China and Africa

Fall Semester 2017
IAFF 3190.16
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Tuesday 3:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
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Office Hours: Monday 6:15 – 7:00 - Elliott School – Room 303

Course Description and Objective

This undergraduate class operates as a seminar and looks at the totality of the China-Africa relationship both historically and on the basis of its current relations. It covers topical issues such as trade, aid, investment, security, political relations, and soft power. It also reviews briefly China’s relations with each of the 54 nations in North and Sub-Saharan Africa. The primary text is China and Africa: A Century of Engagement by David Shinn and Joshua Eisenman supplemented by a number of readings. I will assume that students have read the required material before each class so that they can discuss it seminar style in class. The grade is based on two 8 to 10 page research papers, one oral presentation, class discussion and attendance.

Required Reading

The required text book cited above is available in the GW bookstore. The other readings are available by direct link, in the Gelman Library E-Journal system or on Blackboard.

Basis for Grading
Eighty percent of the grade is determined by the two research papers (40 percent for each paper). Please email to me by 12 September a one paragraph description of the first paper. I will get back to you by email. The research paper is due in hard copy on 17 October. Think of this as your mid-term grade. Please email to me a one paragraph description of the second research paper on 24 October. The second paper is due in hard copy on 28 November so that I can return it to you on the last day of class on 5 December.

Both research papers should be a minimum of 8 full pages and a maximum of 10 pages, including footnotes. Follow carefully the Chicago Manual of Style for footnotes. Do not include a bibliography. Late papers will be penalized. In addition to a paper that is strong on substance, I put a premium on clear and concise drafting and accurate footnotes that follow the Chicago Manual of Style. I will send you by email early in the course my summary critique of papers done last year. I will also provide examples of several excellent papers from students in previous classes.

I will email to each student my China-Africa bibliography that now exceeds 230 pages. This imposing document contains resource material on every conceivable topic concerning China-Africa relations.

The final 20 percent of the grade is based on class participation and a MIMIMUM five and MAXIMUM ten minute oral presentation. In the case of the oral presentation, please do not summarize the required reading for the day. Pick a theme from the required reading for that session and expand on it, drawing on your own thoughts and drawing on material beyond the required reading.

This is a seminar; student discussion is essential. Students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time and have read all required reading. On 5 September, I will ask each student to select a subsequent week when he/she will make an oral presentation on the seminar topic for the day. These presentations will constitute part of the grade for class participation.

**Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the course, students should have a solid understanding of the development and current state of China-Africa relations, where China excels and where it faces major challenges. They should be aware of the key substantive issues in the China-Africa relationship and the nature of its ties with each African country. Students should also appreciate what is expected for a graduate level research paper and acceptable footnotes.

**Compliance with Credit Hour Policy**
Over 14 weeks, students will spend 2 hours and 30 minutes (150 minutes) per week in class. Required reading for the classes, two term papers, and one oral presentation are expected to take up, on average, 5 hours (300 minutes) per week. Over the course of the semester, students will spend about 35 hours in instructional time and about 70 hours preparing for class.

**Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to comply with the strict standards of the George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity which can be found at [https://studentconduct.gwu.edu/sites/studentconduct.gwu.edu/files/downloads/160912%20Code%20of%20Academic%20Integrity%20Final.pdf](https://studentconduct.gwu.edu/sites/studentconduct.gwu.edu/files/downloads/160912%20Code%20of%20Academic%20Integrity%20Final.pdf). All members of the GWU academic community are expected to demonstrate honesty in all of their work, including the preparation of research papers.

**Class Schedule**

UNIT 1


The first part of the class is devoted to a review of the syllabus, administrative issues and asking each student to say a few words about him or her. In the remaining time, I will discuss the themes in the introductory chapter of Shinn/Eisenman and provide an overview of the China-Africa relationship.

**Required Reading:**

Shinn/Eisenman – Chapter 1 – Introduction.


UNIT 2

September 5: The History of the China-Africa Relationship.
Each student should be prepared to select a future unit for his/her five to ten minute oral presentation.

Most of this session will consist of a lecture on the development of the China-Africa relationship since 1949, although I will encourage students to ask questions and contribute their own views.

**Required Reading:**

Shinn/Eisenman – Chapter 2 – A Historical Overview of China-Africa Relations.


**UNIT 3**

**September 12: The Importance of State-to-State Relations and FOCAC.**

Please provide by e-mail a one paragraph description of your first research paper.

China’s strength in its ties with Africa stems from the fact that 52 countries recognize Beijing; two recognize Taipei. China has cordial relations with all 52 governments that recognize it. China emphasizes the state-to-state relationship above all else. It institutionalized this relationship with the creation of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC).

**Required Reading:**


**UNIT 4**

**September 19: Political Relations and the Role of the CPC.**
China’s political relations with Africa have been based on support for state sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of African countries. China makes frequent use of senior Communist Party of China (CPC) officials in its interaction with both government and political party leaders in Africa. The leaders of ruling African political parties are also often the guests of the CPC. This interaction, with a few exceptions, does not extend to African opposition party officials. This unit also covers some of China’s sensitive internal issues that have implications for its relations with African countries.

Required Reading:

Shinn/Eisenman – Chapter 3 – Political Relations.


UNIT 5

September 26: China-Africa Trade Relations.

In 2009, China passed the United States and became the largest bilateral trading partner by dollar value with Africa’s 54 countries. China’s trade domination has grown in subsequent years. While total African trade was until recently roughly in balance with China, many individual African countries have huge trade surpluses or deficits with China. Some of the African countries with large trade deficits are becoming concerned about the trade imbalance. Perhaps more than any other sector, trade defines the importance of the China-Africa relationship.

Required Reading:

Shinn/Eisenman – Chapter 4 – Trade Relations.

UNIT 6

October 3: China’s Investment in Africa and Africa’s Investment in China.

No one knows how much money Chinese companies and individuals have invested in Africa. The official figure at the end of 2014 was $32 billion, although some Chinese officials and foreign think tanks put the actual figure at twice this amount. It is not clear what China considers as overseas FDI and it acknowledges that its official figure only captures investment that is reported officially. It misses investment that goes through tax shelters such as Hong Kong, the Cayman Islands and British Virgin Islands. Chinese investment in Africa in recent years has probably been about equal to FDI from the United States. It is important to remember, however, that cumulative FDI from the United States and other major European countries exceeds the cumulative figure for China as these countries have been investing over a longer period. Information on African investment in China is equally sketchy.

Required Reading:

Shinn/Eisenman – Chapter 5 – Investment and Assistance – pp. 128-43.


UNIT 7

October 17: China’s Aid to Africa.

A hard copy of your first research paper is due today. Please print on one side only.

Although reliable Chinese aid statistics for each African country are not available (China treats aid as a state secret), China is becoming an increasingly important aid donor. In the past several years, its annual OECD-equivalent aid to Africa has probably been about $2.5 billion. This compares to $8 billion from the United States. Most of the aid is in the form of the concessory component of loans. There are also some cash and in-kind grants. China has a good record on debt cancellation. More than half of China’s global aid goes to Africa. China emphasizes that its aid, unlike that from the West, has no political conditionality.

Required Reading:


**UNIT 8**

**October 24: Media, Educational and Cultural Links.**

Please provide by email a one paragraph description of your second research paper.

This is the softest of China’s soft power effort in Africa. China has emphasized all three areas since the beginning of its interaction with Africa in the late 1950s. The media engagement has evolved from an early ham-handed approach by Xinhua to a much more sophisticated operation that has become the largest news service in Africa. It has been joined by increasingly strong programming from China Radio International and China Central Television. China offers about 5,000 fully paid scholarships annually, although the program remains hindered by the language issue. It also pays considerable attention to cultural exchanges but has been unable to compete with Western music and films, European football and even Indian films. Confucius Institutes are among the most recent additions to China’s soft power in Africa.

**Required Reading:**

Shinn/Eisenman – Chapter 7 – Media, Education, and Cultural Relations and Ties with Chinese Communities in Africa.


**UNIT 9**

**October 31: Military and Security Ties and Peacekeeping Missions.**
Africa is a low security priority for China compared to countries on its periphery and Western powers. Nevertheless, Africa has grown in importance because of China’s greater reliance on African oil and minerals. China is a major arms supplier to Africa and has at least a minimal security relationship with all 52 countries that recognize Beijing. Between one and two million persons of Chinese origin live in Africa; they are experiencing increasing security challenges. China is a significant provider of troops to UN peacekeeping operations in Africa. Finally, China wants to insure the safe passage through the Western Indian Ocean of its flag vessels and those that are conveying Chinese imports and exports.

**Required Reading:**

Shinn/Eisenman – Chapter 6 – Military and Security Ties and Peacekeeping Missions.


**UNIT 10**

**November 7: China’s Relations with North Africa and the Sahel.**

This begins the country-by-country look at China’s relations with individual African countries. This unit covers the five countries in North Africa and five in the Sahel zone of Africa. I have singled out Egypt and Chad for additional attention.

**Required Reading:**

Shinn-Eisenman – Chapter 8 – China’s Relations with North Africa and the Sahel.


UNIT 11

November 14: China’s Relations with East Africa, the Horn, and the Indian Ocean Islands.

This unit covers the nine countries in East Africa and the Horn and the four African countries in the western Indian Ocean. It takes a closer look at two of them: Ethiopia and Madagascar.

**Required Reading:**

Shinn/Eisenman – Chapter 9 – China’s Relations with East Africa, the Horn, and the Indian Ocean Islands.


UNIT 12

November 21: China’s Relations with West and Central Africa.

This unit covers 29 countries in west and central Africa, a region that played a major role in alternating ties between Beijing and Taipei. Today, only one of the 29 countries recognizes Taiwan. The unit takes a closer look at Nigeria, Ghana, and Senegal.

**Required Reading:**

Shinn/Eisenman – Chapter 10 – China’s Relations with West and Central Africa.

Ben Lampert and Giles Mohan., “Sino-African Encounters in Ghana and Nigeria: From Conflict to Conviviality and Mutual Benefit,” Journal of Current Chinese Affairs, v. 43, no. 1
UNIT 13

November 28: China’s Relations with Southern Africa.

A hard copy of your second research paper is due today. Please print on one side only.

This unit covers ten countries in southern Africa, a region where China’s interaction has been especially intense. The unit takes a closer look at South Africa and Zambia.

Required Reading:

Shinn/Eisenman – Chapter 11 – China’s Relations with Southern Africa.


UNIT 14

December 5 : The Future of the China-Africa Relationship, Challenges and Lessons Learned.

China is in Africa to stay. The relationship is important to both sides. But the more China engages in Africa, the more complicated the relationship becomes and the more problems and challenges both parties must confront. There are many more Chinese living in Africa than Americans and, increasingly, they are encountering problems. The impact of China’s activities in Africa and its policies on human rights, democratization, the environment, respect for labor laws, and competition with African traders and small industry present significant challenges for
China. For their part, individual African countries must maximize the benefits they obtain from such a huge player on the international stage.

**Required Reading:**

Shinn/Eisenman – Chapter 12 – Conclusion: Looking Forward.

