

CURRICULUM PROPOSAL COVER SHEET
University-Wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

3B

LSC Use Only
Number <u>130</u>
Action _____
Date _____

UWUCC Use Only
Number _____
Action _____
Date _____

I. TITLE/AUTHOR OF CHANGE

COURSE/PROGRAM TITLE RS 360 African Religions
 DEPARTMENT Philosophy & Religious Studies
 CONTACT PERSON Dr. Kwasi Yirenkvi

II. THIS COURSE IS BEING PROPOSED FOR:

- Course Approval Only
- Course Approval and Liberal Studies Approval
- Liberal Studies Approval only (course previously has been approved by the University Senate)

III. APPROVALS

3-8-90

Sharon Montgomery
 Department Curriculum Committee

Sharon Montgomery
 Department Chairperson

Robert Jones
 College Curriculum Committee

R. Joyce 3/28/90
 College Dean

Cheryl Smith
 Director of Liberal Studies
 (where applicable)

Provost
 (where applicable)

*College Dean must consult with Provost before approving curriculum changes. Approval by College Dean indicates that the proposed change is consistent with long range planning documents, that all requests for resources made as part of the proposal can be met, and that the proposal has the support of the university administration.

IV. TIMETABLE

Date Submitted
 to LSC _____
 to UWUCC _____

Semester/Year to be
 implemented ASAP

Date to be published
 in Catalog ASAP

Revised 5/88

[Attach remaining parts of proposal to this form.]

LIBERAL STUDIES COURSE APPROVAL FORM

About this form: Use this form only if you wish to have a course included for Liberal Studies credit. The form is intended to assist you in developing your course to meet the university's Criteria for Liberal Studies, and to arrange your proposal in a standard order for consideration by the LSC and the UWUCC. If you have questions, contact the Liberal Studies Office, 353 Sutton Hall; telephone, 357-5715.

Do not use this form for technical, professional, or pre-professional courses or for remedial courses, none of which is eligible for Liberal Studies. Do not use this form for sections of the synthesis course or for writing-intensive sections; different forms will be available for those.

PART I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. For which category(ies) are you proposing the course? Check all that apply.

LEARNING SKILLS

- First English Composition Course
- Second English Composition Course
- Mathematics

KNOWLEDGE AREAS

- Humanities: History
- Humanities: Philosophy/Religious Studies
- Humanities: Literature
- Fine Arts
- Natural Sciences: Laboratory Course
- Natural Sciences: Non-laboratory Course
- Social Sciences
- Health and Wellness
- Non-Western Cultures
- Liberal Studies Elective

B. Are you requesting regular or provisional approval for this course?

- Regular Provisional (limitations apply, see instructions)

C. During the transition from General Education to Liberal Studies, should this course be listed as an approved substitute for a current General Education course, thus allowing it to meet any remaining General Education needs? yes no

If so, which General Education course(s)? RS 100 & RS 110

PART II. WHICH LIBERAL STUDIES GOALS WILL YOUR COURSE MEET? Check all that apply and attach an explanation.

All Liberal Studies courses must contribute to at least one of these goals; most will meet more than one. As you check them off, please indicate whether you consider them to be primary or secondary goals of the course. [For example, a history course might assume "historical consciousness" and "acquiring a body of knowledge" as its primary goals, but it might also enhance inquiry skills or literacy or library skills.] Keep in mind that no single course is expected to shoulder all by itself the responsibility for meeting these goals; our work is supported and enhanced by that of our colleagues teaching other courses.

	Primary	Secondary
A. Intellectual Skills and Modes of Thinking:		
1. Inquiry, abstract logical thinking, critical analysis, synthesis, decision making, and other aspects of the critical process.	X	
2. Literacy--writing, reading, speaking, listening		X
3. Understanding numerical data		
4. Historical consciousness		X
5. Scientific inquiry		X
6. Values (ethical mode of thinking or application of ethical perception)	X	
7. Aesthetic mode of thinking		X
B. Acquiring a Body of Knowledge or Understanding Essential to an Educated Person	X	
C. Understanding the Physical Nature of Human Beings		
D. Certain Collateral Skills:		
1. Use of the library		X
2. Use of computing technology		

PART III. DOES YOUR COURSE MEET THE GENERAL CRITERIA FOR LIBERAL STUDIES? Please attach answers to these questions.

- A. If this is a multiple-section, multiple-instructor course, there should be a basic equivalency (though not necessarily uniformity) among the sections in such things as objectives, content, assignments, and evaluation. Note: this should not be interpreted to mean that all professors must make the same assignments or teach the same way; departments are encouraged to develop their courses to allow the flexibility which contributes to imaginative, committed teaching and capitalizes on the strengths of individual faculty.

What are the strategies that your department will use to assure that basic equivalency exists? Examples might be the establishment of departmental guidelines, assignment of responsibility to a coordinating committee, exchange and discussion of individual instructor syllabi, periodic meetings among instructors, etc.

Please see explanations (attached)

- B. Liberal Studies courses must include the perspectives and contributions of ethnic and racial minorities and of women wherever appropriate to the subject matter. If your attached syllabus does not make explicit that the course meets this criterion, please append an explanation of how it will.

Please see explanations (attached)

- C. Liberal Studies courses must require the reading and use by students of at least one, but preferably more, substantial works of fiction or nonfiction (as distinguished from textbooks, anthologies, workbooks, or manuals). Your attached syllabus must make explicit that the course meets this criterion.

[The only exception is for courses whose primary purpose is the development of higher level quantitative skills: such courses are encouraged to include such reading, but are not expected to do so at the expense of other course objectives. If you are exercising this exception, please justify here.]

Please see explanations (attached)

- D. If this is an introductory course intended for a general student audience, it should be designed to reflect the reality that it may well be the only formal college instruction these students will have in that discipline, instead of being designed as the first course in a major sequence. That is, it should introduce the discipline to students rather than introduce students into the discipline. If this is such an introductory course, how is it different from what is provided for beginning majors?

Please see explanations (attached)

Liberal Studies Form - 4

E. The Liberal Studies Criteria indicate six ways in which all courses should contribute to students' abilities. To which of the six will your course contribute? Check all that apply and attach an explanation.

- 1. Confront the major ethical issues which pertain to the subject matter; realize that although "suspended judgment" is a necessity of intellectual inquiry, one cannot live forever in suspension; and make ethical choices and take responsibility for them.
- 2. Define and analyze problems, frame questions, evaluate available solutions, and make choices
- 3. Communicate knowledge and exchange ideas by various forms of expression, in most cases writing and speaking.
- 4. Recognize creativity and engage in creative thinking.
- 5. Continue learning even after the completion of their formal education.
- 6. Recognize relationships between what is being studied and current issues, thoughts, institutions, and/or events.

PART IV. DOES YOUR COURSE MEET THE CRITERIA FOR THE CURRICULUM CATEGORY IN WHICH IT IS TO BE LISTED?

Each curriculum category has its own set of specific criteria in addition to those generally applicable. The LSC provides copies of these criteria arranged in a convenient, check-list format which you can mark off appropriately and include with your proposal. The attached syllabus should indicate how your course meets each criterion you check. If it does not do so explicitly, please attach an explanation.

6
CHECK LIST -- NON-WESTERN CULTURES

Knowledge Area Criteria which the course must meet:

- Treat concepts, themes, and events in sufficient depth to enable students to appreciate the complexity, history, and current implications of what is being studied; and not be merely cursory coverages of lists of topics.
- Suggest the major intellectual questions/problems which interest practitioners of a discipline and explore critically the important theories and principles presented by the discipline.
- Allow students to understand and apply the methods of inquiry and vocabulary commonly used in the discipline.
- Encourage students to use and enhance, wherever possible, the composition and mathematics skills built in the Skill Areas of Liberal Studies.

Non-Western Culture Criteria which the course must meet:

- Develop an understanding of contemporary cultures that differ substantially from the prevailing cultures of the United States, Canada, Western Europe, New Zealand, and Australia.
- Present cultures on their own terms with an appreciation of their dimensions, going beyond mere description of a culture. Those dimensions may include religion, economics, politics, art, language, literature, ethics, as well as other dimensions of the cultural milieu.
- Address, where appropriate, the experience of women and/or the roles of men and women.

Additional Non-Western Culture Criteria which the course should meet:

- Encourage the use of indigenous material whenever possible rather than rely on secondary instructional material, reviews of the literature, or textbooks exclusively.
- Encourage the student to acquire cultural appreciation and understanding, and provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate the ability to analyze and synthesize information about the culture.

(OVER)

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These additional Non-Western Cultures guidelines indicate the various forms which appropriate courses may take; check all that apply.

- Although a course may deal with a single culture, . . .
- . . . comparative courses addressing relationships among cultures are encouraged.
- A course may present one or more cultures by emphasizing a single dimension, e.g. art, music, dance, politics, religion. Such a course is appropriate if the dimension is represented in its cultural context, emphasizing cultural ideals, norms, and issues.
- A variety of perspectives or methodologies—anthropological, geographical, historical, sociological, and so forth—may be employed, so long as the course emphasizes the cultural phenomena, issues, and values in contemporary society.
- Literature courses, either in translation or in the language of the culture(s), can be appropriate if the dimension is represented in its cultural context, emphasizing cultural ideals, norms, and issues.
- An approved exchange/study abroad program, which meets the general criteria of the non-Western requirements, may meet the requirements of the Liberal Studies program.
- An internship can meet the requirements for a non-Western course. A research paper or a report should be required that demonstrates learning appropriate to the Non-Western Culture criteria.
- Interdisciplinary courses that treat cultural issues apart from the dominant United States, Canada, Western Europe, New Zealand, and Australian cultures are encouraged.

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CHECK LIST — LIBERAL STUDIES ELECTIVES

Knowledge Area Criteria which the course must meet:

- Treat concepts, themes, and events in sufficient depth to enable students to appreciate the complexity, history, and current implications of what is being studied; and not be merely cursory coverages of lists of topics.
- Suggest the major intellectual questions/problems which interest practitioners of a discipline and explore critically the important theories and principles presented by the discipline.
- Allow students to understand and apply the methods of inquiry and vocabulary commonly used in the discipline.
- Encourage students to use and enhance, wherever possible, the composition and mathematics skills built in the Skill Areas of Liberal Studies.

Liberal Studies Elective Criteria which the course must meet:

- Meet the "General Criteria Which Apply to All Liberal Studies Courses."
- Not be a technical, professional, or pre-professional course.

Explanation: Appropriate courses are to be characterized by learning in its broad, liberal sense rather than in the sense of technique or professional proficiency. For instance, assuming it met all the other criteria for Liberal Studies, a course in "Theater History" might be appropriate, while one in "The Craft of Set Construction" probably would not; or, a course in "Modern American Poetry" might be appropriate, while one in "New Techniques for Teaching Writing in the Secondary Schools" probably would not; or, a course on "Mass Media and American Society" might be appropriate, while one in "Television Production Skills" probably would not; or, a course in "Human Anatomy" might be appropriate, while one in "Strategies for Biological Field Work" probably would not; or, a course in "Beginning French" might be appropriate, while one in "Practical Methods for Professional Translators" probably would not.

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION
RS 360 AFRICAN RELIGIONS

3c-01-3sh

Prerequisites: None

Examination of the nature of African Traditional Religion and how traditional religion, Islam and Christianity coexist and influence each other.

GENERIC COURSE SYLLABUS

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION
RS 360 AFRICAN RELIGIONS

3c-01-3sh
Prerequisite: None

Examination of the nature of African Traditional Religion and how traditional religion, Islam and Christianity coexist and influence each other.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Describe the nature of African Traditional Religion.
2. Understand the role of religion in the lives of Africans.
3. Compare and contrast a non-Western and Western culture through the study of African Traditional religion and philosophy.
4. Appreciate the belief system, values, symbols and world-view of a non-Western religion and culture.
5. Critically evaluate the positive and negative impact of the West on Africa and Africa's impact on the development of the West.

Course Procedures:
Primarily lectures, class discussions, guest-speakers from different regions of Africa, class assignments, assigned readings, in-class and outside class essays, videotapes.

III. COURSE OUTLINE: This is only a sample. Actual outlines may vary with instructor but will include some of the following areas:

1. a) Introduction to Africa: Review of course outline and evaluation procedures; QUIZ: What do you know about Africa? Geography, History, Perceptions and Reality.
- b) The Nature of African Religion; the relationship between African Religion and Philosophy; where African Religion is found; Approaches and Attitudes.
- c) Anthropological Theories of Religion.
2. African Views of the Universe.
3. The Nature of God and Spirits.
4. The Cyclical Concept of Human Development.
5. Rituals and Festivals.
6. Role of Women in African Religion (Comparison with the West).
7. Religious Specialists: medicine-men/women, diviners, mediums and seers, rainmakers and priests, traditional rulers.
8. Mystical Powers, magic and medicine, witchcraft and sorcery.
9. Morals in African Religion.
10. Imported Religions: Christianity, African Judaism, Islam and other religions.

11. The Impact of Christianity and Islam on Africa.
12. Africa's Impact on the West.
13. New Issues in African Christianity; Apartheid.
14. The Search for New Values and African Identity.

Expectations and Assessment:

- a. Discussion and participation is important and will be strongly encouraged in this class.
- b. There will be three exams consisting of short essays, single sentences, fill in blanks and a few true/false type questions (50 points for each exam). 75% of the grade.
- c. Students will be required to write an essay of about 4-6 pages in length (typed). The topic will be selected from a list of topics given by the instructor. Students will have the option of selecting their own topics with instructor's approval. They will be asked to improve upon their papers on several occasions in and outside class and will be required to hand in rough work/revisions and the final paper in a folder. This paper constitutes 25% of the grade (50 points). Detailed instructions will be distributed in class at the beginning of the course.
- d. Required viewing: About 3 or 4 videotapes will be shown in class. Attendance is expected.

Required Reading: All students will read a textbook and at least one book-length material. These may vary from instructor to instructor or year to year by the same instructor. The following are samples of books available (Asterisk indicates book-length material).

Mbiti, John S. 1989. Introduction to African Religion.
New Hampshire: Heinemann Educational Books.

Mbiti, John S. 1988. African Religions and Philosophy.
New Hampshire: Heinemann Educational Books.

Parrinder, E. G. 1962. African Traditional Religion.
London: SPCK.

Idowu, E. B. 1973. African Traditional Religion.
London: SCM Press.

- * Achebe, Chinua. 1962. Things Fall Apart. Heinemann.
- * Achebe, Chinua. Arrow of God. Heinemann.
- * Achebe, Chinua. 1963. No Longer at Ease. Heinemann.
- * Thiong'o, Ngugi Wa. Weep Not, Child. 1964. Heinemann.

(12) (12)
Select Bibliography: Used to prepare for and teach this course.

Abrahams, W. 1963. The Mind of Africa. London.

Abrahamsson, H. 1951. The Origin of Death. Uppsala.

Beetham, T. A. 1967. Christianity and the New Africa.
London:

Brier, U. 1966. The Origin of Life and Death. London:
Heinemann.

Danquah, J. B. 1944. The Akan Doctrine of God. London.

Debrunner, H. 1959. Witchcraft in Ghana. Kumasi.

Evans-Pritchard, E. E. 1956. Nuer Religion. Oxford:
Clarendon Press.

Forde, D. ed. 1954. African Worlds. London: Oxford
University Press.

Fortes, M. and Dieterlen, G. eds. 1965. African Systems
of Thought. London: Oxford University Press.

Idowu, E. B. Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief. 1962.
London: Longman.

Idowu, E. B. African Traditional Religion. 1973.
London: SCM Press.

Little, K. L. The Mende of Sierra Leone. 1951. London.

Mbiti, J. S. African Religions and Philosophy. 1969.
Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann Educational
Books, Inc.

Mbiti, J. S. Concepts of God in Africa. 1970. New
York: Praeger.

Mbiti, J. S. The Prayers of African Religion. 1976.
New York: Orbis.

Parrinder, E. G. African Traditional Religion. 1962.
London: SPCK.

Parrinder, E. G. Religion in Africa. 1969. Penguin.

Sawyer, H. God: Ancestor or Creator? 1970. London:
Longman.

Liberal Studies Course Approval Form: Explanations.

Part I. BASIC INFORMATION

Please refer to the items checked A, B, C.

Part II. LIBERAL STUDIES GOALS MET BY THIS COURSE

A. Intellectual Skills and Modes of Thinking

1. Inquiry, critical analysis. . .: primary goal

This course will introduce students to a non-Western culture. Instructor will lead students through lectures, discussions, reading, films and written assignments to compare and contrast African religion and culture with their own. They will critically evaluate the culture they study with their own. For instance, students will compare African attitudes toward individual rights within communities. Is the interest of the individual more important than the group or vice versa? Such analysis will develop skills of critical thinking and stimulate students' interest in inquiry, and to synthesize their own views of life with others.

2. Literacy: Secondary

Students will be required to write a short paper (4-5 pages). In addition, they will be required to express their ideas on paper on several occasions in class. They are also required to take notes. Their exams will be a combination of short answers and essays. The students will read a textbook, a book length material and at least three more books in preparation for their written paper. Discussion is strongly encouraged in this class. Students will also listen to guest speakers who will come to class.

3. Understanding numerical data: Not relevant to this course.

4. Historical Consciousness: Secondary

A major part of the content of the course has both historical and contemporary relevance. For instance, the history of the origins of some of the ethnic groups and their religions, the history of African Judaism, Christianity and Islam, Colonialism and apartheid (which is a contemporary issue in South Africa).

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5. Scientific Inquiry: Secondary.

The approach to this course is critical and nonsectarian, therefore, it emphasizes the social scientific inquiry. This tool of analysis is to enable students to be objective and somewhat detached from the subject.

6. Values: Primary.

A major component of this course is the critical examination of the value system of African societies. Students will be able to compare these value systems with their own and learn to appreciate others. Students will realize that societal values shape religious views and vice versa.

7. Aesthetic mode of thinking: Secondary.

Often African art expresses religious ideas. Various symbols are found on wood, stools, calabashes, stones, sticks, pots, handicrafts, domestic animals and human bodies. Students will learn to appreciate African religion through the aesthetic mode of thinking.

8. Acquiring a body of knowledge or understanding essential to an educated person: Primary.

One often hears the expression: the world has become a "global village". Contemporary African nations have become a major force in international relations and the world community of today and the future must understand Africans if there is to be meaningful interaction and peace in the world. A major step in understanding Africans and their culture is a basic knowledge of their religions. Students at IUP (the future leaders of this nation), should not only be educated persons, but well informed and responsible leaders of a superpower nation in the "global village".

C. Understanding the Physical Nature of Human Beings: Not Applicable.

D. Certain Collateral Skills:

1. Use of the Library: Secondary.

In writing their papers, students are required to use three books outside their textbook and the book-length material and will therefore have to use the library.

Part III. GENERAL CRITERIA

A. This course will be taught as one section by one professor (currently the only one with expertise in the area). Should the department or any department hire a person with knowledge in the area, there will be periodic meetings (once a semester) among instructors who will teach the course to discuss syllabi, textbooks and other pertinent issues. Suggestions or decisions will be brought to the attention of other colleagues at Departmental meetings.

B. This course will include the perspectives and contribution of women and various ethnic groups in Africa. Women have often played a very significant and equal role with men in the realm of African Traditional Religion. E.g. women priests and medicine women are just as important religious specialists as men (see course outline items #6 & 7).

C. Several book-length materials will be placed on library reserve. In addition, students will be required to read Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart (a classic in African Literature, see textbooks).

D. This course is designed to meet the needs of majors and non-majors with no prerequisites. It provides a broad-based introduction to African religion and culture rather than with a narrow focus.

E. 1. Six ways in which the course contributes to students' abilities.

Through lectures, discussions, reading, library assignment and videotapes the course will raise many ethical issues relating to African religion and culture. Students will be encouraged to compare and contrast and make their own judgments. They will be encouraged to make objective ethical and religious choices for themselves and to respect the choices of others in a pluralistic society. (See Part II A 1, 6)

2. See Part II A, 1, 2, 5, 6 E 1

3. See Part II A, 2, 5, 6, II B

4. Through critical examinations of the issues raised in the course (e.g. Christianity's ambivalent attitude towards traditional religion or ethnic conflict with missionaries). Students will learn about Africans who found

new ways to deal with societal issues and in turn learn to engage in creative thinking.

- 5. As students examine the role of religion in African society, they will come to appreciate the fact that the issues they discuss in class are not unique to Africans and that they are perennial ones which students will face and deal with throughout their lives.
- 6. The practical nature of the course and the existential questions raised make it easy for students to link what they study with the actual society. Many of the students are adherents of other religious traditions which they practice daily.

PART IV. CRITERIA FOR CURRICULUM CATEGORY

The syllabus along with the above -explanations demonstrate how this course meets each criterion checked.

The course is non-technical, covers a broad area and at the same time is an in-depth study..

COURSE ANALYSIS QUESTIONNAIRE

RS 360 African Religions

Section A: Details of the Course

- A1. This course is designed for the Liberal Studies Program in the non-Western and electives categories. The course is intended for both majors and non-majors. It is the only non-Western course in the department dealing solely with Africa and thus plays a unique role in departmental offerings.
- A2. This course does not require changes in the content of existing courses.
- A3. The organization of this course follows the traditional type of offerings by the Department. The difference lies in its non-Western emphasis on Africa.
- A4. The course was offered in Fall 1988 as RS 481 Special Topics: African Religions. It was offered on a trial basis at the time with the intention of making it a permanent offering in the Department. 30 students who took the course rated it highly.
- A5. This course is not a dual-level one.
- A6. This course is not to be taken for variable credit.
- A7. A number of SSHE areas I called do not offer the course because they do not have the expertise to teach it. Most of the SSHE members have small departments for Philosophy and Religious Studies. However, a number of colleges and Universities teach this course. My conversations with colleagues at African Studies Conference indicates that Memphis State University and Boston University offer the course.
- A8. The content of this proposed course is not recommended or required by any professional society, accredited authority, law or any other external agency.

Section B: Interdisciplinary Implications.

- B1. The course will be taught by one instructor with occasional guest lecturers.
- B2. No additional or corollary courses are or will be needed with the course.
- B3. Departments such as Anthropology, Geography and Political Science teach courses in their areas on Africa. However, none of them offers a course or any substantial material in African Religions and Philosophy. For instance, GE 255 Geography of Africa is a survey of the physical, economic, political, historical and cultural geography of the continent;

Anthropology: AN 481 (Spring, 1988) Cultures of Africa examined contemporary African issues from anthropological perspectives.

- B4. This course does not exclude any segment of the University. Students in the School of Continuing Education are more than welcome to take the course. The Department will put aside five seats for Continuing Education students, if and when this course is offered in the evening.

Section C: Implementation.

C1. Resources

- a. No new faculty is needed to teach this course.
- b. Current space allocation is adequate to offer the course.
- c. Current equipment is adequate to offer this course.
- d. No laboratory supplies are needed.
- e. Videotapes are available in the Library. Books are not adequate and I will put my own copies on reserve for use.
- f. No travel funds are needed.

C2. No grant funds are associated with this course.

C3. The Department expects to offer this course at least every third semester.

C4. I anticipate offering one or multiple sections in response to the demands for non-Western courses and needs of our Department.

C5. 25 students will be accommodated in a section. This number is not limited by available resources.

C6. No society recommends enrollment limits in this course.

C7. This course will be one of the non-Western courses offered in the Department to fulfill that requirement or for electives.