

HC 370 African Spirituality and Education – Fall 2006

Loop Campus, Wednesdays, 6.00 – 9.00 pm.

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Course Description: The aim of this course is to disclose the basic worldview and basic educational system that define African Indigenous Spirituality and Education, and to demonstrate that there is no distinction between spirituality or education and everyday life experience in this cultural tradition.

It farther aims at showing how the disclosed basic values and basic educational system are timeless and timely human values that enrich, not only contemporary spiritual and educational programs in Africa, but also can and should contribute to a universal human spirituality and education, and raise consciousness to the pressing need and quest today for sustainable human and cosmic development and survival. Finally, this course intends to nourish and inspire not only your mind and intellectual curiosity, but also your spirit or soul.

Competencies:

H-5: Can analyze issues from a global perspective.

1. Students should be able to analyze global issues like education, spirituality, the environment, etc.
2. Explain how these issues affect individuals or societies in both positive and negative ways.

H-2-E: Can compare one social, cultural, economic, or political institution in a society to a comparable institution in a different society.

1. Identify two comparable institutions (family, educational system, community, etc.) in African culture and American culture and analyze their significant similarities and differences.
2. Link the characteristics of these institutions to the culture or society you represent.

H-3-G: Can analyze the impact of social institutions on individual human development.

1. Identify a social institution and describe its characteristics.
2. Articulate criteria for analyzing the impact of this institution on your individual development.

A-1-H: Can explain the function of folk arts in the transmission of culture and values.

1. Indicate how stories and proverbs are an artistic way of transmitting values in indigenous Africa.
2. Articulate the major aspects of African Spirituality emerging from your experience, study and reflection on the **Timbuktu Shrine** visit(s) at 1919 Irving Park Road, Chicago.

A-3-B: Can explore a model of spiritual development and apply it to oneself or others.

1. Discuss the assumptions and implications of spiritual development in the studied African model.
2. Discuss the model in relation to your personal experience.

Please note: other competences may be negotiated in the first week of the course.

The Learning Experience:

We shall develop competencies in this course through such methods as: reading, class and small group discussions, collaborative learning exercises, interviewing, story telling and story listening, journal writing (optional), listening to elders, remembering, study, and **reflection on all the above and more.** We shall also devote ample time to writing systematic or scholarly short papers, in which we shall have the opportunity to articulate our integrating reflections. The aim in these reflections is to voice emerging findings, insights, lessons learned, awakenings, and tentative resolutions for future action.

Reading Materials/Required Readings:

1. R. Sambuli Moshia. **The Heartbeat of Indigenous Africa.** New York: Taylor and Francis Publishers, 2000.
2. Nelson Mandela. **Long Walk to Freedom.** An Autobiography of Nelson Mandela. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1995.
3. Sobonfu Some. **The Spirit of Intimacy.** Ancient Teachings in the Way of Relationships. New York: William Morrow and Company, 1999.

Evidence of Learning:

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Understand the major themes studied, regardless of the selected competencies. First demonstrate that you have a good grasp of the material presented from a holistic, interdisciplinary and interconnected perspective, then show that you can relate selected themes and insights to your individual competencies.
2. Demonstrate that they have just begun to scratch the surface of African Indigenous Spirituality and Education, and that they have gathered some highlights that will serve as a point of departure for an ongoing study, research and reflection on this culture for the grand aim of inspiring their own lives.

Students are therefore encouraged to go for academic excellence by attending **all** classes, being attentive and reflective listeners, becoming active and generous participants in class and small-group discussions, and by maintaining an ongoing **mentoring relationship** with the instructor, Professional Advisor and Faculty Mentor.

Course Requirements:

1. Please attend **all sessions**, arriving at each class promptly and remaining for the entire period. Disable cell phones, text-messaging devices, beepers, and provide a written excuse for missing a class, which should be a very important reason. Missing two class meetings will make it very difficult to pass the course. SNL policy allows the grade of “F” to be submitted for any student missing three or more class meetings.
2. Active in-class and small-group **participation**. We need to learn from your findings, insights, stories and life experiences. At some point become a story teller, and also a listener.
3. **Six short Reflective Papers** (min. 3 pages), and a **Final Integration Paper** (5 pages min.). Due dates are indicated in the Calendar.
4. In each short paper, please devote about half of the total pages to answer the general question/topic, and then on the final half concentrate on your two competencies, one after the other.
5. The **Final Integration Paper, due on Nov. 15th**. In this paper, well organized and systematic, articulate clearly and precisely the findings and insights that emerged for you from the entire course experience. Indicate here how your two competencies have been articulated, and what, if any, are tentative resolutions for your future personal education and formation. Make use of findings, reflections and insights that emerged in the previous six papers.

Workload and Attendance:

This course requires hard work from the student. One should spend an average of 10 hours a week completing course requirements. Attendance in class is **mandatory**. Absences will result in missed educational experience that cannot be recaptured simply by reading another student’s notes and may require you to repeat the course later.

Please note that failure to complete the course requirements within the quarter will **not** automatically result in the opportunity to receive an “I” grade. An “Incomplete” must be requested in writing prior to the final class and will be granted in the instances when unusual personal circumstances have interfered with the completion of the required assignments. A formal request will involve completion and signing of a form specifying the deadline and academic requirements for receiving a “Pass” grade. Failure to meet these criteria with the agreed time will result in a grade change to “F”.

Assessment and Grading:

1. Preparation, attendance and participation: 25%
2. The first Six Short Papers: 60%
3. The final Integration Paper: 15%.

Late written assignments will each lose 3% of the final mark.

Your papers should be well **organized, systematic, and well written. Properly acknowledge other people’s ideas and sources**. If you refer to sources other than the three required for this class, acknowledge them as you write and give a short biography at the end of your paper. When you refer to the texts for this class (Mandela, Sobonfu and Mosha), it will be enough to put in parenthesis the name of author and page number after the concerned quote or reference.

Your paper will be assessed according to **clarity and precision. Articulate briefly and clearly at the beginning what you intend to write on, then articulate it well in several paragraphs, and finally conclude. Papers will be assessed as very good or excellent if they show not only a good understanding of the material studied, but especially if they reveal new inspiration, insight, new awakenings, however small (the “aha” moments, the “this-is-an-awesome-insight-moment”, the “I-am-beginning-to-realize-that moment” etc.).**

Such insights and inspiration is possible with plenty of *reflection*, so give yourself ample time to reflect on selected themes as you drive, walk or sit contemplatively wherever you enjoy passing quiet time. The Greek Philosopher Socrates says: “The un-reflected life is not worth living.”

Required Written Assignments and Time Frame:

Short Paper One: Select *one* of the four facets of the African Indigenous Worldview, study it, reflect on it, and enriched by class discussion and your own experience, **highlight new insights**, and relate it to your own life long learning commitment. Include an insight or two from Mandela and Sobonfu on the same facet. Relate to your chosen competencies as well. **Please note that each paper should be a good balance between your general understanding and insights on the chosen theme(s), and your commitment to demonstrate ability in your chosen competencies.**

Due on Wed. Sept. 20.

Short Paper Two: Reflect on **two key agents/players** in your own childhood growing experience. What other insights from the three authors would have enriched your childhood formation experience? **Due on Wed. Sept. 27.**

Short Paper Three: Referring to the **Heartbeat**, pp. 46-85, which formation tool most identifies with your own formation? You may choose other “tools” that you are more familiar with, in case those in the **Heartbeat** do not resonate with your experience. However, use the **Heartbeat** as a point of departure. **Due of Wed. Oct. 4.**

Short Paper Four: After reading the **Heartbeat**, pp. 87-158, and **The Long Walk**, identify *two personality dispositions (characteristics, virtues)*, that would most describe Mandela. **Due on Wed. Oct. 18.**

Short Paper Five: With insights and findings from the **Heartbeat**, pp. 159-186, critique and evaluate your own education so far, and articulate how you would make any improvements, if any. **Due on Wed. Oct. 25.**

Short Paper Six: Describe how **insights from Sobonfu Some** have touched you or enriched your own individual human and spiritual development. Briefly show how she echoes the **Heartbeat** and the **Long Walk**. **Due on Wed. Nov. 1.**

Final Integration Paper: Demonstrate how this entire course experience has inspired and formed you. Identify new insights, findings, awakenings, reclaimed lost memories, formative stories. Your sources should be: the three texts, lectures, the entire class experience, the six previous papers, your experience, and **reflection on all the above.**

Due on Wed. Nov. 15.

PLEASE NOTE: ALL your papers should be double-spaced, not more than 12 font size, stapled together, and pages numbered. Include a **cover page**, bearing your name, course title, an **appropriate title (please be creative)** for the paper, date of submission, telephone number, and email address. This **cover page information** should not count as part of your first page.

Academic Integrity Policy: This class will be conducted in accordance with the University’s guidelines on academic integrity(<http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/handbook/code16.html>). Please remember that **plagiarism is unethical behavior** and will result in appropriate penalties if disclosed, possibly including dismissal from the University. Plagiarism is the direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or music scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or in part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else’s work. It is also copying of any source, in whole or in part, with only minor changes in working or syntax even if acknowledged. It is

furthermore, submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer paper, lab report or other assignment which has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency. Plagiarism is also the paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.

Plagiarism will therefore **not be tolerated**. One who is guilty of it risks immediate expulsion from DePaul University. Any plagiarism in this course will result, at least, in the assignment of a failing grade. Please consult the Student Handbook for further details.

Calendar: At the beginning of each class you will be given an outline for that session; including information on readings to be done in preparation for the next session.

Session One: Wed. September 6:

Introduction to one another and to the Course
 Discussion of Course Goals, and Requirements
 A short overview of the three Required Texts
 A Brief Introduction to the African Continent
 The African Indigenous Worldview

Session Two: Wednesday, September 13:

A class **field trip to Timbuktu Shrine**, at 1919 West Irving Park Road, Chicago. Please pay \$5.00 for a tour of the Shrine and explanation by the Owner and Spiritual Director, Chief Kalilu of Sierra Leone, West Africa.

To get there, please take the Brown Line toward Kimball and get off at the Irving Park Road "L" station, then walk to 1919 W. Irving Park. The tour will start at 6.30 pm and end at 8.30 pm. If you are taking the A-1-H competence, you are advised to visit the Shrine several times this quarter. Chief Kalilu's phone number: 773-665-4672. Everyone is expected to attend this session, just like any other session.

Session Three: Wednesday, September 20:

Questions, reflection on the Shrine experience and on readings so far
 Mentors and key players in African Indigenous formation
 The Role of the Community in raising children
 "Inter-formation and Outer-formation" **First Short Paper due**

Session Four: Wednesday, September 27:

Formation "tools": Story Telling; Proverbs; Riddles; Ritual; Power of Example
 Small groups: telling and listening to stories; re-discover the story teller in you.
Second Short Paper due

Session Five: Wednesday, October 4:

Virtue in African Indigenous Formation
 Respect, Self control, Silence (thoughtfulness)
 Mandela's inspiring examples
 Reflection and discussion in small groups

Third Short Paper due

Session Six: Wednesday, October 11:

Virtues of Courage, Diligence in Work, Community
 Intimacy in Sobonfu Some
 Small groups: Mandela's example, and the experience of each one.

Session Seven: Wednesday, October 18:

Critique of our own formation/education
 What we want to keep, what we would rather discard
 Discussion on improving the formation of children and the educational system in our time

Fourth Short Paper due

Session Eight: Wednesday, October 25:

Themes from Sobonfu's book: Power of Spirit, Marriage, Our Unique Potential, Findings, insights from her book and her husband's **The Healing Wisdom of Africa**, (Malidoma Patrice Some, 1999: Mentoring and Rituals of Healing)

Fifth Short Paper due

Session Nine: Wednesday, November 1:

Concluding themes, lesson learned, findings, insights to take with us, tentative resolutions, any "seeing" experiences, and so on

Last Short Paper due

Session Ten: Wednesday, November 8: Please do not come to class.

Use the extra time privately to work on the Final Integrating Paper.

Session Eleven: Wednesday, November 15:

Concluding the Course, **Final Paper due**

A reason to celebrate?

Faculty Biography:

Raymond S. Mosha, Ph.D., born and raised in Tanzania, East Africa, is currently in a one year teaching position at the School for New Learning, DePaul University. He received his B.A. from Kipalapala Philosophy and Theology College in Tanzania, then three M.A. degrees: Theology; Education (Counseling); and Spirituality from, respectively: Maryknoll School of Theology, N.Y., Seton Hall University, South Orange, N.J., and Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, Pa. He also received his Ph.D. in Philosophy from Duquesne University.

Prof. Mosha has taught various interdisciplinary undergraduate and graduate courses in Tanzania, Kenya, and in the USA at: Duquesne University, Xavier University, Loyola University Chicago, and Georgetown University. He enjoys teaching courses in these areas: Spirituality; African Culture and Education; Great Thinkers; Christian and Non-Christian Spiritual Classics; Counseling and Spiritual Direction; Spirituality, Justice and Peace; Spirituality and Everyday Living; Graduate and undergraduate Research Seminars. In 2000 he published **The Heartbeat of Indigenous Africa**, and now he is working on a forthcoming book, **The Pearls Kilimanjaro: Chagga Proverbs**. In this book he will articulate the wisdom treasured by over two hundred proverbs of the Chagga people who live on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro in Northern Tanzania.

**THANKS A LOT, AND ENJOY THANKSGIVING AND
THE HOLIDAYS**