Course Description:
A survey of Africa’s history before 1850, emphasizing the enormous variety among African societies and exploring the diverse characteristics of sub-regions within the continent. Topics include African cultural features, African states and empires, trade and material culture, Islamic civilization, the trans-Atlantic slave trade and abolition.

Goals:
Students should come away from this course with a broad understanding of the early history of African societies. We will be able to distinguish the unique developments that took place in various sub-regions of the continent, including Southern Africa, East Africa, West-central Africa, West Africa, North Africa, the Middle Nile Basin (modern-day Sudan), and the Horn of Africa. We will also be able to explain long-term historical processes that connected these regions to one another. In the final section of the course, we will find ways of explaining why the trans-Atlantic slave trade infiltrated African economies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and how African societies responded to it.

Course Requirements:
1) Class Participation: Students are expected to do the assigned reading before coming to class, participate in discussions of all assigned readings and complete all assignments. (20% of grade)
2) Quizzes (20% of grade)
3) Paper (10% of grade)
4) Midterm Exam (20% of grade)
5) Final Exam (30%)
6) Approximate time spent outside of class doing the reading and preparing for class each week: four to five hours.
Books to Buy:

1. *Africa in Global History with Sources* (2018), by Robert Harms


NOTE: Additional reading assignments will be available on Canvas and noted with the following on the syllabus: [Canvas]

Grading Scale:  
A=100-94; A-=93-90; B+=89-87; B=86-84; B-=83-80; C+=79-77; C=76-74; C-=73-70; D+=69-67; D=66-64; D-=63-60; F=59-0

COURSE OUTLINE

Note: Please bring your syllabus and copies of the assigned reading to class every day.

**Week 1** (September 4): Introduction to the Course  
Take-home map quiz handed out (Due Wednesday, September 11!)

**Week 2** (September 9 & 11): Out of Africa  
Readings:  
1) *Africa in Global History (AGH)*, Ch. 1  
2) “How to Write About Africa,” by Binyavanga Wainaina [Canvas]  
In-Class Film—“Africa’s Great Civilizations,” Part 1, “Origins” (to 22:00)  
Quiz Monday  
Take-home map quiz due Wednesday

**Part I: Africa in the Old World, to 1500 CE**

**Week 3** (September 16 & 18): African Connections in the “Old World”  
Readings:  
1) *AGH*, pp. 41-43  
2) “Northern Africa in a Wider World,” by Philip Curtin [Canvas]  
Quiz Monday  
Map quiz Wednesday, September 18
Week 4 (Sept. 23 & 25): Food Revolutions & Frontier Societies, 8000 BCE-1000 CE
Readings:
   1) AGH, Ch. 2
In-Class Film—“Africa’s Great Civilizations,” Part 1, “Origins” (40:30-53:00)
In-Class Film—“Smelting Iron in Africa, a Demonstration” YouTube
Quiz Monday

Week 5 (Sept. 30 & Oct. 2): Imperial Power and Religious Revolutions
1) AGH, Ch. 3
Quiz Monday

Week 6 (October 7 & 9): Cities of Gold
Readings:
   1) AGH, Ch. 4
   2) Sundiata, Introduction, Background Info, Note on Oral Tradition (pp. vii-xvi)
   3) “This Man Embodies a Thousand Years of West African Oral History” [Canvas]
Paper assignment handed out (Due Monday, October 21!)
Quiz Monday
In-Class Film—“Africa’s Great Civilizations,” Part 4, “Cities” (to 21:30)

Week 7 (October 14 & 16): The Epic of Sundiata
Readings:
   1) For Monday: Sundiata, Preface (p. xxiii-xxiv) and pp. 1-40
   2) For Wednesday: Sundiata, pp. 41-end
Quiz Monday
In-Class Film—“Africa’s Great Civilizations,” Part 3, “Empires of Gold” (31:20-41:23)

Week 8 (October 21 & 23): Review & Mid-Term Exam
** Paper due Monday
Monday: Review Session
Wednesday: In-Class Exam
Part II: Africa in the Age of Global War Capitalism, 1400-1800

Week 9 (October 28 & 30): Global War Capitalism & Atlantic Africa
Readings:
1) *AGH*, pp. 162-67
2) *AGH*, pp. 168-74 (first part of of Ch. 5)
3) "How we Think about the Term 'Enslaved' Matters," by Nell Irvin Painter [Canvas]

Quiz Monday
In-Class Film—“Africa’s Great Civilizations,” Part 5, “Atlantic Age” (to 20:11)

Week 10 (November 4 & 6): Atlantic Africa During the Slave Trade
Readings:
1) *AGH*, pp. 174-207
2) “Ending the Slavery Blame Game,” by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. [Canvas]

Quiz *Wednesday*
In-Class Film—“The African Trade” (Monday)

Week 11 (November 11 & 13): Expansionist States and Decentralized Power
Readings:
1) *AGH*, Ch. 6
2) “Expansion of the Fante,” by James Sanders [Canvas]

Quiz Monday
In-Class Film—“Africa’s Great Civilizations,” Part 5, “Atlantic Age” (28:51-34:53)

Week 12 (November 18 & 20): Indian Ocean and Mediterranean Shores 1500-1800
Readings:
1) *AGH*, Ch. 7

Quiz Monday
In-Class Film—“Africa’s Great Civilizations,” Part 4, “Cities,” (34:43-38:21)

Part III: Africa in the Age of the Great Divergence, 1800-1870

Week 13 (November 25): The Great Divergence
Readings:
1) *AGH*, pp. 282-86
2) “Ending the Slave Trade: A Caribbean and Atlantic Context,” by Philip D. Morgan [Canvas]
**Quiz Monday**
In-Class Film—“Africa’s Great Civilizations,” Part 6, “Commerce & Clash” (to 2:09 and 28:30-35:45)
***Thanksgiving Break Nov 27 – No classes

**Week 14** (December 2 & 4): Economic and Political Upheavals in the 19th Century
Readings:
1) *AGH*, Ch. 8

**Quiz Monday**
In-Class Film—“Africa’s Great Civilizations,” Part 6, “Commerce & Clash” (11:00-20:15)

**Week 15** (December 9 & 11): Catch Up and Review

**Final Exam is Friday, December 20, 7:30-9:30 am**

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**Additional Information and Policies**

**University Policies:** Please refer to the following link for specific information about university policies: [http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf)

**Office Hours:** My office hours are a time when students can meet with me to discuss any matter related to the class. I especially encourage students who may find it difficult to participate regularly in class discussions to drop by to discuss any matter related to the course. In addition to my office hours, I will be available by appointment to speak to students. You can also e-mail me. If you notice any problem or difficulty in the class, please see me during office hours as soon as possible.

**Attendance Policy:** Regular and prompt attendance is essential for learning in this class because we will use class time to clarify difficult concepts in the reading and to formulate historical analyses that will be assessed on exams. More than two absences will result in the reduction of your final grade.

**Quizzes:** Most Mondays we will begin class with a quiz that will assess students’ knowledge of the material in the reading assignment for the week. Each quiz will be based on the list of **key terms at the end of the chapter** assigned for that week, unless
otherwise noted in class. Quizzes count for 20% of your final grade. If you miss a quiz, you will receive a score of zero unless you are representing the university in a special academic or sporting event that conflicts with a scheduled quiz AND have contacted the professor BEFORE THE QUIZ DATE. All make-up quizzes will take place during the last week of class.

**Late Work and Missed Exams:** Late work will not be accepted. If you miss an exam or quiz, you will receive a score of zero. A student representing the university in a special academic or sporting event that conflicts with a scheduled quiz/exam may schedule a make-up quiz or exam, IF he/she contacts the professor BEFORE THE QUIZ/EXAM DATE. All make-up exams will take place during the last week of class.

**Policy on classroom recording:** To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student’s own private use.

**Policy on Electronic devices in the Classroom:** No laptop computers permitted without permission from the instructor. Please silence cell phones and other messaging devices.

**Academic Misconduct:** Academic misconduct is an act in which a student seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation, uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise, forges or falsifies academic documents or records, intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others, engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student’s academic performance, or assists other students in any of these acts. Prohibited conduct includes cheating on an examination; collaborating with others in work to be presented, contrary to the stated rules of the course; submitting a paper or assignment as one’s own work when a part or all of the paper or assignment is the work of another; submitting a paper or assignment that contains ideas or research of others without appropriately identifying the sources of those ideas; stealing examinations or course materials; submitting, if contrary to the rules of a course, work previously presented in another course; tampering with the laboratory experiment or computer program of another student; knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above, including assistance in an arrangement whereby any work, classroom performance, examination or other activity is submitted or performed by a person other than the student under whose name the work is submitted or performed. Policies for addressing students cheating on exams or plagiarism can be found at the following: http://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/facultystaff/policies/academic-misconduct/

**Disability Statement:** If you will need accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of this course, please contact me as soon as possible. Verification of disability, class standards, the policy on the use of alternate materials and test accommodations can be found at the following: http://uwm.edu/arc/