



# African Interdisciplinary Studies Hub

University of Missouri

## FY21 Talking Points

### ○ **What is MU Africa Hub?**

- MU African Interdisciplinary Studies Hub promotes interdisciplinary, collaborative research and teaching that contributes to a better understanding of Africa at the University of Missouri.
- Contact information:
  - Email: [africahub@missouri.edu](mailto:africahub@missouri.edu)
  - Website: <https://africahub.missouri.edu/>
  - YouTube channel:  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjEJB5Z2gdcJxgROix3vFyA>
  - Twitter: @MUAISHub
  - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MUAfricanStudiesHub/>

### ○ **Who is part of the initiative?**

- Director: Jenifer Pilz
- Volunteers: Nadege Uwase, Yanu Prasetyo, Barituka Bekee, & Najah Thabit.
- CIP staff: Kerry Clark, Lindsey Saunders, & Linda Journey
- Advisory Board:
  - Composed of students, staff, and faculty
  - 2016 Advisory Board Chair: Patrick Pithua
  - 2017-2018 Advisory Board Chair: Michael Marlo
  - 2019-2021 Advisory Board Chair: Wilson Majee
- Africanists: We have identified more than 100 Africanists at Mizzou. Africanists are students, staff, and faculty teaching courses, conducting research, taking students to study abroad programs, student organizations, and much more. Africanists are individuals promoting any initiatives/programs/events about Africa at Mizzou.



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## ○ **Where is MU Africa Hub?**

- MU Africa Hub has an academic and fiscal home in the College of Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources (CAFNR) under the International Programs office (CIP).
- Dr. Kerry Clark is the current director of CIP.
- Address
  - MU African Interdisciplinary Studies Hub  
1-28 Agriculture Bldg. |710 Hitt St.  
Columbia, MO 65211

## ○ **What is the purpose the Hub?**

- **Inclusion:** Mizzou has an Asian Affairs Center, a Confucius Institute (*closed FY20*), a Cambio Center as well as other smaller centers conducting research in specific countries. Africa is emerging as a major player in all aspects of world affairs. From politics to agriculture, demographics to culture, the coming decades will require a deep understanding of the place of Africa in the world.
- **Research:** Mizzou is a land-grant university and a premier research facility. One of our main goals is to bring together and leverage many faculty members' research portfolio and encourage interdisciplinary collaborations to strengthen our existing work in and about Africa, as well as create new opportunities for future ground-breaking research.
- **Curriculum:** As a higher learning institution, students are asked to graduate with sound intellectual foundation, via core learning objectives. In keeping with four goals from our core learning objectives, the Hub plans to support faculty members develop courses, within disciplines and interdisciplinary, about Africa.

## ○ **Previous Programs**



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- What we did in FY16
  - Hosted Our African Origins Symposium with Dr. Meave Leakey as the keynote speaker. We received financial support from the Department of Student Activities, Office of Undergraduate Studies, School of Medicine, Department of Anthropology, Honors College, Department of Pathology & Anatomical Sciences, Donald Lectureship Fund, Life Science & Society Program, Chancellor's Distinguished Visitor's Program, and College of Arts & Science.
  - Hosted the 2016 Interdisciplinary Zoonoses Research Symposium with the financial support of the Mizzou Advantage, the Conference Center, and the College of Veterinary Medicine.
  - Hosted Jonny Steinberg, a South African writer and scholar at Oxford University, with the financial support of Provost Office (Lectures Committee), School of Journalism, MU Libraries, and Black History Month Committee.
  - Hosted Focus on Africa blitz presentations by Africanist faculty members. The program is a partnership with Life Science & Society Program (directed by Mary Shenk) and the Division of Applied Social Sciences,
  - Hosted Real Colorism with Missouri Student Association, Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc., and the Black Studies Department.
  - Screening of Democrats, film about the making of a new Zimbabwean constitution, with Kinder Institute.
  - Utilizing social media to help promote Hub and programs as well as events about Africa around campus.
  
- What we did in FY17
  - Host an African Film Series and start series by screening Ota Benga



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- Encourage students and faculty to submit applications to the Fulbright program by hosting knowledge sharing programs with the International Center.
  - Fundraise to host student interns at the Global Health Initiative: International Research Elective. This will be a collaboration with the School of Medicine and our recently signed MOUs with Copperbelt University School of Medicine and Lusaka Apex Medical University in Zambia.
  - Continue Focus on Africa blitz presentations.
  - Seek collaborative opportunities with Africanists and units around campus
- What we did in FY18
    - Continued Focus on Africa blitz presentations.
    - Helped Advisory Board members, Tunde Ojewola, Yassine Dguidegue, and Jenifer Pilz to start and support African Graduate and Professional Student Association.
    - Provided funding to events that promote the study and understanding of Africa at Mizzou.
    - Hosted Social Gathering to celebrate the end of the semester for African Students.
    - Hosted dinner for Cochran Fellows from Senegal.
    - Helped to host a presentation by Yousouf Ouattara, a Fulbright Mizzou Alumni.
  - What we did in FY19
    - Continued Focus on Africa blitz presentations, African Film Series, and African Book Series.
    - Provided funding and collaborated with offices and departments on campus for events that promote the study and understanding of Africa at Mizzou.
    - Hosted MU Africanist Social Gathering.



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- World Café Method discussion of vision, mission, current initiatives and the next five years.
- Supported efforts of African Student Association (ASA) and the African Graduate & Professional Student Association (AGPSA).
  
- What we did in FY20
  - Focus on Africa
    - The program continued to be truly interdisciplinary. Our speakers came from the following departments/colleges/units:
      - College of Education, Political Science Department, Department of Romance Languages and Literature, School of Nursing, Fulbright Fellowship in the School of Engineering, School of Medicine, Black Studies Department, Visiting Scholars (Borlaug Fellowship), School of Journalism, Health Informatics, and the Anthropology Department.
    - Funding was provided by the Office of Research lead by Dr. Mark McIntosh.
    - We had more than 400 participants, most of whom gave us feedback about how they enjoy the program.
  - African Film Series
    - We screened four films: The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind, Makala, Colors of Heaven, and a Netflix Watch Party (Phone Swap) during the COVID-19 pandemic.
    - Collaborators for this program included the Division of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity, Black History Month Committee, Public Health Program, Mizzou for Malawi, City of Columbia Human Rights Commission, Cambio Center, the Central Missouri Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Association and MU Citizenship Program.
    - We had over 300 participants in attendance.

- MU Zambia Program
  - The Global Health Initiative: International Research Elective MU-Zambia program provides two outstanding students from medical schools in Zambia-Lusaka Apex Medical University (LAMU) and Copperbelt University School of Medicine (CBU SOM), the opportunity to research under a MU School of Medicine faculty mentor over the course of one summer.
  - The 2020 program was moved to summer 2021 due to COVID-19.
  - The cost for the program is approximately \$9,400 (based on 2019 actual expenses). The School of Medicine's Dean's Office will cover the stipend and taxes, room and board, tuition and fees, and administrative costs. Pan African Organization for Health Education and Research (POHER) lead by Dr. Akwi Asombang (she helped start the program while at MU) is donating \$5,000. MU Africa Hub raises the remaining funds.
- Women's History Month
  - We hosted Nicole Warren. Dr. Warren is a professor at Johns Hopkins University. She spoke about Respectful Maternity Care and visited classrooms.
  - Funding was provided by the International Center, Division of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity, School of Health Professions, School of Social Work, Women Center, and Humanity for Children.
- Swahili course
  - The course will be housed in the Black Studies Department
  - Students have option of Honors track via the Honors College
  - Currently developing Swahili 2
  - 27 students are signed up for fall 2020