

## COURSE SYLLABUS



**History 115: History of Africa**  
**Department of History, Moravian College**  
**Instructor: Dr. Akbar Keshodkar**  
**Spring 2015**

*Office Hours:* Wednesdays, 10 am – 1 pm, or by appointment

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course aims to introduce students to the diverse histories of Africa and the extent to which interaction between societies throughout Africa and other continents have shaped ancient and modern human history. The first part of the course will explore social, economic and political development in various regions of Africa before 1500 CE. The second part of the course will be devoted to examining how the experience of people throughout Africa has been transformed through their interaction with societies outside African since the 1500s and how these developments have shaped modern African societies. Through the examination of the various topics and historical developments, the course aims to further problematize and encourage students to challenge preconceived notions of race, ethnicity, tribe, gender, kinship, violence and religion often attributed to African societies.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

By the end of the course, students should have improved their ability in:

- Developing an understanding of the diverse cultural milieu throughout Africa, past and present
- Identifying major themes in African History
- Understanding the impact of levels of interaction between African societies and societies from other parts of the world
- Engaging with primary and secondary sources and explore the relationship between text and context in the writing of history
- Critically evaluating and interpreting a variety of primary sources and acquiring an awareness of the issues involved in interpreting primary sources
- Developing writing conventions appropriate to the discipline of History

### **TEXT:**

Required reading:

The following book is available for purchase at the college bookstore:

Gilbert, Erik and Jonathan T. Reynolds. 2012. *Africa in World History: From Prehistory to the Present*. Boston: Pearson (ISBN: 978-0-205-05399-5)

Additional articles and primary source documents required for the course can be accessed through the college library electronic journal database or will be posted on blackboard.

### **Supplementary Reading:**

Abbink, Jon, Mirjam de Bruijn & Klaas Van Walraven (Eds). *Rethinking Resistance: Revolt and Violence in African History*. Leiden: Brill, 2003.

Falola, Toyin. *Key Events in African History: A Reference Guide*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2002.

Isichei, Elizabeth Allo. *The Religious Traditions of Africa: A History*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers, 2004.

McEvedy, Colin. *The Penguin Atlas of African History*. London: Penguin Books, 1995.

Parker, John and Richard Rathbone. *African History: A very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Reid, Richard. *A History of Modern Africa: 1800 to the Present*. London, Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

Shillington, Kevin (Ed). *Encyclopedia of African History*. New York: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2005.

#### Websites:

BBC – The Story of Africa:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index.shtml>

Internet African History Sourcebook:

<http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/africa/africasbook.asp>

Links to online resources for Africa:

<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/africa.htm>

African lives today:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/africanlives/front.htm>

African history archives:

<http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/30/index.html>

Annotated resource list from Africa:

[http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Home\\_Page/WWW\\_Links.html](http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Home_Page/WWW_Links.html)

Politics and Governments in Africa:

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/depts/por/afbase.htm>

Africa bibliographical database:

<http://www.africabib.org/>

#### Videos:

*Africa: A History Denied*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z08CP9UJskk&noredirect=1>  
*Guns, Germs and Steel-Into the Africa*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRLXH8EE5bA>

### **COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:**

1. *Attendance and Participation*: Students will be required to *attend* class regularly and *participate* in discussions. Questions, feedback, and student interaction are an integral part of the learning process, and will supplement lectures and films. Students should come prepared, having read the assigned materials prior to coming to class and having the materials accessible during class. Chronic absences, tardiness and leaving early will adversely affect your grade. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class on random days and tardiness or absences on those occasions will result in a deduction of 5 points per infraction from the class participation grade. Absences due to illness or emergencies must be communicated to the instructor prior to the class.
2. *Basic classroom rules*: While in class, students are expected to use appropriate language with the instructor as well with each other, have their cell phones on silent and not be involved in personal conversations with each other or any activities which would disrupt the classroom environment. Infraction of these rules will result in a deduction of 20 points from the class participation grade and the student being asked to leave the classroom.
3. *Plagiarism*: I take plagiarism, copying someone else's work and representing it as your own, very seriously. This applies to all work submitted for the course. Students will be required to submitted all work done outside of the classroom on Safe Assign, through Blackboard.



**Plagiarism, academic dishonesty, or cheating will result in an automatic grade of F for the course.** If a student's work is suspected of plagiarism, the student as well the Dean's office will be notified of the offence and it will be the student's responsibility to demonstrate evidence reflecting the originality of the work, such as all notes and other materials utilized in developing the submitted work. Students should refer to the college's academic handbook for more information about plagiarism.

4. *Blackboard:* All assignments, additional reading materials, announcements and information related to the course will be posted on Blackboard. It is the students' responsibility to check Blackboard and their Moravian College email on a regular basis throughout the semester.
5. *Accommodating disabilities:* Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Elaine Mara, Assistant Director of Academic and Disability Support, located in the lower level of Monocacy Hall, or by calling [610-861-1401](tel:610-861-1401). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.
6. *Quizzes:* Starting week 2, there will be short, weekly quizzes on weekly reading materials. The quizzes will commence at the beginning of the class and students will have 10 minutes to complete them. Students should note that no makeups will be offered and those arriving late would not receive extra time to complete the quizzes. Students will also be allowed to drop the lowest quiz grade.
7. *Document Based Essays (DBQ):* Two document essays will be assigned over the materials covered in the class over the course of the semester. The first DBQ will be administered in class and the second one will be take home, and should be submitted typed, doubled spaced, in Times New Roman font, Type 12, with standard one-inch margins and with proper citations and bibliography. Students may only use academic journals and published books for acquiring materials. Under no circumstances are online sites that are not academic journals, considered acceptable for citation on papers. Students must also ensure to use correct grammar, as that will account for 10% of the grade on each paper. Students should refer to the rubric on blackboard for greater clarification on criteria that will be utilized in assessing the essays. No late papers will be accepted.
8. *Midterm and Final Exam:* The midterm and final exam will cover material from lectures, discussions, films, and reading, consisting of objective questions (e.g. short answer questions), primary source documents and/or essay questions. Questions will be primarily based on the assigned readings and supplementary materials. Make-up exams will be given only in emergency situations, and you should contact me before the scheduled exam if possible.

9. *Explanation and Breakdown of Grades:*

Attendance and Class Participation	10%
Document Based Essays (15% each)	30%
Weekly Quizzes	20%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%

Grade Equivalence		
A	4.0	93 – 100
A-	3.7	90 – 92.9%
B+	3.3	87 – 89.9%
B	3.0	83 – 86.9%
B-	2.7	80 – 82.9%
C+	2.3	77 – 79.9%
C	2.0	73 – 76.9%
C-	1.7	70 – 72.9%
D+	1.3	67 – 69.9%
D	1.0	63 – 66.9%
D-	0.7	60 – 62.9%
F	0	59.9% and below

- A/A-: Excellent; performance was outstanding and surpassed all expectations set forth in the course; consistently displayed superior grasp of course materials in assessments and through participation in class activities
- B+/B: Above average; fulfilled all requirements set forth in the course with a very good grasp of course materials in assessments and through class participation
- B-/C+/C: Average; adequately fulfilled course requirements, average performance on assessments, participation in class activities was satisfactory
- C-/D+/D/D-: Below average; performance minimally acceptable to pass the course, consistently displaying inadequate understanding of course materials on assessments and not sufficiently participating in class activities
- F: Failure to demonstrate basic understanding of course materials, consistently underperforming on assessments and not adequately participating in class activities

10. *Withdrawals/Incompletes:* Under no circumstances will a student receive an academic incomplete if they are failing the course or if they have done little or no work. In circumstances that an Incomplete is given, it will be the responsibility of the student to ensure that the work is submitted on time and meets the requirements of the course. If work is not submitted by the deadline given, the student will automatically receive an “F”.

## COURSE OUTLINE/SCHEDULE

The course will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:55 am – 10:05 am. Students are required to come prepared for each class, having completed the reading assignments beforehand. Unless indicated, all the required readings listed below are from Gilbert and Reynolds (GR). Primary Source documents (PS) can be accessible through the links provided. Other required reading materials will be posted on Blackboard and can also be accessed through the college library's electronic Journal collection (BB).

### Part I – Africa in Ancient History

#### Week 1:

20 Jan 2015 Introduction to the course - Discussion of course expectations and requirements

22 Jan 2015 Ch. 1 – Physical context of African History (GR, p. 1-12)  
Ch. 2 – Africa and Human Origins (GR, p. 14-24)

#### Week 2:

27 Jan 2015 Ch. 5 – North and Northeast Africa in Early World History (GR, p. 67-84)

29 Jan 2015 PS: Voices in African History: Be a Scribe (GR, p. 72-73)  
PS: Procopius of Caesarea: *History of the Wars*, c. 550 CE. Book I.xix.1, 17-22, 27-37, xx.1-13 (BB)  
<http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/nubia1.asp#Procopius>

### Part II – World Religions in Africa

#### Week 3:

3 Feb 2015 Ch. 6 – Africa and Early Christian World (GR, p. 85-97)

5 Feb 2015 Voices in African History: The Kebra Negast (GR, p. 90-91)  
PS: *The Christianization of Nubia*  
<http://www29.homepage.villanova.edu/christopher.haas/nubian-texts.htm>

#### Week 4:

10 Feb 2015 Ch. 7 – North and West Africa and the Spread of Islam (GR, p. 98-119)  
Ch. 8 – Islam in East Africa (GR, p. 120-138)

12 Feb 2015 PS: Leo Africanus: Description of Timbuktu, from *The Description of Africa* (1526) (BB)  
[http://web.archive.org/web/20030608172524/www.wsu.edu/~wldciv/world\\_civ\\_reader/world\\_civ\\_reader\\_2/leo\\_africanus.html](http://web.archive.org/web/20030608172524/www.wsu.edu/~wldciv/world_civ_reader/world_civ_reader_2/leo_africanus.html)  
Primary source: Ibn Battuta on Women and Matriliney in West Africa (GR, p. 113)  
PS: *Ibn Battuta: Travels in Asia and Africa 1325-1354* (BB – from “Ibn Battuta arrive in Aden” to “The People of Dhofar and their customs”)  
<http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1354-ibnbattuta.asp>

### Part III – Trans-Atlantic Slavery and the Transformation of the Continent

#### Week 5:

17 Feb 2015

#### **In-Class Document Based Essay**

19 Feb 2015

Ch. 9 – Slavery and the Creation of the Atlantic World (GR, p. 143-174)

#### Week 6:

24 Feb 2015

PS: Equiano's Description of the Middle Passage (GR, p. 160)  
PS: Thomas Phillips, "A journal of a voyage made in the Hannibal of London, 1694" (BB)

26 Feb 2015

Ch. 10 – West and West Central Africa, 1500-1800 (GR, p. 175-198)

#### Week 7:

3 Mar 2015

PS: An Account of the Slave Trade in Africa (GR, p. 185-186)  
PS: John Barbot, "Narratives of the African Slave Trade, 1682"  
<http://www.vgskole.net/prosjekt/slavrute/1.htm>

5 Mar 2015

#### **Midterm Exam**

#### Week 8:

10 Mar 2015:

NO CLASS (Spring Break)

12 Mar 2015:

NO CLASS (Spring Break)

### Part IV – European Domination of Africa

#### Week 9:

17 Mar 2015

No In Class Meeting; Ch. 12 – East Africa, 1500-1850 (GR, p. 219-240)

19 Mar 2015

PS: A French Slaver in East Africa: Captain Dallons (GR, p. 230)

#### Week 10:

24 Mar 2015

Ch. 13 – Southern Africa, 1500-1870 (GR, p. 241-261)

26 Mar 2015

PS: Cultural Contact in Southern Africa: Journal, Jan van Riebeeck  
<http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/p/69.html>  
PS: Letters of Johanna Maria van Riebeeck  
<http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/modules/lesson7/lesson7.php?s=2>  
PS: Letters of Will, Laurens Verbrugge and Beletje Frederikszoon  
<http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/modules/lesson7/lesson7.php?menu=1&s=9>

#### Week 11:

31 Mar 2015

Ch. 14 – Colonialism and African Resistance, (GR, p. 262-285)

2 Apr 2015

PS: Rudyard Kipling, The White Man's Burden, 1899 (BB)  
<http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/Kipling.asp>  
Documentary: Excerpts from Out of Africa

Week 12:

7 Apr 2015 Ch. 16 – Political Change in the Time of Colonialism (GR, p. 314-338)

9 Apr 2015

PS: The ANNC Protests the Land Act of 1913 (GR, p. 334-335)  
Documentary: People's century – Colonialism and anti-colonial movements in Africa

Part V – The Struggle for Self Determination

Week 13:

14 Apr 2015

**Document based essay 2 due at beginning of class**

Ch. 15 – Economic Change in Modern Africa (GR, p. 286-313)

16 Apr 2015

PS: John Hobson, "The Political Significance of Imperialism"  
<http://www.marxists.org/archive/hobson/1902/imperialism/pt2ch1.htm>

Week 14:

21 Apr 2015

Ch. 18 – Politics in the Era of Colonization and Independence (GR, p. 360-387)

Documentary: People's Century – African Independence

23 Apr 2015:

PS: Nnamdi Azikiwe on Imperialism (GR, p. 364-365)

PS: Kwame Nkrumah, "I Speak of Freedom," 1961

<http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1961nkrumah.asp>

PS: The Arusha Declaration, 1967

<http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1967-arusha.asp>

Documentary: People's Century - Apartheid

Week 15:

28 Apr 2015

Ch. 17 – African Culture in the Modern World (GR, p. 339-359)

Siti binti Saad, "The Voice of Taarab (GR, 354-355)

30 Apr 2015

Ch. 19 – Contemporary Africa (GR, p. 388-415)

**FINAL EXAM:**

**Thursday, 7 May 2015, 8:30 am**



**Writing Assessment Rubric for the Course:**

Criteria	Comments	Percentage			
		Strong	Good	Adequate	Weak
<p><b><u>Content Analysis (70%)</u></b>            How well does the student respond to the Question/prompt? Are the arguments relevant, sufficient, explained clearly, persuasive?            Is the synthesis of information adequate, and can the student differentiate between objective and subjective analysis? Is the thesis well developed? Is there both a specific and broader dimension to the argument? Is the evidence sufficient and adequately explained in relevance to the thesis?</p>		Strong	Good	Adequate	Weak
		63-70	54-62	49-53	48 >
		/ 70%			
<p><b><u>Information Literacy (10%)</u></b>            Has the student chosen appropriate sources? Has the student utilized sufficient number of sources? Is quoted material used effectively? Are sources acknowledge and cited correctly (in-text and bibliography)? Are citations missing?</p>		Strong	Good	Adequate	Weak
		9-10	8	7	6 >
		/ 10%			
<p><b><u>Organization &amp; Style (10%)</u></b>            Is the essay well-organized, with an introduction and conclusion? Is supporting evidence presented logically within each paragraph? Are there clear and appropriate links between the paragraphs?            Does the student use an academic writing style, with a variety of well-structured simple, compound and complex sentences? Is the vocabulary sufficiently academic and accurate?</p>		Strong	Good	Adequate	Weak
		9-10	8	7	6 >
		/ 10%			
<p><b><u>Correctness / Accuracy (10%)</u></b>            Are commas and full-stops used accurately? Are capital letters used correctly? Is spelling sufficiently accurate? Are verb forms (tense and agreement) used appropriately and accurately?</p>		Strong	Good	Adequate	Weak
		9-10	8	7	6 >
		/ 10%			
Total Percentage		/ 100%			

#### A paper (90-100)

- The student responds well to the prompt, using relevant, logical arguments with strong understanding of the evidence.
- Sources are appropriate for the topic, and quoted material is used effectively. All sources are correctly cited.
- The essay is well-organized, with a clear thesis, evidence is presented clearly, and the ideas and paragraphs are well-linked. The student uses an academic writing style, with a variety of sentence types, and academic vocabulary use is varied and appropriate for the topic.
- Language use is accurate, with correct punctuations and spelling. Occasional errors with prepositions and articles.

#### B paper (80-89)

- The student responds reasonably well to the prompt, and most of the arguments and evidence are relevant, with clear understanding of the evidence.
- Most sources are appropriate for the topic, and quoted material is used effectively most of the time. Only occasional inaccuracies of logic or citation.
- The essay is mostly well-organized, with a clear thesis, some evidence is presented clearly, and the ideas are well-linked. The student uses an academic writing style, with a variety of sentence types that are mostly well-structured. Academic vocabulary use is varied and mostly appropriate for the topic.
- Language use is mostly accurate, punctuation is generally well-controlled, some spelling errors in less common words. May be several errors with prepositions and articles.

#### C paper (70-79)

- The student responds adequately to the prompt, with some arguments and evidence that are relevant and with partial understanding of the evidence.
- Most sources are appropriate for the topic, and quoted material is used effectively some of the time. More frequent inaccuracies of logic and citation.
- Attempts to organize the essay, with a thesis, and attempts to organize ideas within paragraphs, but with only limited success. Some evidence is presented clearly, and some ideas are well-linked. The student attempts to use an academic writing style, with a variety of simple and compound sentence that are mostly well-structured, and some complex sentences. Academic vocabulary is attempted.
- Language use is varied, attempts at accurate punctuation, but more frequent errors, frequent spelling mistakes in less common words. Errors with prepositions and articles may be frequent, but do not impede meaning.

#### D paper (60-69)

- The student responds minimally to the prompt, with limited arguments and evidence that are relevant and with little understanding of the evidence.
- Some sources are relevant for the topic, but quoted material is often ineffective or inappropriate. Frequent inaccuracies of logic and citation.
- Limited attempt to organize the essay, thesis is unclear, and limited attempts to organize ideas within paragraphs. Evidence and ideas are not presented clearly or logically linked. The student has limited control of academic writing style, sentences are poorly-structured, and complex sentences are rarely attempted. Vocabulary use is rather basic.
- Language use is varied, punctuation is often inaccurate, spelling mistakes even in common words. Errors with prepositions, articles, verb forms may be frequent and sometimes impede meaning.

#### Failing paper (below 60)

- Failure to respond to the prompt, with irrelevant information and little or no understanding of the evidence.
- Sources are not relevant, and quoted material, if any, is ineffective or inappropriate. No attempt at citation.
- Very little attempt to organize the essay, no thesis is presented, and information within paragraphs is not organized. Evidence and ideas are unclear. Academic writing style is not attempted, and even basic sentences are poorly -structured. Vocabulary use is inadequate.
- Little control of language, with inaccurate punctuation and frequent spelling mistakes in common words. Errors with prepositions, articles, verb forms are frequent and cause difficulty for the reader.