This course deals with the main themes of African history up to c. 1500. It is a vast and varied continent. We will only be able to hit some of the high points. There is still much work to be done on this early period of African history so that some areas are better understood than others. Some of the major topics covered in the course are: an introduction to African peoples, social systems, and geography; African prehistory; early population movements into North Africa; the influence of Islam and Christianity on various areas of the continent; trans-Saharan and Indian Ocean trading systems; the Ghana and Mali empires of West Africa; Bantu migrations; Swahili city-states; Southern African population movements.

Required texts


Outline maps of Africa

HISTORY 376

Course requirements

Map quiz, September 20: 50 points

Mid-term Exam (for 3-credit students)—Essays and identifications: October 18: 200 points (Term paper=200 points)

Objective Quiz (identifications, multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank on Islam and North African Islamic period) November 1: 100 points

Final Map Quiz, December 6: 75 points

Final Exam, Tuesday, December 18, 7:45-9:45 am: 250 points

Attendance at two African Studies Center movies or lectures, or films on Africa shown on Public T.V., typing up a two-page description and discussion of each: 50 points each = 100 points

Map work: You are to study the following list, locating the ethnic groups, place names, and geographical features. Use your text book maps as well as the Atlas recommended above. A copy is also placed on reserve for this class. For the map quiz on September 20 I will select 25 terms. You will place the corresponding number for each of the terms on a blank map purchased at the bookstore. It is suggested that you purchase an extra map to use as a study sheet. For the final map quiz on December 6 I will choose terms from the following list and include other map terms taken from lectures. A study list will be distributed one week before the quiz.

- Senegal River
- Niger River
- Volta River
- Gambia River
- Nile River
- Blue Nile
- White Nile
- Lake Tana
- Futa Jalon
- Futa Toro
- Lake Chad
- Lake Victoria
- Lake Tanganyika
- Cape of Good Hope
- Red Sea
- Kilwa
- Memphis
- Qayrawan
- Bunyoro
- Axum
- Tripoli
- Fezzan
- Napata
- Cairo
- Begho
- Boure
- Mogadishu
- Gao
- Timbuktu
- Taghaza
- Wolof ethnic group
- Mombasa
- Zanzibar
- Alexandria
- Elmina
- Drakensberg Mountains
- Lower Egypt
- Mapungubwe
- Luba
- Massawa
- Nubia
- Kanem
- Meroe
- Pemba
- Bambuk
- Kru ethnic group
- Asante ethnic group
- Carthage
- Grain Coast
- Mossi ethnic group
- Hausa ethnic group
- Thebes
- Zambezi River
- Orange River
- Gold Coast
- Cirta/Constantine
- Upper Egypt
- Buganda
- Mbanza Kongo
- Lalibela
Lecture assignments:

The African Studies Center at the University of Wisconsin offers weekly lectures Wednesdays at noon and occasional films on Africa. Numerous other lectures are also offered through the year as scholars pass through the area. Some African subject video tapes are available for viewing on site in the Learning Support Services Lab, Room 274 Van Hise Hall. The room is open M-Th, 8:30 a.m.-8:30 p.m. and F 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. There are also films shown on Africa on public t.v. from time to time. To encourage you to become acquainted with these offerings I am asking you to attend two during the semester, writing up a two-page report on each. As lectures and films come to my attention I will try to announce them in class, but keep your eyes open. I will not accept wildlife films on Africa to fulfill this assignment. With very few exceptions, feature films are not appropriate for this assignment. If you're unsure of the appropriateness of a lecture or film for this assignment, ask me before you write it up.

NOTE: You are not assured full credit on this assignment. Your papers must be neat, thoughtful, and grammatically correct.

Readings: Readings below are an integral part of the course. The articles by Posnansky, Solanke, and Munson are available in xerox form from Kinko's Copies at 620 University Avenue. They are also available on Reserve in the College Library (Helen C. White).

GRADING

There are 750 points possible total credit for the course.

To receive an A you must have 697 points
A/B 652 points
B 622 points
B/C 577 points
C 520 points
D 450 points
F below 450 points

Lecture Topics & Reading Assignments

WEEK I September 4 - Introduction to the Course
September 6 - Geography of Africa with slides


WEEK II September 11 - Peoples of Africa and Social Systems
September 13 - Sources for African History; Prehistory

READING: Jolayemi Solanke, "Traditional social and political institutions," in African History and Culture, edited by Richard

UNESCO History of Africa-Vol. II, Chapter 21, pp. 296-305.

WEEK III September 18 - African prehistory/Bantu expansion
September 20 - Discussion and slides; MAP QUIZ-50 points

UNESCO History of Africa-Vol. III, Chapter 6, pp. 140-62, Chapter 28, pp. 750-93 (to be reviewed for several following lectures)

WEEK IV September 25 - Ancient and Pharaonic Egypt
September 27 - Egypt cont. with slides (TERM PAPER TOPICS DUE TODAY FOR 4-CREDIT STUDENTS)


WEEK V October 2 - North Africa-Berbers, Phoenicians/Carthage
October 4 - North Africa-Greeks and Romans


WEEK VI October 9 - North Africa-Vandals and Byzantines; pre-Christian Ethiopia and Nubia
October 11 - Christian Ethiopia and Nubia

UNESCO History of Africa-Vol. IV, Chapters 16 and 17, pp. 398-454.
Connah, African Civilizations, Chapters 3-4, pp. 24-96

WEEK VII October 16 - Cont. of Oct. 11 topic and slides
October 18 - MID-TERM EXAM, 200 points

READINGS: Finish readings from Week VI.

WEEK VIII October 23 - Islam
October 25 - Arab conquest of North Africa, Fatimids, Mamluks

WEEK VIII (cont.) READINGS: UNESCO History of Africa-Vol. III,
HISTORY 376

Chapters 2-4, pp. 31-118; Chapter 7, pp. 163-93, Chapter 12, pp. 314-35.


WEEK IX Oct. 30 cont. of October 25; oasis settlements and the trans-Saharan trade

Nov. 1 - QUIZ, 100 points.


WEEK X November 6 - slides and discussion

November 8 – Ghana and Mali empires, and early Songhay


Connah, African civilizations, Chapter 5, pp. 97-120.

Niane, Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali.

WEEK XI November 13 - Mande diaspora

November 15 - Fulbe, Hausa, and Yoruba


UNESCO General History of Africa-Vol. IV, Chapter 11, pp. 266-300; Chapter 14, pp. 346-69; Review Chapters 6 & 7.

Connah, African civilizations, Chapter 6, pp. 121-49.

WEEK XII November 20 - Review, discussion of Sundiata epic, slides

There will be a question on the final exam on the epic.

WEEK XIII November 27 - Indian Ocean trade and Swahili Society

November 29 - Great Lakes kingdoms (TERM PAPERS DUE TODAY FOR 4-CREDIT STUDENTS)


UNESCO General History of Africa-Vol. III, Chapter 21, pp. 586-615


Connah, African civilizations, Chapter 7, pp. 150-82.

WEEK XIV December 4 - Central African societies: savanna and rainforest
December 6 - Zimbabwe and Botswana; MAP QUIZ, 75 points


WEEK XV December 11 - Southern African populations - Bantu and Khoisan exchange
December 13 - Review


FINAL EXAM, Tuesday, December 18, 7:45-9:45am: 250 points