decolonization have played in Congolese history
- Identify how key points of continuity & change have intersected with local & global interactions to shape Congo's conflicted history
- Examine & critique the role of both Congolese & foreign actors in Congolese history
- Demonstrate a knowledge of the historiography of Congo & its changes over time
- Formulate and defend a historical & historiographical argument in standard English

Assignments:

- **Book Reviews**
 - Students will complete two book reviews over the course of the semester. Each review should be between 1000 and 1500 words. The first review is due February 10th and should review a book read for class to that date. The second review is due March 9th and should be a review of a book for the student's term paper but not one that we have read in class. Further instructions to follow.
- **Reaction Papers**
 - Students will complete 4 reaction papers in response to the books we read in class over the course of the semester. Two must be completed before spring break (March 9th) and the remainder must be completed by April 13th. Reaction papers should be 1-2 pages in length, critically evaluating the book for that week's class. Reaction papers are due in class the day that the chosen book is discussed.
- **Discussion**
 - Each student will be responsible for leading class discussion one week during the semester. I will send out a sign-up sheet during the second class.
- **Seminar Paper**

- The main assignment for this class will be a 15-20 page historical and historiographical seminar paper on Congolese history on a topic of your choice. I strongly recommend that you choose a topic related to your thesis. For example, if you are writing a thesis focusing on women and gender, select a topic about women and gender in the Congo. If you are studying media, select a topic about media in the Congo.
- Your paper should formulate an independent historical argument while also addressing key historiographical literatures and debates related to your topic. Depending on your topic, primary sources may be available. If they are not, you may rely on secondary sources alone. You must incorporate at least 8 scholarly books and articles in your seminar paper.
- Due Dates:
 - Broad topic submission due Feb. 3
 - Meet with me to discuss your topic - Jan. 25 - Feb. 10
 - Book Review 1 - Feb. 10
 - Annotated Bibliography & abstract - March 2
 - Book Review 2 - March 9th
 - First 2 Reaction papers done - March 9th
 - Pre-circulated high-quality draft - April 13
 - Second 2 Reaction Papers done- April 13
 - Class Conference - April 20
 - Final Paper - April 27 by noon

Policies:

- You are expected to attend all class meetings well prepared and ready to discuss. You should jot down at least one critical comment and one question on the reading for each class.
- More than one absence will negatively affect your grade in class.
- Late work is penalized 1 letter grade per 24 hour period it is late
- Meaningful participation in class discussions is essential.
- All work should be turned in on paper. Several assignments should also be turned in electronically via the drop box on course den.
- All work must be completed to pass the course. Failure to complete assigned work will result in a failing grade.
- All work should be formatted according to the following guidelines: double-spaced Times New Roman 12 point font; 1-inch margins, last name and page number in the bottom right footer; a heading at the top left of the first page with your name, the date, and the

assignment; proper spelling and grammar; and Chicago-style footnotes. Only the drafts of your seminar paper require a bibliography.

- Academic Dishonesty and plagiarism will result in a failing grade in the class and reporting to Academic Affairs.
- University Policies: http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf

Grading:

- I do not discuss grades with 48 hours of returning them. I can also not discuss grades via email. I am more than happy to discuss your grades during my office hours
- I do not change grades except in cases of mathematical error. Grades are given at my discretion. I am happy to explain the reasoning behind grades but I will not change them.
- Grade distribution:
 - Book Reviews - 6% (3% each)
 - Reaction Papers - 9% (2.25% each)
 - Participation - 20%
 - Annotated Bibliography & Abstract - 5%
 - Draft - 5%
 - Presentation - 5%
 - Final Paper - 50%

Required Texts:

There are a number of required texts for this class. Many of them are available in the bookstore, the library, or through GIL-Express or Interlibrary loan. Many are also available new and used online. I have included book options and approximate prices below. It is your responsibility to obtain copies of course readings each week. I have placed library copies on reserve at the circulation desk.

Schedule:

Weds 1/13 – Intro – Jan Vansina, *Kingdoms of the Savanna*, 1966 (Library reserve & Library e-book)

Weds 1/20 – Wyatt McGaffey, *Kongo Political Culture*, 2000 (Bookstore \$35 new/ \$21 used)

Weds 1/27 – John Thornton, *The Kongoese St. Anthony*, 1998 (Bookstore \$38 new/ \$7 used)

Wed 2/3 – Mariana Candido, *An African Slaving Port in the Atlantic World*, 2013 (Amazon \$32 new/ \$15 ebook)

Wed 2/10 – Jan Vansina, *Being Colonized*, 2010 (Library e-book & bookstore \$30 new/ \$10 used)

Wed 2/17 – Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, 1899 (Library & Library e-book, \$7 new/ \$2 used/ Free on Kindle)

Wed 2/24 - Allen Roberts, *A Dance of Assassins*, 2013 (Library e-book, \$25 kindle/ \$50 new)

Wed 3/2 – Matt Stanard, *Selling the Congo*, 2012 (Library e-book & Bookstore \$25 new/ \$23 kindle/ \$20 used)

Wed 3/9 – Lisa Namikas, *Battleground Africa*, 2015 (Bookstore \$30 new and used)

Wed 3/23 – Larry Devlin, *Chief of Station*, 2008 (Library & Library e-book \$17 new/ \$10 kindle/ \$5 used)

Wed 3/30 – Michaela Wrong, *In the Footsteps of Mr. Kurtz*, 2009 (\$12 new/ \$11 Kindle/ \$5 used)

Weds 4/6 - Jason Stearns - *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters*, 2012 (Library e-book & Bookstore \$12 new/ \$10 kindle/ \$5 used)

Weds 4/13 - Gerard Prunier, *Africa's World War*, 2011 (\$17 new/ \$12 used)

Weds 4/20 – Class Conference