

Njeri Githire, Professor, African American Studies

As I had already mentioned, there does appear to be some overlap between the proposed course and courses taught in our department. Notably, AFRO 3437 which explores major themes in history of East Africa. Colleagues also do have some reservations with regards to the course title: "Violence in Africa" (when in fact the countries in question are Kenya and Algeria). And while I understand that suggesting an alternative course title may be outside the scope of the consultation process, I wonder if it would be possible to consider the negative stereotypes about Africa that a title such as this reinforces.

While the need to evoke violence in association with Africa might be the only way to elicit interest in potential students for whom Africa is one long, chaotic, violent mess (if not a dark, inhospitable and disease-ridden jungle), a creative title might be just as appealing. After all, Kenya and Algeria engaged in Anti-colonial/Liberation struggles whose violence should really not be the only way to entice a student to peek into the course description. Furthermore, to generalize Africa is more a norm we associate with clueless westerners or opportunistic writers ready to exploit generalizing tendencies to advance the sales of a book, a film, etc.

How about a title like the one that the thoughtful editors Martin Thomas and Gareth Curless have chosen for their book: *Decolonization and Conflict Colonial Comparisons and Legacies* or *Human Rights in the Shadow of Colonial Violence: The Wars of Independence in Kenya and Algeria* by Fabian Klose and translated by Dona Geyer. This last title may be long, but it is just a suggestion ...

Shaden Tageldin, Professor, CSCL

Thanks very much for writing to us regarding Professor Patricia Lorcin's proposed new course in History, HIST 3443: *Violence in Africa: The Decolonization of Kenya and Algeria in Comparative Perspective*.

I happen to know the syllabus well, since Patricia designed this course with a Faculty Curriculum Development Grant from the African Studies Initiative (ASI), and I am in the process of giving her comments from an ASI perspective.

From my standpoint, however, as a faculty member in CSCL, the course does not conflict with the tenor of our own CSCL 3130W: *Colonial and Postcolonial Literatures and Theory, 1700 to the Present*.

CSCL 3130W ranges across several colonial/postcolonial contexts; it foregrounds literature and film and reads these in tandem with key works in decolonization or postcolonial theory, with historical studies appearing—when they do—as background. By contrast, HIST 3437 focuses on two case studies—Kenya and Algeria—and a single problematic, violence, exploring these through texts largely rooted in the disciplines of history, sociology, or anthropology as opposed to forms of cultural expression. HIST 3437 does, of course, include some screenings of films; however, the only overlap I see is

Gillo Pontecorvo's film *Battle of Algiers*. Otherwise, Karin Blixen's works, memoirs of her life in Kenya, are the only texts that venture into CSCL-style terrain.

Speaking of Karin Blixen, one point of note is that Patricia's research interests incline toward the experiences of European settlers in Algeria and Kenya; she explores the problem of torture in Algeria, for instance, through the perspective of the French victim Henri Alleg (a comrade of Maurice Audin), though she does use secondary sources by the Algerian-born sociologist Marnia Lazreg, as well as by critically minded Western scholars of Algeria like James McDougall. Our course, CSCL 3130W, approaches questions of colonialism, decolonization, and postcoloniality principally from the perspective of non-Europeans. Again, our accent is different.

In sum, I see HIST 3443 as a worthy contribution in its own right and a complement—not a competitor—to CSCL 3130W.

Gilliane Monnier, Professor, Anthropology

This course does not overlap with any of our offerings.