

# IAL 598: Exploring the Complex Realities of the African Continent



## Course Information

**Course Description:** This elective course within ASU's MA IAL program explores the complex reality of the African continent in the context of its demographics, state of economic and political development, and its relations with the outside world. Students will gain an understanding of Africa's pre-colonial history, the impacts of European colonization, the Atlantic slave trade, and the US-USSR Cold War competition on Africa's current development, and the prospects of the future with Africa's impact on the rest of the world in the area of climate change, the specter of global pandemics, the presence of violent extremist movements, its role in present-day great power competition, and the potential global impact of Africa's young, growing population. The students will use the knowledge gained in this course to develop policy analyses and proposals for government or private sector interactions with the nations of Africa, bilaterally and regionally.

**Credits:** 3

**Prerequisites:** Only open to IAL students.

## Instructor Contact Information

**Instructor:** Ambassador Charles Ray (he/him/his)

**Preferred Name:** Ambassador Ray

**Virtual Office Hours:** Because this is an online course, office hours are by appointment only via Zoom. Days and times can be coordinated to accommodate both the instructor and the student.

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**Link:** <https://asu.zoom.us/j/7498949831>

**Access Information:** No log-on or ID is required. The instructor will open the Zoom room five minutes before the agreed-upon meeting time, and the student can click on the Zoom link in the 'Join Us This Week on Zoom' section of any module.

**Request an appointment outside of office hours:** Because of the differing time zones of students and the instructor, regular office hours are not practical. Appointments can be arranged as outlined above.

**Email:** Email is the preferred communication in ASU Online courses. While students can use the email feature directly in the course to send digital correspondence, students can also contact me directly at Charles.Ray.1@asu.edu. Include IAL 598 in the subject line so that I am aware that it is for this course.

**Contact Number:** My phone number is 1-240-660-7794. If you call and I'm not able to answer, leave a voice mail and contact number, and I will get back to you as quickly as possible.

## Communicating With the Instructor

### Community Forum

This course uses a discussion called "Community Forum" for general questions and comments about the course. Prior to posting a question or comment, check the syllabus, announcements, and existing posts to ensure it is not redundant. You are encouraged to respond to the questions of your classmates.

Email questions of a personal or sensitive nature to your instructor. You can expect a response within 72 hours.

### Chat

The Chat tool in Canvas allows students and the course team members to interact in real time. Use Chat only for informal course-related conversations unless your instructor informs you otherwise. Chat is not ideal for questions about assignments; instructors are **not** required to monitor it and conversations may be buried or lost.

### Email

ASU email is an [official means of communication](#) among students, faculty, and staff. Students are expected to read and act upon email in a timely fashion. Students bear the responsibility of missed messages and should check their ASU-assigned email regularly.

**All instructor correspondence will be sent to your ASU email account.**

## Course Objectives

Specific topics the instructor will cover include:

- Africa Prior to the Arrival of the Europeans

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- The Arrival of Europeans and the Scramble for Colonies
- The Post-Colonial Period, Independence, and the Cold War
- Africa After the Cold War
- Contemporary African Issues
- The Future of Africa and the World
- Why Africa Matters – Developing an Effective Policy Strategy

## Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Discuss and understand pre-colonial African history in the context of world history of the same era. Assess the richness and complexity of the African continent.
- Assess the impact of the trans-Saharan and trans-Atlantic slave trade and European colonization on the continent's economic, political, and social development.
- Assess the impact on Africa's development of the different colonizers' preparation of the colonized countries for independence.
- Assess the impact of the US-USSR Cold War competition on Africa's development and compare that to the effect of the US-China global competition for influence and economic hegemony.
- Discuss and analyze current impediments to development in Africa, such as climate change, poor governance, corruption, lack of access to education and health care, and poverty
- Analyze the future trajectory of US relations with the nations of Africa from both a bilateral and a regional perspective.

## Technology Requirements

This course is fully online and requires a computer with internet access. You must have full administrative rights to download and install necessary applications. A smartphone, iPad, Chromebook, etc. will **not** be sufficient for completing your work in ASU Online courses. While you will be able to access course content with mobile devices, you must use a computer for all assignments, quizzes and exams, and virtual labs.

## Course Access

Your ASU courses can be accessed by both [canvas.asu.edu](https://canvas.asu.edu) and [asu.instructure.com](https://asu.instructure.com); bookmark both in the event that one site is down.

## Proctoring

- There are no proctored exams in this course.

## Hardware

- Standard personal computer with major operating system (OS)
- Reliable, strong Internet connection: broadband internet connection (DSL or cable) to stream videos
- Webcam

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- Microphone, headset/earbuds, and speaker

## Software/Other

- Web browser: [Chrome](#), [Mozilla Firefox](#), or [Safari](#)
- PDF Viewer: [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) is free for all currently-enrolled ASU students
- Microsoft Office: [Microsoft 365](#) is free for all currently-enrolled ASU students

## Textbook and Required Readings

### Required

- The Fortunes of Africa, Martin Meredith, Public Affairs, 978-1-61039-635-6. Available as an eBook. Also available on Amazon
- The Black History Book, Nemata Blyden, editor, Penguin Random House, 978-0-7440-4214 6. Available as an eBook. Also available on Amazon.
- Elements of Style, William Strunk, Dover Publications, 978-0486447988. Available as an eBook. Also available on Amazon.

The ASU eBooks allows for three user licenses at a time. If you plan to use this free version, please access and download the needed chapters, then close the window so that the licenses become available for other students to access.

### Recommended additional reading:

- Introduction to Africa: Shining a Light on the Dark Continent, Charles Ray, Uhuru Press, 9798326649652. Available on Amazon. Paperback: <https://www.amazon.com/Introduction-Africa-Shining-Light-Continent/dp/B0D57D4ZY8/>; E-Book : <https://www.amazon.com/Introduction-Africa-Shining-Light-Continent-ebook/dp/B0D54FJXR7/>.

Any required readings are provided within or are accessible through the course or the [ASU Library](#).

## Coursework

### Submitting Coursework

All coursework, unless otherwise announced, **must** be submitted to the designated area of Canvas. Do **not** submit an assignment via email.

Coursework due dates follow Arizona Standard time. Use a [Time Converter](#) to ensure you account for the difference in Time Zones. Note: Arizona does **not** observe daylight savings time.

### Late or Missed Coursework

**Syllabus disclaimer:** Any information in this syllabus may be subject to change without advance notice. Stay informed by checking course announcements and the syllabus section of your course.

When possible, notify the instructor before coursework is due. If an urgent situation or emergency arises and you are unable to submit coursework on time, please communicate with your advisor, success coach, and instructor as soon as possible.

Follow the appropriate University policies to request an [accommodation for religious practices](#) or to accommodate a missed assignment [due to University-sanctioned activities](#).

## Course Assignments, Quizzes, and Discussions

Assignments for this course are weighted by group as follows

Group	Weight
Quizzes	10%
YellowDig Discussions	20%
Collaborative Research	30%
Memos	40%

**Quizzes.** There are review quizzes in Modules 3 and 5, each of which is worth 5 points. Students will have only one attempt to complete the quiz for grade.

**YellowDig Discussions.** Each week, a discussion topic will be assigned, and students can earn a total of 100 points per week for a total of 700 for the entire course, which will not be fully calculated until the end of the course. You earn points each week in the following ways. Creating a new post in response to a discussion prompt, of at least 75 words to earn 25 points. Comment to reply to another student's post, with at least 25 words to earn 25 points. Extra points can be earned by receiving accolades (3+), comments (2,) and reactions (2) from the instructor. Keep in mind, though, that just doing the required minimum will give only an average grade. Higher grades (A and A+) require going beyond the minimum requirements.

**Collaborative Research.** Modules 1 – 4 have collaborative research projects assigned for 100 points each, for a total of 400 points. Students will be assigned to a group corresponding to one of four ancient African kingdoms. For each project, students will collaborate on research to address the module's prompts or questions, and then submit individual responses. Group research results are posted to Google Slides.

**Memos.** Two written assignments are required for this course.

- In module 5, students are to select a subject from a list and write a 500-word paper on how the topic has affected development in Africa, including actions to mitigate the impacts, and citing at least three resources. This essay will also serve as a resource for the final essay that is due in module 7, and in addition to grading the substantive content, the grammar and structure will be graded. You can earn a total of 100 points for this memo.
- In module 7, students are given a list of issues and directed to select one or more of them at their discretion and identify one short-term, one medium-term, and one long-term U.S. policy goal for the issue—or combination of issues. For each goal, you must provide a statement of need, a goal, and a policy recommendation with justification. You should submit a paper of 750 to 1,000 words, which will be graded on substantive content as well as grammar and writing, for a total of 100 points.
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# Grading

Grades reflect your performance on coursework and when required, adherence to due dates. Grades will typically be available within 72 hours of the due date in the Canvas Gradebook.

## Due Dates and Late Penalties

Unless otherwise noted, all coursework is due on **Sundays at 11:59 PM Arizona (AZ) time**. Due dates in your course are set up in Arizona Standard time. Use a [Time Converter](#) to ensure you account for the difference in time zones and remember to update your course settings to reflect your time zone (see your onboarding course for directions). Arizona does **not** observe daylight savings time.

## Quizzes

No late penalty is applied after the due date and time, but in order to complete all coursework by the final submission date, it is highly recommended to follow the due date. Any quiz not completed by 11:59 PM AZ time the week of module 7 will be given a zero (0) grade.

## YellowDig Discussions

No late penalty is applied after the due date and time, but the opportunity to receive points each week expires at the end of the week.

## Collaborative Research

A deduction of one (1) point per day is applied after the scheduled due date and time.

## Memos

A deduction of one (1) point per day is applied after the scheduled due date and time.

## Overall Course Grade Breakdown

This section lists how your final grade in the course will be calculated. Understanding the grade breakdown helps you plan your time, prioritize your efforts, and stay on track throughout the semester.

Coursework	Quantity	Points
<b>YellowDig Discussions (100 points each)</b>	7	700 (total)
<b>Graded Quizzes (5 points each)</b>	2	10 (total)
<b>Collaborative Research Projects (100 points each)</b>	4	400 (total)
<b>Memos (100 points each)</b>	2	200 (total)

<b>Total Course Points</b>		<b>1310</b>
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## Grade Scale

The instructor reserves the right to adjust individual grades based on, but **not** limited to: violations of academic integrity.

<b>Range of Points</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>
970 - 1310	97 - 100	<b>A+</b>
930 - 969.99	93 - 96.99	<b>A</b>
900 - 929.99	90 - 92.99	<b>A-</b>
870 - 899.99	87 - 89.99	<b>B+</b>
830 - 869.99	83 - 86.99	<b>B</b>
800 - 829.99	80 - 82.99	<b>B-</b>
770 - 799.99	77 - 79.99	<b>C+</b>
700 - 769.99	70 - 76.99	<b>C</b>
600 - 699.99	60 - 69.99	<b>D</b>
0 - 599.99	0 - 59.99	<b>E</b>

## ASU Course Policies

Read the ASU Course Policies, which can be found within the navigation menu for more detailed information, in addition to the policies listed in this syllabus.

## Code of Conduct

The aim of education is the intellectual, personal, social, and ethical development of the individual. The educational process is ideally conducted in an environment that encourages reasoned discourse, intellectual

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honesty, openness to constructive change, and respect for the rights of all individuals. Self-discipline and a respect for the rights of others in the university community are necessary for the fulfillment of such goals. The [Student Code of Conduct](#) is designed to promote this environment at Arizona State University. It sets forth the standards of conduct expected of students who choose to join the university community. Students who violate these standards will be subject to disciplinary sanctions in order to promote their own personal development, to protect the university community, and to maintain order and stability on campus.

Students are expected to follow the [ABOR Student Code of Conduct](#) and the ASU [Student Code of Conduct](#) at all times.

## Expected Behavior

An instructor may withdraw a student from a course with a mark of “W” or “E” or employ other interventions when the student’s behavior disrupts the educational process. For more information, review [SSM 201–10](#).

If you identify something as unacceptable classroom behavior (e.g., in Canvas, Ed Discussion, Zoom, etc.), please notify your instructor immediately or as soon as possible.

Our classroom community rules are to:

- Be professional
- Be positive
- Be polite
- Be proactive

## Academic Integrity

Academic honesty is expected of all students in any materials intended to be used for an academic evaluation, including, but not limited to: all examinations, papers, presentations, laboratory work, academic transactions, and records. The possible sanctions for academic integrity violations include but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification, and dismissal.

All students are expected to adhere to the [ASU Student Honor Code](#) and the [ASU academic integrity policy](#). Students are responsible for reviewing this policy and understanding each of the areas in which academic dishonesty can occur. If you have taken this course before, you may not reuse or submit any part of your previous assignments without the express written permission from the instructor.

All student academic integrity violations are reported. Withdrawing from this course will not absolve you of responsibility for an academic integrity violation and any sanctions that are applied. The AIO maintains a record of all violations and has access to academic integrity violations committed in all other ASU colleges/schools.

Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. Students must take the exams independently without assistance from other students. Students may not submit papers written by persons other than themselves.

## Use of Generative AI

### No Generative AI Use Permitted

This course assumes that work submitted for a grade by students, including all drafts, brainstorming, and final projects, will be created without the use of generative AI. The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot, etc.) for generating student-attributed content is **not permitted** in this class. This includes the use of generative AI tools in reports/assignments, discussion board posts, portfolios, presentations, and related assignments. The use of these generative AI tools on assignments will be considered a violation of the [ASU Academic Integrity Policy](#), and students may be subject to sanctions for non-allowable use in this course.

More information and resources regarding the use of AI at ASU is at: [Generative AI | Office of the University Provost | ASU](#).

## Copyright

### General

You must refrain from uploading to any course shell, discussion board, or website used by the course instructor or other course forum, material that is not the student's/learner's original work, unless the student/learner first complies with all applicable copyright laws; faculty members reserve the right to delete materials on the grounds of suspected copyright infringement. For more information, see the [Computer, Internet, & Electronic Communications Policy](#).

The contents of this course, including lectures (Zoom recorded lectures included) and other instructional materials, are copyrighted materials. Students may not share outside the class, including uploading, selling or distributing course content or notes taken during the conduct of the course. Any recording of class sessions is authorized only for the use of students enrolled in this course during their enrollment in this course. Recordings and excerpts of recordings may not be distributed to others. See [ACD 304-06](#) "Commercial Note Taking Services" and [ABOR Policy 5-308 F.14](#) for more information.

## Absence Policies

There are no required or mandatory attendance events in this online course.

Excused absences do not relieve students of responsibility for any part of the coursework required during the period of absence. If exceptions for graded coursework deadlines need to be made for known excused absences, please reach out to your instructor as soon as possible. Review availability windows and due dates for coursework and schedule accordingly.

Review the resources for what qualifies as an excused absence and review the late penalties in the Due Dates and Late Penalties section of the syllabus and the course:

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- Excused absences related to religious observances/practices that are in accord with [ACD 304–04](#), “Accommodation for Religious Practices” (please see [Religious Holidays and Observances](#)).
- Excused absences related to university sanctioned events/activities that are in accord with [ACD 304–02](#), “Missed Classes Due to University-Sanctioned Activities”.
- Excused absences related to missed class due to military line-of-duty activities that are in accord with [ACD 304–11](#), “Missed Class Due to Military Line-of-Duty Activities,” and [SSM 201–18](#), “Accommodating Active Duty Military”.

## Virtual Office Hours

### Expectations

The environment should remain professional at all times. Inappropriate content/visuals, language, tone, feedback, etc. will not be tolerated, reported and subject to disciplinary action. Review the policy regarding Expected Behavior section of the syllabus, [ABOR Student Code of Conduct](#) and the ASU [Student Code of Conduct](#) at all times.

## Disruptive, Threatening or Violent Behavior

In the classroom and out (i.e., online and in virtual office hours), students are required to conduct themselves in a manner that promotes an environment that is safe and conducive to learning and conducting other university-related business. Students, faculty, staff, and other individuals do not have an unqualified right of access to university grounds, property, or services. Interfering with the peaceful conduct of university-related business or activities or remaining on campus grounds after a request to leave may be considered a crime. All incidents and allegations of violent or threatening conduct by an ASU student will be reported to the ASU Police Department (ASU PD) and the Office of the Dean of Students. Such incidents will be dealt with in accordance with the policies and procedures described in [Section 104-02 of the Student Services Manual](#).

## Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Suitable accommodations are made for students with disabilities. Students needing accommodations must register with [ASU Student Accessibility and Inclusive Learning Services](#) (SAILS) office. Students should communicate the need for an accommodation at the beginning of each course so there is sufficient time for it to be properly arranged. These requests should be submitted through the [online portal](#). See [ACD 304-08](#) Classroom and Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities. SAILS will send the instructor a notification of accommodations. It is recommended that students communicate with instructors regarding documented accommodations.

## Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

Arizona State University is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation for the entire university community, including all students, faculty members, staff employees, and guests. ASU expressly prohibits discrimination, harassment, and retaliation by employees, students,

contractors, or agents of the university based on any protected status: race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and genetic information.

Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <https://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs>.

As a mandated reporter, I am obligated to report any information I become aware of regarding alleged acts of sexual discrimination, including sexual violence and dating violence. ASU Counseling Services, <https://eoss.asu.edu/counseling> is available if you wish to discuss any concerns confidentially and privately.

ASU online students may access 360 Life Services, <https://goto.asuonline.asu.edu/success/online-resources.html>.

## Photo Requirement

Arizona State University requires each enrolled student and university employee to have on file with ASU a current photo that meets ASU's requirements (your "Photo"). ASU uses your Photo to identify you, as necessary, to provide you educational and related services as an enrolled student at ASU. If you do not have an acceptable Photo on file with ASU, or if you do not consent to the use of your photo, access to ASU resources, including access to course material or grades (online or in person) may be negatively affected, withheld or denied.

## Syllabus Disclaimer

The syllabus is a statement of intent and serves as an implicit agreement between the instructor and the student. Every effort will be made to avoid changing the course schedule but the possibility exists that unforeseen events will make syllabus changes necessary. Remember to check your ASU email and the course site often.