

## HISTORY/INTERNATIONAL STUDIES 280: HISTORY OF AFRICA(5CR)

INSTRUCTOR: E. HAINES

PRESCRIBED TEXTS: K. Shillington, History of Africa  
(Revised edition)

M. Chamberlain, The Scramble for Africa [The assigned readings for each part of the syllabus are given in the syllabus in the section under "Course Outline."]

D. T. Niane, [Sundiata](#): An Epic of Old Mali (Revised edition - 2006)

### COURSE CONTENT AND OBJECTIVES:

History 280 is a survey course but one which also offers a more specialized area study. The course gives special emphasis to the development of African history from the classical age to the present. Emphasis is given to the rise and fall of ancient African kingdoms and empires; the relationship of Africa to the wider world from classical times to the 20th century and Africa's place in international affairs. The course aims to give students an understanding of the historical experiences of African peoples from the earliest times; to identify the variety of cultures which have helped to shape the history of the continent; to explain Africa's role in world history from the earliest civilizations through to the present, including such topics as the dynamics of the slave trade and the significance of Africa in international affairs in modern times. Students will also gain insights into the patterns of imperialism and colonialism; the emergence of African nationalism and the crisis areas of contemporary Africa. In general the course seeks to give students the opportunity to understand the historical experiences of a different continent with different cultures. It is designed to broaden the insights of students with

interests in a wide range of courses and to help students to better understand the complex world in which they live. One of the major objectives (through reading and writing assignments) is to develop critical thinking skills. History (from the Greek) means “learning through inquiry” and a key objective is to promote inquiry and debate. Students will demonstrate a capacity to make inferences, handle complexity of cause and consequence; understand divergent interpretations and the nature of historical evidence and the debates to which it gives rise in relation to the history of Africa. These will be specific elements of assessment in this class. The discipline is more than knowing lists of facts and dates (though these are important) and students will need to demonstrate that they have developed thinking/analytical skills by the end of this course.

#### TEACHING METHODS:

This course is a distance-learning course involving online lecture material, prescribed readings from text and documentary sources and provides an opportunity for online discussions organized around the major themes. All students will be encouraged to raise questions at any time based upon their work with the texts and their appreciation of online discussion. This course requires each student to undertake independent work. Methods for this course resemble those, which would be applied in the study of a foreign language. The study of history is cumulative. Since issues and events are presented as relational, it is fundamental to the success of a student to ensure that the reading assignments and other work will be accomplished in a timely fashion so that a current accumulation of relevant data as method of analysis and argument are introduced. The study of history at this level requires college literacy and hence the ability to communicate ideas and facts clearly and accurately. Students are advised to make careful notes leaving space for the incorporation of supplementary materials from the text- books or for the creation of independent questions

about the topics under review. All questions concerning discussion or text assignments are welcome at any time. It is important for students to gain a reasonable geographical sense of places under discussion. Also, it is crucial that each student develop a chronology of events that will serve as a scaffold upon which to build arguments and interpretations of data. The course is divided into approximately six thematic units. (See content outline at the end of the syllabus.) Students are entirely responsible for reading and knowing the relevant material in the prescribed texts as well as any other assigned material. Access to a good atlas and dictionary is recommended when reading for this course. Check geographical locations and note the meanings of technical or difficult terms. It will be useful to compile a separate glossary or vocabulary of commonly encountered words with which you are unfamiliar.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

### (1) EXAMINATIONS:

There will be TWO (2) formal examinations, a midterm and a final. . Examinations consist of a set of multiple-choice questions and short essay/paragraphs. There will be a short tutorial/guide for the midterm and final examinations posted on the homepage.

### (2) QUIZZES:

In addition there will be FOUR (4) timed quizzes. Each quiz comprises a timed multiple-choice section consisting of approximately 25 questions. The material for the quizzes will be drawn from the prescribed readings and documents, online lecture comments and discussions.. Each quiz is posted on the homepage under the “icon” labeled “quizzes.” An overview tutorial will be posted on the course homepage for each of the quizzes. Quizzes cumulatively will represent 20% of the final grade. The quizzes may be completed at any time, but all quizzes must be completed

by the final day of the quarter. Once accessed, each quiz has a limited time for completion.

### (3) DISCUSSIONS:

There will be a series of discussion topics posted every 8 days or so (unless otherwise announced.) These topics will be based on texts and posted reading materials. Students are required make an initial discussion posting by the end of the first week of the discussion posted for that week. Discussions are graded according to the degree of focus on the analysis problem and the quality of additional commentary offered in response to postings made by other class members. Each follow-up posting must add some new insights in response to other students' postings or significantly develop your thinking about the issues already raised. (Please read the document on the homepage on the requirements for the discussion topics.) See the course calendar for the final posting date for each of the discussion topics. Participation and completion of the discussions will be worth 30% of the final grade. The lowest discussion score will be discarded before the average is calculated.

### GRADING:

Each examination will be worth 100 points. Quizzes will generally each count 50 calculated as a percentage. Discussions topics are worth 100 points each. All results will be reduced to an overall average to decide the final grade. The midterm and final examinations will count 20% and 30% respectively each towards the final grade. Quizzes make up 20% of the grade. The discussions will be worth the remaining 30% of the final grade. It is important to remember that at one level history is the narrative of things done, and so students are expected to know an accurate body of facts about the past. However the study of history also involves thinking about the changes that have taken place across

historic time, why and how these changes came about. Superior grades will be earned by students who: (1) demonstrate an accurate knowledge of the historical facts ;(2) organize their material clearly with good supporting evidence; (3) make critical assessments or analyses; (4) are able to apply their knowledge to critical thinking-problems. There are no courtesy grades for this class. Grading is designed to maintain the highest college level standards and to measure as accurately as possible the individual student level of performance against this standard. In order to achieve a passing grade students must demonstrate that they have met the requirements of the course and achieved competency in the course objectives. It is imperative that students make use of consultation with the instructor. It is pointless to make known difficulties at the last moment when the situation may be beyond salvage. Students have the responsibility of seeking assistance in a timely manner.

## GRADES:

Are achieved on a straightforward percentage basis. There is no curve grading. Please note that A grades are only awarded if students' work has attained the highest levels of excellence as outlined in the requirements above.

The grading scheme is as follows:

A = 90-100% A- = 85-89% B+ = 80-84% B = 75-79% B- = 70-74% C+ = 65-69% C = 60-64% C- = 55-59% D = 50-54% F = Below 50%

Students who find that they need to withdraw from the course need to make a responsible decision by the final date for withdrawal (in person). Students who remain on the roster after that date will be assigned a final grade.

## GENERAL:

I encourage student consultation at every opportunity. My office number is B 100B. Office phone is 425- 564-2383. In addition to my scheduled office- hours students may make appointments to see me at other times. PLEASE MAKE ALL e-MAIL COMMUNICATION WITH ME VIA VISTA MAIL.

## PROVISIONAL COURSE OUTLINE:

### WEEK ONE:

1. INTRODUCTION: The historiography of Africa; the geography and peoples of the continent. [Note primarily this is section is to provide a background. You do not need to give this section the same detailed attention as the rest of the reading.] The emergence of the human community in Africa; the transition to the Neolithic era and the earliest civilizations of the Nile Valley and the Sudan. Shillington (text) Chapters 1, 2, 3. See also Chamberlain (text), pp.1-16.

2. Africa and the Mediterranean world of the “Classical” age (c.1000 BCE – c.750 AD/CE). Africa and its relationship to Phoenician, Greek, Roman and Arab/Islamic worlds. Shillington (text) Chapter 3, Chapter 5.

3. ‘Caravans to Timbuktu’ (C.500 –c.1500AD/CE). The development of trans- Saharan trade and the rise of West African Kingdoms and Empires; the East African “Swahili” city-states. Shillington (text) Chapters 6,7,9. See also Niane (text) [Sundiata](#).

[The above readings constitutes the material required for QUIZ # 1]

## WEEK TWO:

4, Kings, Commoners and Slaves (c.1500 –c.1870 AD/CE) The iron age communities of C. and S, Africa; the forest states of West Africa. Shillington (text) Chapter, 13.

5. The beginnings of European expansion – Portuguese, Dutch, British and the rise of the Atlantic slave trade and its impact. Shillington (text) Chapters 12, 14, pp.196-200, Chapter 16, pp.230-239, Chapter 17,pp. 249-255.

[The above reading constitutes the material required for QUIZ # 2]

## WEEK THREE:

6. South Africa to the 19th C: Dutch and British intervention and settlement. Bantu, Boer and British conflicts. The problem of the Mfecane/Difiqane. The mineral revolution of the 19thC Shillington (text) Chapters 15, 18.

## WEEK FOUR:

Midterm Examination.

## WEEK FIVE:

7. The Scramble for Africa (c. 1870 – 1950), The partition of Africa. The establishment of the colonial systems. Chamberlain, The Scramble for Africa (text) – select ONE regional area presented in the text as your focus of reading and study. Shillington (text) Chapters 20, 21, 22.

8. Colonial Wars and the international conflicts such as the World Wars. Shillington (text) Chapters 23, 24, 25.

[The above reading constitutes the material required for QUIZ # 3]

**WEEK SIX:**

9. The rise of African nationalism (c.1870-c.1950). The Islamic North; West and East Africa. The apartheid. State in S. Africa. Shillington (text) Chapters 24, pp.355-363. Chapters 26, 27.

[The above reading constitutes the material required for QUIZ # 4]

10. Select problems in the history of contemporary Africa . Shillington (text) Chapters 28, 29, 30.

**WEEK SEVEN:**

Final Examinations (Summer Quarter Ends)