

NOTE: This description is out of date. Interested students should contact Professor Brown, room 5108 Humanities.

THE UNIVERSITY OF
Department of History
Semester I Year 77-78

<u>COURSE NO.</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE</u>	<u>INSTRUCTOR</u>
376	History of Africa before 1880	Brown

COURSE DESCRIPTION

History 376 is the first semester of a year course on the history of African ideas, society, and politics. There is a strong emphasis in this course on understanding African institutions and patterns of thought in a historical context: on how complex trade worked without money as we know it, on the logic of African thought, on the processes by which states were formed, and on the organization of the slave trade.

The course is constructed on the assumption that African society before European conquest had basic operating principles which, while they had great intrinsic value, require an effort of the imagination for an American to understand. That effort is worth making, so that the student can come a little closer to seeing African history through African eyes, and not merely as obscure movements on distant maps. Only once the institutions and patterns of ideas have been examined does the real nature of the African achievement become clear, and to the alternatives which African society provides to our own way of life become understandable.

All this will be done in a historical context, with an emphasis in the narrative on a few of the central problems of African history. These include the creation of African states, with emphasis on the role of religion (both traditional African religion and Islam) in the state; indigenous and alien slavery and the slave trade; the great social and political movements which occurred in the period immediately before European conquest.

LECTURES

Lectures twice weekly, supplemented by discussion meetings.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS and EXAMINATIONS

There will be several options. (a) Six week exam, term paper, final examination. (b) The student can write his own syllabus on the history of a period for use at any level in the educational system. The final exam would then be based on the contents of his own syllabus. (c) Six weeks, twelve weeks, and final exam.

GRADING SYSTEM

Varies with the option

REQUIRED READINGS

See Attached

The weekly reading load is not heavy, but students will be expected to keep up with the readings, and to read carefully those readings which, while they are brief, are rich in content.

REQUIRED READING:

Biebuyck and Mateene, The Mwindo Epic (U. of California paperback)

Hilda Kuper, A Witch in My Heart (Paperback) (Oxford UP)

Do not purchase until you have been to class

Mofolo, Chaka the Zulu (Oxford) Must be paperback ed.

B. Davidson, A History of West Africa (Anchor)

Niane, Sundiata: an Epic of Old Mali (Humanities) Paperback ed.

Christopher, The Islamic Tradition (Harper and Row - paperback)

Uchendu, The Igbo of Southeast Nigeria (Holt, Rinehart, and Winston)

BOBBS MERRILL REPRINTS

R. Horton, African Traditional Thought and Western Science, BC-143

Walter Rodney, African Slavery and other forms of social Oppression, BC-246

M. Waldman, The Fulani Jihad, BC-307

J. Fage, Slavery and the Slave Trade, BC-75

P. Curtin, Epidemiology and the Slave Trade, BC-60