

ESCATHOLOGY IN AFRICAN RELIGION **(AFST4625/6625) (FALL 2009)**

Class Schedule: Tuesdays and Thursdays. 12:30 – 1:45 PM -219A Peabody Hall.

Instructor: Dr. Ibigbolade Aderibigbe ***Office:*** 206 Peabody Hall, Rm. 20 (Basement.)

Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:00 – 3:00 PM and by appointment

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Course Description: :The course Examines African Traditional Religion concept of Eschatology with specific consideration of African doctrines and muses of death, categories of death, burial rites, the ancestral cult, reincarnation, final judgment, and destination of humans.

Instructional Objective:

At the end of the course students are expected to become familiar with the concept and significance of eschatology in African Religion. In particular, the focus of the course on African doctrine of death and afterlife, as well as the notion of reincarnation, and ancestral beliefs, would offer the students informed understanding of Africans' reverence for death, the ceremonies surrounding it, the purpose of man's life on earth, his destination, the belief in the dual nature of man, and the mortality of the body and immortality of the soul. Also by processes of engagements in classroom instructions, discussions and debates, as well as written and oral presentations, students would have had the opportunity of understanding and appreciating African eschatological beliefs and hold informed comparison with such beliefs in other religious traditions within and outside their different backgrounds.

Textbook and other reading materials:

Required Texts:

1. African Religion and Philosophy. By John S Mbiti
2. Eschatology. By Hans Schwartz (2000)
3. West African Religion. By Awolalu and Dopamu (1979)
 - ♦ **If you plan to purchase textbooks on Amazon.com, browse Amazon's books through www.PA.CafeDetre.com to send 6-8% of your payment to the charity Promote Africa, at NO extra cost to you.**

Additional readings/ materials will be announced or distributed in class.

Course Requirements

- ◆ **ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:** Regular attendance is vital as materials discussed in class may differ from those covered in the textbooks. I will expect you to be prepared to discuss any and all assigned readings.

I will usually take attendance by circulating a roll sheet for signatures. Students who arrive after the roll sheet has completed a circuit of the classroom should see me after class; however, habitual tardiness will affect your grade. After leaving the classroom I will *not* recognize claims of attendance unless supported by the roll sheet.

Each student begins the semester with a full credit of 100 points for attendance/participation. Points will be lost during the semester due to irregular attendance (**more than three unexcused absences**); habitual tardiness; lack of preparation for class; lack of participation in class activities (sleeping, surfing the net, doing something else other than listening to a speaker, etc.); or engaging in disruptive behavior such as talking while a speaker is speaking, regularly allowing cell phones to ring, or ignoring directions from the instructor. As I may not inform students when participation points are lost, you are encouraged to speak with me if you are concerned about losing points.

- ◆ **TESTS:** During the semester, two sixty-minute tests and a final exam will be given. These will involve material from lectures, reading assignments, and other class activities or assignments. While the two tests will cover only specified material, the *final exam will be cumulative*. The final exam will be a conventional in-class.
- ◆ **Projects:**
 1. **Individual:** There will be two individual projects in form of Essays for Undergraduates and detailed Researched Papers for Graduate Students. These will be submitted as designated.
 2. **Group:** The concluding assignment for the course is a group project on any topic covered by the Syllabus. Each group will present the results of their research to the class and submit a formal paper to the instructor. This assignment is designed to allow students to narrow their focus from the entire Topics to a specific topic. The presentations are a vital part of the course as it reinforces course content and further illuminates how far the students have benefited from the course.

Additional details will be provided on this assignment later but the following are important activities and due dates:

- *Sept.15* – Inform instructor of group members (5-6 members) Groups should be student-formed but students not self-placed in a group will be randomly assigned to a group by the instructor.
- *Sept.15* – Individual Papers allocation.
- *Oct.6* – Submit individual and group topics to be researched to the instructor
- *Oct 22* – *Submission of #1 individual Papers*
- *Nov. 17-* *Submission of #2 individual Papers*
- Nov. 19, Dec. 1&3 – Group Presentations made to the class (5-6 minutes)

• Dec. 3 – Formal paper by Groups due (8 - 10 pages)

- ◆ EXTRA CREDIT: Students will be given opportunities to earn *limited* extra credit by attending designated events throughout the semester. These will be announced in class.

Course Guidelines

Please use the email function to communicate with the instructor as much as possible.

All written work for this course should be typed, double-spaced in a 12-point font. Margins should be 1 to 1.5 inches, with indent reference Style. There will be **NO Email submissions of work UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.**

Make-up tests will only be given in accordance with university policy. If you miss a test I will need to see documentary evidence of the reason for your absence. Acceptable documents include but are not limited to doctor's notes and funeral announcements. *In the absence of such evidence, your grade on the test in question will be zero.* If the conditions of university policy are met, I will meet with you to establish an agreement as to how the missed test will be made up.

Cell Phones – If you need your cell phone for emergency reasons, please put it on silent mode.

Academic Honesty – All academic work must meet the standards described in the University of Georgia pamphlet "A Culture of Honesty." This document can be found at:

http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/culture_honesty.htm . I take this seriously, and cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of the Vice President for Instruction.

Grading

Course grades will be calculated as follows:

Attendance/Participation	100
Individual Project	200
Group Project	200
Test #1	100
Test #2	100
Final Exam	300
Total Points	1000

Grades will be assigned as follows:

1000–933	A
932–900	A-
899–867	B+
866-833	B
832–800	B-
799-767	C+
766-733	C
732-700	C-
699- 600	D
below 600	F

Week	Date		Readings – <i>Read before scheduled day!</i> - As provided By Instructor! From the Three Recommended Books and Materials from Instructor	Instructor /Guest Instructors may be invited. So can Change.
1	August 18. August 20.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course Introduction & Overview of syllabus content. General Introductions to the Concept of Eschatology& ATR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant Pages of Eschatology by 	Dr. Ibigbolade Aderibigbe
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> August 25 August 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concept of Eschatology &ATR Cont. ATR Concept of Man-Dualistic Nature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From Eschatology by Hans Schwarz/ Materials from the Instructor. From Mbiti/ Awolalu& Materials from the Instructor	Dr. Aderibigbe
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sept. 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sept. 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ATR and Doctrine of Death ATR and Doctrine of Death Cont. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ” ” 	Dr. Aderibigbe
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sept.8 . Sept.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ATR, Mode and Categories of Death Mode and Categories Cont.- Review Time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ” ” 	Dr. Aderibigbe

5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sept.15 Sept. 17 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Test 1 Inform Instructor of Groups/Individual Papers' Topics Allocation Burial Ceremonies and rites of passage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> „ 	Dr. Aderibigbe
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sept.22 Sept. 24 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burial Ceremonies Cont. After-Death and Immortality of soul 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> „ 	Dr. Aderibigbe
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sept. 29 Oct.1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After-Death Cont. After life and Ancestors Beliefs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> „ 	Dr. Aderibigbe
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oct.6 Oct.8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After life and Ancestors Cont. Midterm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> „ – 	Dr. Aderibigbe –
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oct. 13 Oct. 15 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After life Cont. After life Cont. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> „ „ 	Dr. Aderibigbe
<u>10</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oct. 20 Oct 22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ATR and Reincarnation. First Individual paper (9-11Pgs.) Due Date/ Discussion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> „ 	Dr. Aderibigbe

11	• Oct. 27	• Reincarnation Cont.	• ”	Dr. Aderibigbe
	• Oct. 29	• ATR and Concept of Final Judgment.	• ”	
12	• Nov. 3.	• Final Judgment Cont.	• ”	Dr. Aderibigbe
	• Nov. 5.	• Review.		
13	• Nov. 10	• Review / Group meetings.	----	Dr. Aderibigbe
	• Nov. 12	• Test 2		
14	• Nov. 17	• Second Individual Paper (9-11pgs) Due Date - Discussion	Materials From Students	Dr.Aderibigbe/Students
	• Nov. 19	• 1st Day of Group Presentations	Materials from Students	Students
15	• Nov. 24	• Thanksgiving Holiday	NO CLASSES	—
	• Nov. 26	• Thanksgiving Holiday		

16	• Dec. 1	• 2nd Day of Group Presentations	Materials From Students	Students
	Dec. 3	• 3rd Day of Group Presentation • Last day of Class/Discussion. Group Project Papers Submission.	Materials From Students	Students Dr. Aderibigbe
	• Dec.15, Tuesday	Final Exam	12:00 – 3:00 PM	Dr. Aderibigbe

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.