

OBERLIN COLLEGE
AFRICANA STUDIES/HISTORY 125
MODERN AFRICAN HISTORY (1870-Present)
FALL 2013

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Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 11: am- 1pm, also by appt

Course Description

This segment of African history is designed to expose students to specific episodes in Africa's political, social, and economic history from the late nineteenth into the twenty-first century. This course examines the emergence of modern Africa and the challenges of building viable nation states. The period from 1960, when most African countries gained their independence to the present, has been marked by political and economic crisis indicative of young emerging nation-states. Using an interdisciplinary approach and a variety of teaching materials, we will explore significant episodes and events in African history, including an examination of European colonialism and African liberation struggles. Our discussion will be guided by the following theme: "Africa, the struggle of a continent for political identity and economic stability." Based on this theme, we will analyze European colonialism and the subsequent emergence of Modern Africa, and then proceed to assess the historical contexts of Africa's putative economic stagnation and political crisis. While recognizing the challenges facing the continent, we cannot neglect the continent's success stories. We will therefore pay close attention to areas where the continent has made and is still making significant progress.

Course Objectives: History courses help to develop students' knowledge of how past events influence today's society and help them understand how humans view themselves. This course will help students:

- Acquire a perspective on history and an understanding of the factors that shape human activity.
- Students will develop a perspective of Africa beyond their personal locations in order to understand other people, places and environments.
- Students will understand Africa's interconnectivity with the rest of the world
- Students will understand the historical development of power, authority, and governance in modern Africa as they relate to the functions of governmental institutions, the exercise of power, and individual rights.
- Students will develop and refine skills such as: synthesizing and analyzing logically, reading carefully, and using evidence judiciously and convincingly.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Alpers, Edward. A. et. al. 2010. *Africa and the West: A Documentary History*. (2nd edition, vol. 2). ISBN: 978-0-19-537313-4

Boahen, Adu. A. 1987. *African Perspectives on Colonialism*. ISBN: 0-8018-3456-2

Gilbert, Erik and Reynolds, Jonathan. 2011. *Africa in World History: From Prehistory to the Present* (3rd edition). ISBN: 978-0-205-05399-5

*Course packet will be placed on blackboard

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class attendance (10%)

The instructor realizes that some students are obliged to miss class occasionally as a result of religious observance, health problems, and personal emergencies. However, prompt and regular class attendance is required and expected. Attendance will be taken daily at the beginning of class. Students are responsible for any work missed during class. **ALSO, FOUR UNEXCUSED ABSENCES WILL RESULT IN AN F FOR ATTENDANCE.** If regular attendance is going to be a problem for you, I suggest you see me immediately or take the course at another time.

Class participation (10%)

Lively and informed class participation is required and expected; this means that you must have read the assigned readings before class. You should ask questions and debate the issues in a respectful way. It goes without saying that **ALL** students in this class have the right to speak and share their opinions in a safe and friendly environment. As such, you will debate the issues, not each other. Therefore, personal attacks and rude comments are strictly prohibited throughout the semester and will negatively impact your final grade. Also, reticence and or failure to demonstrate that you have done the readings will result in a lower final grade even if higher grades had been obtained on other assignments (eg. A to A-). If you are a person who finds it difficult to talk in class, please come see me early in the semester.

Map Quiz (5%)

Since we will be studying various locales in Africa, it is imperative that we are familiar with their geographical locations. A complete map of Africa is located in Gilbert and Reynolds, interactive maps of Africa are also available online. The quiz will be taken on the first class day of week three (**Sept. 17**).

Response Papers 10%

Throughout the semester, students will be required to write a one page response to specific questions listed on the syllabus on the topic for that day. Students are to provide a total

of five responses, and each is due at the beginning of the class for which they have written a response to. Also, students are free to create their own questions for up to two of the responses (**I strongly encourage you all to do so**).

Individual Country Research Project (20%)

Since it is impossible to provide an in-depth analysis of all fifty-four African countries within a semester, students will have the opportunity to choose and conduct research on a nation not extensively covered in the course. Each student will submit a country study of no less than **five pages**, but no more than **seven** (doubled spaced), focusing on one of several themes: economics, politics, religion(s), social issues, struggle for independence, health, etc. Students are also welcome to choose their own theme if they are not interested in any of the topics listed above. During weeks eleven and twelve, each of you will have (10 minutes) to present your findings to the class and will turn in your paper. You are required to use at least two primary sources and as many secondary sources as you would like, but no **Wikipedia!** By the end of week four, all students will have selected a country and turned in an outline of their projects. Each research paper should include a bibliography. More information about the project will be discussed in class.

Mid-Term Exam 20%

The mid-term exam for this course will be take home. Students will be given a list of several essay questions from which they are to select (**two questions**) and write detailed response to. All essays should have a one-inch margin, be typed, and doubled-spaced. The total number of pages for both essays should be between 5-7pgs, but should not exceed 7. More information about the exam will be provided to the class by the start of week six.

Final Exam 25%

The final exam will be comprehensive and will consist of one long essay and five identification questions. Students will be given a number of questions in advance (study guide) from which the exam questions will be selected.

My Commitment to Your Success

I am committed to helping you succeed in this course. I will endeavor to accommodate your needs, but not in ways that will give you undue advantage over your colleagues. I therefore strongly encourage you to kindly bring to my attention any difficulties you may encounter with the readings or lectures and to consult me during office hours on issues requiring personal attention. Also, I will check my email daily and will response to you ASAP. It is my desire to make this course interesting and productive for you, and to help you obtain an excellent grade.

Late Assignments

In fairness to all students, a paper that is submitted late will receive one letter lower grade for each day of tardiness (e.g. from A to B). Any assignment submitted after three days of the

due date without the instructor's permission will receive an automatic "F" for the assignment. Extension will be granted for verifiable circumstances.

Academic Misconduct

The term academic misconduct includes all forms of misconduct wherever committed, including but not limited to cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations and research papers. Plagiarism is the representation of another's works or ideas as one's own. It is one of the most serious offenses that can be committed in an academic community. Always cite your sources (I will be happy to assist you with this). The Oberlin Honor Code applies to all assignments in this course, and can be found through Blackboard and should be placed on all assignments, tests and quizzes. In order to preserve the integrity of Oberlin College as an excellent institution of higher learning, and to maintain your own integrity, **DO NOT PLAGIARIZE!**

Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students who wish an accommodation for disability for health reasons are responsible for requesting accommodation from the instructor. This self-identification is the only way to assure that the instructor can provide the appropriate accommodation. Anyone who feels the need for an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. At the appointment we can discuss the course format, anticipate your needs, and explore potential accommodations. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to **Ms. Jane Boomer**, director for services for students with disabilities. Her phone number is **58464** and her office is located in **Peters G-38A**.

COURSE SCHEDULE

*Instructor reserves the right to modify the schedule if necessary, but students will be informed of such revision in advance.

Unit: 1 1870-1945

Week One: Setting the Stage: Prelude to Modern Africa/ What is Modern Africa?

Sept 3: Introduction, Course overview and general housekeeping

Sept 5: **Read:** Boahen, Chapter 1, Gilbert & Reynolds, Chapter 10

Week Two: From Legitimate Commerce to the Partition of Africa: Conquest and Resistance

Sept 10: **Read:** Boahen Chapter, 2 "Slaves into Soldiers," and Gilbert & Reynolds, Chapter 14
Question: What primarily facilitated the conquest of Africa?

Sept 12: Religion as mode of resistance? **Read** “Maji, Maji Rebellion (**handout**).” David Robertson “Sidiyya Baba: Co-architect of Colonial Mauritania.” “Revolutionary Mahdism and Resistance to colonial rule in the Sokoto Caliphate”
Question: What role did religion/s played in the struggle against the imposition of colonial rule?

Week Three: Colonial rule and its implications for Africans

Sept 17: **Map Quiz, Read:** Boahen, chapter 3, Worger, et. al. Pages 1-12, 22-26, Gilbert and Reynolds pages 315-330.

Sept 19: **Read:** Gilbert and Reynolds Chapter 15, also pages, 331-338, Worger, et. al, pages 13 to the top of 22.

Week Four: Colonial Economy

Sept 24: Documentary on the Belgian Congo- **White King, Red Rubber, Black Death!**

Sept 26: Complete documentary and discuss film.

Unit II 1945- 1960

Week Five: Development of African Nationalism: Pan Africanism and Liberation Struggles

Oct 1: **Read:** Gilbert and Reynolds, chapter 18, Worger, et. al, pages 41-73.
Question: How would you define African nationalism?

Oct 3: Film: **Mau Mau**

Week Six: Decolonization Struggles across the Continent: Violent vs. Nonviolent

Oct 8: Complete film, **read:** Worger, et. al, pages 107- top of 134.

Oct 10: **Read:** James Matthews, “World War 1 and the Rise of African Nationalism: Nigerian Veterans as Catalyst of Change,” Adrienne Israel, “Ex-Servicemen at the Crossroads: Protest and Politics in Post-War Ghana” (**Blackboard**).

Unit III 1960- 1990

Week Seven: Political & Economic Struggles of New Africa: Cold War and The World Bank

Oct 15: **Read:** Worger, et. al, pages 134-143, chapter 5.

Question: What was the significance of Africa during the Cold War to both the capitalist and communist bloc?

Oct 17: **Film:** Patrice Lumumba

Week Eight: Oct 22& 24: **Fall Recess-** Have a safe break!

Week Nine: Political and Economic Struggles Continue

Oct 29: **Read:** Worger, et. al, chapter 7, J. Barry Riddell “Things Fall Apart Again: Structural Adjustment Programs in Sub-Saharan Africa.”

Question: Who is to be blamed for Africa’s economic crisis?

Unit IV 1990-2000s

Oct 31: **Social Conflicts and Civil wars in Africa**

Read: Gilbert and Reynolds, chapter 19, Worger, et. al, chapter 8

Week Ten: Social conflicts continue

Nov 5: **Read:** Worger, et. al, chapter 6, Boahen, chapter 4

Nov 7: **Read:** Ousman Kobo, “We are Citizens Too,” and “Youth and the Liberian Civil War”

Question: Discuss one important issue affecting Liberian Youth post-civil war.

Week Eleven: Nov 12& Nov 14: **Class Presentations**

Week Twelve: Corruption and African States

Nov 19: Class Presentations end

Nov 21: “Mugabe’s Zimbabwe,” Corruption in Africa, Chapters will be handed out.

Week Thirteen

Nov 26: Complete lecture and discussion on corruption

Nov 28: **Happy Thanksgiving**

Week Fourteen: China and the United States: New Allies or Neo-Colonialism?

Dec 3: Africa-US Relations: AFRICOM- readings will be given out

Dec 5: Africa China’s Relations: Who benefits? Readings will be hand out

Week Fifteen

Dec 10: begin review for final

Dec 12: Last day of class, end review