

**RSOC 38 Religion and Culture in Africa: Gendered Perspectives: Africa.**

**Spring 2016**

**(30<sup>th</sup> March)**

**Monday/Wednesday : 3:30-5:15**

**Pre-requisite: Introductory Level Course (SCTR1-19, TESP 1-19 OR RSOC 1-19)**

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**NB: This course fulfils the RTC 2 course requirements for the New Core curriculum.**

**(See below)**

**Course Description:**

Culture can be defined as a *society's way of life*. It comprises the totality of a people's heritage **of ideas, language, habits, beliefs, customs, social organizations, symbols, crafts and material artifacts**. Culture is the result of a **people's efforts to define themselves in the world** and to navigate it from the *particularities of their social, political, and historical contexts*. Underlying and informing a people's culture is *a system of values and norms* which shape and influence people's perception of themselves, their relationships with each other and with the rest of the world. Religious *beliefs and ideas* are **often part of the system of values** and ideas embedded in culture and informing and shaping it. At one level then, culture is a *vehicle or a carrier of religion*. At the same time, religious beliefs, ideas and values often have a profound impact on a people's efforts to define themselves and to navigate the world in light of their self definition. Religion thus becomes a major *force in history* since it is intertwined with people's *identity formation* and also becomes a resource for people as they navigate life in its *dynamism and complexity*.

In the process of this navigation and negotiation of the world through history, people **form, reform and even transform their cultural heritage**. Culture is therefore necessarily **dynamic rather than static**, often changing as people respond to the *contingencies* of time and history.

Against this background, and focusing on Africa **as a case study**, through gendered lenses, this course explores the *complex and multifaceted* yet intriguing relationship between **religion and culture and the implications** of the intersection of religion and culture for the society in which African religio-cultural beliefs emerge and are experienced. Several recognitions and prior observations will inform this exploration as follows:

- Recognizing the role of culture as “a carrier of religion,” and using specific examples from *across the African continent*, we will examine various ways in which **religions of Africa find expression in the cultures** of Africa. We shall, for example, explore how African religion is expressed through African *oratures, rituals and artistic forms* including *music and dance*.
- Recognizing also that *religious ideas inform and shape the ways people define themselves* in the world and with *specific examples*, we will examine how religions and cultures of Africa are implicated in the **construction of identity including, gendered identity at the individual and collective level**.
- Recognizing the *significance of gender in human experience*, the course will pay special attention to the **gendered dimensions** and social implications of African Religions and Culture as a lived reality, particularly for women (see the text book: Oduyoye: **Daughters of Anowa**.)
- Recognizing that religion is a **major force in history**, and with *specific examples*, we shall examine the *religio-ethical factor in African history* as we explore the role of religion in *shaping the social political and cultural lives* of African peoples. (Mosha's Book: **Heart Beat of Indigenous Africa** spells out the ethical dimension of Indigenous Africa while Hood, Oduyoye

and Ela spell out the social -ethical ramifications of Africa's *encounter with other religions* ,particularly Christianity )

- Recognizing the tremendous **diversity of religio- cultural** belief systems in Africa, we will examine the implications of *this diversity for the construction of identity* in Africa and examine African responses to the reality of "**many- ness of religions and cultures** in the continent and beyond.
- Recognizing that culture is a *dynamic rather than static* phenomenon, we shall examine how African peoples have *responded to the phenomenon of change* and consequently how , if at all, *African religio- cultural beliefs and ideas* have changed, in what directions and why.(eg the emergence of *African forms of Christianity* in the phenomenon of *African Independent Churches*)

### **Specific Course Goals (i.e. Intended Learning Outcomes)**

Students who successfully complete this course will:

1. Demonstrate mastery of an *adequate content regarding African religions* and their specific *expression* through **aspects of African cultures**.
2. Be able *critically to distinguish* between *culture and religion* while at the same time understanding *the connections* between the two.
3. Be able *critically to respond* to issues pertaining to **Gender** and its implication of African Religions particularly for women.
4. Be able *critically to analyze* the role of religion in identity formation and transformation in specific *historical contexts* in Africa and its Diasporas.
5. Be able to identify and *critically analyze* the role of religion in *African social -political history*.
6. Demonstrate an analytical awareness and understanding of the *cultural and religious diversity* that characterizes Africa and to analyze the implications of responses *to this diversity for* Africa and beyond.
7. Be able *critically to express their own responses* to issues of diversity and difference among human beings and analyze *the role of religion and culture* in the formation and transformation of these responses.

**Departmental Goals: the course also intends to nurture and test achievement of Religious Studies Departmental goals and expects that students who successfully complete this course will:**

1. *Demonstrate mastery of a coherent body of material* in order to broaden the data base that student uses to think about *religions, religious issues and all the possible inter -disciplinary connections*. \*\*\*
2. *Show mastery of a discrete body of materials* (in this case materials on African Religions) in **its own terms** and draw on this new knowledge in addressing issues of religion in **different contexts** and be **alert** to the ways knowledge is **organized and appropriated across time and history**\*\*\*
3. *Demonstrate their ability to question and probe religion* for what it reveals about *human beings*, their diverse societies, traditions, convictions and aspirations.
4. *Demonstrate ability to use diverse materials* and to demonstrate (understanding and ability to apply) *critical methods of enquiry* into religion in order to go beyond *simple description of religion to reflective* engagement with it. (Eg through response papers )

These departmental goals are embedded in the course goals above and their achievement will be facilitated and tested through course activities as stipulated below.

Please note that: This course also fulfills Santa Clara's **RTC 2 Core** Requirements and it is expected that Students who successfully complete the course will achieve the three RTC2 core goals as follows:

1. Be able to analyze *complex and diverse religious phenomena* (such as architecture, **Art, music, ritual, scripture (or Oratures), theological belief systems** and other **Cultural expressions** of religious beliefs.
2. Be able to *clarify and express beliefs* in light of their own critical inquiry into the religious dimension of human existence .
3. Be able to *integrate and compare different disciplinary approaches* to coherent set of religious Phenomena

The above core goals are embedded in **course goals** and their achievement will be facilitated and evaluated and tested through course **activities** in ways explained below:

**RSOC 38 :Course Requirements** (AKA Course activities or means of Achieving Course Goals and Intended Learning Outcomes)

1. **Regular Attendance, and active presence /participation** in class both in structured group work, any *in class assignments* , voluntary suggestion of ideas or raising and responding to pertinent questions. Students may be called upon either individually or in groups to lead discussion on specific subthemes or to act as discussants as well as participation in and reporting on *pertinent events beyond scheduled class*. This will be monitored and will comprise 5% of final grade (see also 3 Below)
2. **Preparation for class** by a thematic and analytical reading of required material and consequent Active participation on the basis of this preparation . Evidence of preparation should be manifested in the students' ability to respond to questions, both oral and written related to the themes and their pertinent texts during in class discussion. In-order to monitor this preparedness, students will be asked to submit written responses to **specific questions** based on the readings. **(10%)**. Prompts **to guide the readings** will be distributed beforehand either in class or on Camino 10%of Final Grade )
3. **Active participation** in class discussion and any *in class assignments* including **group work** as well as participation in *pertinent events beyond scheduled class*. For the purposes of group work (see 6 below) the class will be divided into working groups in and through which common tasks can be accomplished Through active (structured )participation , particularly but not limited to group participation, students will show- case their understanding of class content but also exercise and demonstrate their ability analytically to come to grips and respond to the class content and its themes: : This activity facilitates and tests achievement of core *Goal 2 and departmental class goal 1 . 10% of final grade*
4. **2 Response papers** minimum 3 pages maximum 5 double- spaced typewritten pages. These should reveal student's **critical engagement** with an *issue or issues arising* out of the readings and their in class discussions. This should be the opportunity to explore **an issue or issues** raised in or through the readings or class discussions that *intrigues you by* analytically commenting on or questioning the issue/s 10% each Total 20%:  
This course activity facilitates and tests RTC2 Core: **Goal number 3:** It is a distinct and deliberate opportunity for each of the students to show case their ability critically to clarify and express beliefs (theirs and those of others as exemplified in the African Case ) in light of their critical inquiry in to the religious dimension of Africans' Human experience .. This exercise also fulfills departmental goals 3&4: It is an opportunity for students to **Question and Probe and engage religion** (in this case African Religions) for what it reveals about *human beings* , their diverse societies , traditions , convictions and aspirations. to reflective engagement with it .

5. **Midterm/ Learning outcome exercise: (Modalities TBA) (20%) (due week 6)** *This exercise will facilitate and test achievement of* Departmental course goal 1 & 2 ie : **Masterly of a coherent content** regarding African Religions and Cultures, in their own terms and in different contexts .. and awareness of the way African religious knowledge is organized and appropriated across time and space. The exercise will also test students analytical awareness of critical issues surrounding the study and practice of African Religions and Cultures as a Case study.
6. **Group (connecting the dots) project:** Students will work in groups on a **pertinent project** designed to help them *connect the dots between what is studied* and discussed in the classroom with the **idea of religion** and culture as a “*lived*” **reality**. (Suggested Projects TBA by Tuesday week 2). Guidance as to what is expected here will be provided in class along with suggested resources for the project. (15%) Groups will also be assigned on Tuesday week 2 Plan to be there!
7. **Final Exam : in the Form of a Book Review from a list to be provided by Instructor (see list at the bottom of this syllabus)**

**Guidelines** as to what is expected here will be provided by **week 7. 20% of final grade**

### **Criteria for Grading:**

Please note that your **grade is cumulative** and is based on how well you do **on all the** various course requirements as detailed above through out the quarter . Grades will be computed as follows:

“**A**” Will be given for **outstanding** work across the board and cumulatively including attendance , participation , written assignment etc. s. An

“**A**” student presents his or her work *coherently, clearly and critically*. His or her Written work is systematic, relevant and well articulated addressing adequately the issues at stake. It is also **submitted in timely manner**

“**B**” Will be given for work that is of **high quality**, which adequately addresses itself to **the issues and** is relatively well, articulated.

“**C**”. Will be given for work which barely meets **the minimal requirements** of the Course.

“**D**”. Poorly presented work; **barely relevant**, incoherent and ill articulated.

**F. Irrelevant, incoherent work** that does not meet the requirements of the course at all.

**NB: A total of 100** points are possible for the course as a whole. **A final letter grade** will be assigned according to the following percentile scale:

90%-100%	A
80%-89%	B
70%-79%	C
60%-69%	D
Below 69%	F

**NB:** The **bottom 2** numbers within each grade category respectively corresponds to **plus or minus grade designations:** e.g. 80%-82% =B, 88%-89%= B+ etc

### **Policy on Plagiarism:**

Students in this course are reminded that **plagiarism**, i.e. the use of other people’s ideas words and work without properly acknowledging them is a **serious offence** and stands to be penalized. If proven, charges of plagiarism could result in **an automatic F**. Consequently, students are encouraged to

develop a strong sense of the need for *academic honesty* at all times, a fact that is self-rewarding both in the short and long run.

#### **Policy on Attendance:**

Class attendance is **mandatory** except for **emergencies**, which should be explained to me, preferably in writing and if possible before hand and supported by appropriate documentation (eg Dr's note if it is a medical emergency) . Only those students with excused/ and excusable absences will be allowed to do make up assignments. Please note that frequent absences (more than 2 but less than 4 ) will lead to a lowering of your grade by **at least one** letter grade. Absences also negatively affect your participation grade . 4 or more absences will **invite** an F for the class. Please note that absence in order to attend other classes and their requirements is not excusable unless it is an emergency situation. Participating in other activities which routinely conflict with your attendance of this class will not be excused .Try to ensure no scheduling conflicts between this and other classes that you are taking. Confirm in writing your availability to attend and participate in this class fully(see self- introduction exercise)

**Class Procedures:** Collegiality and Accountability for the Class as a Learning Community :

The course will be presented through a **combination of lectures and discussion** in order to achieve that stated goals: **Audiovisual material** where possible and applicable will also be used. Other learning activities, **including group discussions/projects** designed to meet the needs of the class as these become apparent will be used. Students **are encouraged to cultivate an inquiring mind, bold enough** to raise **appropriate** questions for discussion. However, this should be done with a spirit of **sensitivity and respect** for all involved in the learning situation. To this end, students are encouraged to cultivate **a spirit of collegiality and accountability to the whole class at all times to ensure success of the class. Students' initiative** in reading around and beyond the assigned readings, sharing information pertinent to the course, and a general *sense of responsibility* for the success of the class over and above the *minimum requirements* of the class is highly encouraged and is self-rewarding. Active participation and involvement in the class is also specifically rewarded in the final grade. Procedures for Group work will be distributed along with the topics on **Monday week 2** .

#### **Disability and other Accommodation:**

To request Academic accommodations for disability and other **pertinent matters**, students must contact Undergraduate Academic advising and Learning Resources Center located in Benson 216 Drahmman Center :408 554 4109 . Students **must provide documentation** supporting their request for accommodation to Disability/Academic Advising Resource Center before receiving accommodation. Please do this in good time, at any rate no later than Friday of week 1 to ensure that you receive the accommodations you need in a **timely and meaningful manner**.

#### **Connecting the dots....and Extra Credit**

As indicated in the course goals, a major objective of the course beyond introducing the students to African religions and cultures ( a complete goal itself) is to facilitate and nurture the students' capacity to *make connections* between in-class discussions and text book information with the world beyond the classroom. The course aims at nurturing your capacity to *move beyond description of religious phenomena* to an *application of insights from the study of religion* and reflective engagement with it. You are encouraged, therefore, to try and make such connections and even to find ways of sharing the *connections you make*. While scheduled opportunities for such connection of dots are available through the *response papers* and the *group project* , you are not limited to these scheduled venues and are encouraged to find creative ways of "*applying*" insights gained in and through the class throughout the quarter.. Please take full advantage of any pertinent co curricular events and opportunities.(eg the Santa Clara Lecture (see below) .Attending such events and submitting a reflective **statement** (2-3Pages) indicating the analytical connection that you make with the class ,its themes and goals , at my discretion you will earn points **towards the participation** grade (see above, course requirements ). **This credit is extra**, does **not substitute** your required work . It will not exceed 5% of final grade

## Schedule of Classes and Topics :

**Please note that the schedule could change to accommodate demographic fluctuations, availability of resources and other contingencies**

### Week 1: Introductory Background

**March 28<sup>th</sup> : Academic Holiday : No Classes**

**March 30<sup>th</sup> :**

- a) Introducing the Course and its Requirements
- b) Introducing key terms of reference : i) The idea of Culture ii) The idea of gender iii) The idea of Africa  
Lecture discussions: No readings (*assign: Victorians and Africans for Monday week 2*)

### Week 2: African Religion and the Issue of Hermeneutics

**April 4<sup>th</sup> :** The Study of African Religion and The Issues of Hermeneutics

Readings:

Bratlinger : Victorians and Africans: The genealogy of the Myth of the Dark Continent: (pdf on Camino)

Olupona: P reface

Viewing: Excerpts: Davidson's Africa: Voyage of Discovery:  
(self-Introductory page due )

**April 6<sup>th</sup>: Attend Connecting the Dots event : Santa Clara Lecture :The Pope , Poverty and the Planet : \*\*\*\***

**Reading(to prepare for Santa Clara lecture) : Mosha : Introduction and Laudato Si (chapter 1 (pdf on Camino ) 1 -2 pages responding to the lecture and connecting to RSOC 38 (for class credit due by Friday Week 2)**

### Week 3: Mapping and Gendering the African religio-cultural landscape

**April 11: *The African World view and Belief Systems: An Introduction***

Mosha: chapter 1: pages 7-15; Oduyoye: Introduction

Video Resource : Pertinent Excerpts From Davidson :Africa :Voyage of Discovery

**April 13** Transmitting Religion and Culture : Understanding the phenomenon of Ipvunda

Readings: Mosha Chapter : 1: Pages 16-30, Chapter 2:35-46, Oduyoye : Chapters 2&3

**Group 1: Gender, Hermeneutics and the Ipvunda Process**

**Video Resource: Excerpts: TBA**

**1<sup>st</sup> Response paper due (Friday to include insights from both classes in week 3**

### Week 4: Transmitting Religion and Culture (2) : Gendered Perspectives on The Formative Role of oratures .

**April 18<sup>th</sup>** The formative role of oratures in Afro -God Talk :

Readings: Olupona Chapters 1& 2.; Oduyoye 1,&5 ;

**Group 2** Ipvunda and the transmission of Afro God talk in gendered perspective  
(optional resource: Hood chapter 5 )

( **Video Resource: Ali Mazrui: New Gods** )

**April 20<sup>th</sup>** : Transmitting Cultures Norms and Values : The Formative Role of Ritual : Rituals of Becoming :  
Readings : Moshia : Chapter 2: Pages 68-78, Oduyoye Chapter 6: Olupona Chapter 4

**Week 5: Transmitting Religion ,Culture, Norms and Values Through Ipvunda continued**

**April 25<sup>th</sup>** The Formative role of Ritual in a Living Interconnected Universe: Implications for Ecological Stewardship : 1  
Reading : Moshia 72-77(revisit)  
**Group 3:** Gendered Perspectives on Ritual In Africa's Moral Landscape Ritual and Africa's Moral Imagination

**Video Resource: Excerpts from Mami Water documentary  
Preview Maathai: Taking Root**

**April 27<sup>th</sup>** : African Religion and Cross- Cultural Encounters  
Colonialism and Its Impact : Case Study : Ambiguity of (Christian Mission and African Responses : Readings : Ela Chapter 2, Hood Introduction

**Video : Basil Davidson : On ambiguity of Mission :**

**Possible Guest speaker on Ela**

**Week 6: Cross- Cultural Encounter and African Responses: Navigating the Colonial Impact :  
The Rise of Afro Theologies of Liberation:**

**May 2<sup>nd</sup>** : The Rise of Afro -Theologies of Liberation: Case Study 1. Independent Churches

Readings: Hood chapter 1 , Ela Chapter 4  
Video : On Independent Churches (Preview or In class s

**May 4<sup>th</sup>** : Africans navigating the Colonial Impact: Case Study 2 : Black and Afro Theologies of Liberation :  
Readings: Hood Chapter 3, Ela Chapter 3 :

**Group 4:** on Cross- Cultural Encounter and Africa's Responses (Black Theologies of liberation

**Video Resource : Preview :Sarafina**

**Midterm Distributed (Due back Before Monday week 7)**

**Week 7: Religion and Culture in Africa's History: The Quest For Justice and "Somebodiness"**

**May 9<sup>th</sup>** Religion and Afro quest for gender Justice :  
Readings : Oduyoye Chapters 4, 7,8  
Video: Resource To be a Woman

**(Group 5) On Religion and Gender Justice**

**May 11<sup>th</sup>** :Religion and the enduring ng quest for **Somebodiness** : The Role of Music and Dance in African History

Readings: Revisit Moshia: Pages 61-68 (On the Formative/transformational role Olupona Chapter 5; Excerpts from Cone ): he Spiritual and the Blues (On Camino )

Excerpts from Spencer: Protest and Praise (Pdf on Camino)

**(Video Resource Amandla)**

## Group 6 on Music and Dance in African history

### Week 8 Culture ,Religion and Quest For authenticity and Belonging in Africa and Diaspora Concluded :

May 16<sup>th</sup> Inculturation and the right to be different? :  
Readings : Ela Chapter 7, Foreword and Chapter 1 (in that order )

May 18<sup>th</sup> Religion , and Quest for and Belonging in Africa and Its Diaspora  
Readings Ela Chapter 8 and Hood Chapter 2  
**Group 7 : On Religion and quest for belonging**

**Video Resource :African Christianity Rising or more of Zulu Zion**  
**Guidelines for final paper distributed**

**Second Response paper due (on Friday to include insights from all of week 8)**

### Week 9 Courses Conclusion and synthesis :

May 23<sup>rd</sup> : Quest For authenticity concluded : Reflections on Religion and identity formation in plural society :

Readings: , Marc Ela: Chapters 9, Olupona chapter 6

**Video Resource The Neo African Americans**  
*New African Americans)*

May 25<sup>th</sup>: Course synthesis concluded  
Reflection son Religion and quest for pluralism in Africa

Readings : Oduyoye chapter 10 ; Olupona Chapter 7

**Video Resource: Misa Luba**

### Week 10 : Course conclusion and Wrap up :

May 30<sup>th</sup> : Memorial Day : No Classes:

June 1<sup>st</sup>

- i) Preparing the Final paper
- ii) Course Wrap up

#### Required Texts: Class texts:

Jean Marc Ela: *African Cry* (Special reprint: Wipf and Stock 2005)

Hood: *Must God Remain Greek*: (WIPF and Stock)

Mosha Sambuli: *The Heart Beat of Indigenous Africa* (Garland Publishing House)

Olupona: *African Religions: A very short Introduction*: Oxford 2014

Oduyoye: *Daughters of Anowa* (*Orbis Books*)

**Excerpts** from other pertinent *texts* will be distributed in class or placed on Canvas

***A note on Readings and their relation to ( RTC Core) Goals: Please note that the Class texts are deliberately chosen to allow at least two different approaches to the materials: eg Cultural anthropological methods (eg Mbiti, and Ifi ) gendered approaches; Eg , and Oduyoye ; Post colonial theories and Liberation theology theories (eg Hood: Must God Remain Greek ) or Marc Ela (African Cry). The texts also highlight the study of African Religions as Ethical Systems : (eg Mosha : Heart Beat of Indigenous Africa ): Thus through this course activity the course facilitates fulfillment of core***



goal 2 and tests its achievement in an ongoing way through out the quarter. Students are expected to do an annotated critical reading of texts that approach the same materials from different methodological angles. Thus Mosha offers an **Ethical analysis** of African religions ,e Oduyoye offers *gendered analysis* and even feminist analysis of the religio cultural life of the Africans, Both offer an *emic (insiders)* perspective and offer a **critique of exclusively etic (outsider)** readings of African religions and Cultures particularly where those *readings are skewed by a colonial and sexist hermeneutics.*

#### **Note on Book Reviews :**

##### **List of Books for Final Review:**

1. Achebe Chinua: Things Fall Apart
2. Ba Mariama: So Long A Letter
3. Nozipo Maraire : Zenzele, A letter to My Daughter
4. Ngugi Wa Thiongo: I will Marry When I want
5. Ngugi Wa Thiongo: Devil on the Cross
6. Ngugi Wa Thiongo: the River Between
7. Marisa Code: I Tituba Black Witch of Salem

#### **Please Note**

The books assigned for review are *mainly novels* in which are embedded an analyses and critique of African Religions and Cultures, through the lenses of *post colonial theory* (eg as Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart, Ngugi wa Thiongo The River Between) or the lenses of *gender and afro feminism* (eg Mariama Ba (So Long a letter, Marisa Conde: I Tituba Black witch of Salem , or Nozipo Maraire : Zenzele , A Letter to My Daughter ) .Students are supposed analytically to review the novels in light of class themes as articulated in the selected required class texts. Both the Class texts and the novels *are chosen* so that they allow analyses of the class material from *multiple perspectives* eg : cultural anthropological **perspective** , feminist /gender studies perspective and post colonial theory Perspective. . Thus in reviewing Chinua Achebe (*Things Fall Apart* ) ,for example, students will apply insights from *postcolonial literature* and its analysis of Africa through with *postcolonial theory* but also use insights from the method of *gendered /Feminist analysis of religion as* exemplified by Oduyoye I her book: Daughters of Anowa The book, daughters of Anowa also comments on the impact of Christianity and colonialism on the lives of African women thus allowing students to probe the idea of *cultural formation and transformation and notions of identity formation* over time even though this formation and transformation is contentious. **This facilitates achievement and testing of Core Learning Goal 2.** This final exercise also tests and facilitates Goal no 4 in the departmental goals list : Students will use **diverse materials** (in this case literary novels in combination with class texts ) to demonstrate their capacities for Critical enquiry into religion and ability to move beyond description to **critical reflection.**

**Note on Group work and Its relation to class goals :** The group topics are designed to facilitate and test achievement of *Core Goal number 1* .ie students :ability to “ *analyze complex and diverse religious phenomena such as ritual e, music , , theological systems and other cultural expression of religious belief*” . *The topics for example include an analysis of Ritual, African Music and African theologies of liberation* (including : Theologies of African Independent Churches, or Inculturation theology of Jean Marc Ela ) ) as examples of *complex ways in which humans express and live their religions*. Through the group projects ,students will also be expected to *show case their ability to “clarify and explain/express beliefs “* (of Africa) in light of their **own critical /analytical** enquiry about Africans and the religious dimension of their “Human Experience:” Thus this exercise facilitates and also evaluates the achievement of **Core goals number 3** (⊗see course goals above ):

**Group topics will be distributed and groups assigned by 1<sup>st</sup> day of week 2**

#### **Navigating the Readings**

1. **Thematic, Analytical and Synthetic Readings:** The readings are organized thematically. For each theme, there will be **at least two different texts** to allow for access to **different perspectives** on the theme for you to consider in your analysis. When you approach the readings, remember to **read for the theme** and also to read **synthetically** (i.e. considering all the texts on the theme) in an analytical manner. Eg. On the theme is : Mapping and Gendering the African Religious Cultural Landscape has . **2 readings are assigned** : Masha (Introduction )and Chapter 1 describes the African world view in rather generic terms while Oduyoye introduces the African religious landscape through a woman's lenses thus allowing a gendered analysis. Reading both these texts together , y gives us more holistic insights not only into the African religious cultural space , but also insights regarding this space as a gendered space.

2. **Keeping Track of your Analytical Thoughts: Taking Note and Taking Notes**

**Remember also to keep track of your analytical thoughts as you process the readings.** I will provide you with questions to Guide the readings and will be posting these on Camino at least 2 days before they are due. These questions /prompts are to facilitate your understanding of the themes embedded in the particular readings. Writing out your **analytical responses** to these questions on the readings provides you with a well thought out set of notes for your reference during in class discussion of the themes but also for reference as you navigate other aspects of the course requirements such including your group work, Midterm etc. I will signal to you to submit these written responses for me to check at intervals what progress you are making in unpacking/understanding the themes. Keep copies of these notes for your records and submit them also on Camino for my records and for me to offer you feedback as needed

3. **Use of Note Cards or Cluster Word maps:** In order to keep track of your analytical thoughts as you read in preparation for class, I recommend that you use note cards to jot down at least 3 points that you consider noteworthy in the readings or that summarizes what is being said in the readings. On the flip side of the Card: Jot down your immediate analytical thoughts as you consider these points. Eg to what extent do you agree with the claims being made in the texts? Why or why not? What more could be said about the points raised? What more are you **curious** about as you consider the claims being made in the texts . If you were to engage the writer on this topic, what analytical question would you ask him/her etc.

On the **flip side of the card** , jot down what you might consider “**muddy** “ points (what if anything is unclear for you in the readings ... we can consider these muddy points during class discussion in efforts to clarify them

**This regular note taking and taking note** will help you keep **track of your thoughts**, as the quarter progresses so that you can use these as a **spring board** for response papers ,for in class discussion and other aspects of your course requirements (including midterm and final paper. At **regular intervals** , you will be called upon in class to share your analytical thoughts with the rest of the class for further discussion . I may also ask you to **submit the note cards** you have prepared to look at how you are **progressing in that regards**. So bring **both your written notes (responding to the questions to guide readings ) and note cards to class for reference**. All this particularly **boosts and documents your preparation and participation grades** .!