

GSGS 2211: “Environment, Health, and Development in Africa”

J-Term 2018 (January 2 –12, 10:00 –16:00)

J.D. La Fleur < jd12s@virginia.edu >



Super Java Soso Print, International Women’s Day 2013, Democratic Republic of Congo
from the U. of Wisconsin’s ‘Africa Focus’ Archive

This is a lecture- and discussion-rich course that explores the changing relationships between people in Africa, their environments (ecological, epidemiological, political, economic, cultural, and more), and their global neighbors from 1900 CE to present. Issues addressed include imperialism, wildlife conservation, petroleum in Africa, HIV/AIDS, the “Green Revolution” and GMOs, growing Chinese roles in the continent's future, gender violence, and the recent (and perhaps resurgent) Ebola crisis. Emphasis will also be placed on critical appraisal of the role of historic and emerging media in understanding (and sometimes misunderstanding) these problems and in engaging Africans’ own aspirations. Experience studying Africa and/or any of the course themes is welcomed but not at all required. The course's focus is on Africa, but the issues are global and comparative, and therefore course learning is applicable to other places.

As a J-Term course, the structure of assignments rewards intensive engagement with course materials and interactions with peers on a consistent basis across the daily meetings of the class. Our lectures, film screenings, and discussions will be leavened with a morning break, a lunch break, and an afternoon break to help keep us sharp. Specific requirements include homework (20% of course grade), participation (25%), a midterm exam (25%), and final exam (30%).

The course belongs to the Global Studies curriculum, and qualifies for the College of Arts & Sciences area requirements in “non-western perspectives” and “historical studies.”