LEHMAN COLLEGE OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

**Department of Africana Studies**

**AAS 232.K301 -- African Civilizations** Professor Bertrade Banoum

Spring 2019 Office Hrs: M.3:30-4:30 pm

M/W. 2:00-3:15 pm And by Appointment-221CA

Carman Hall-Room 225 e-mail: [bertrade@lehman.cuny.edu](mailto:bertrade@lehman.cuny.edu) Tel.718-960-8669/1160/8283

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Exploration of the development of African civilizations from the origin of humankind to the present day. Their contributions to the development of the continent and the major world civilizations.

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|  | **COURSE GOALS** |

The course satisfies the following skills: critical thinking, oral expression, writing skills, library/data base/information literacy.

**Students are expected to:**

- Recognize and critique common misrepresentations of Africa, Africans and their cultures.

- Identify (Pan-African) Movements that have contributed to an understanding of Africa.

- Recognize Africa as a continent (not a country!), Egypt as part of Africa, and Africa as part of the World (Geographical and Historical Background).

- Learn the Physical & Cultural Evolution of Humankind in Africa, the diversity and complexity of Africa (peoples, land, vegetation, cultures, arts, oral traditions, languages, religions, political systems, scientific and technological developments, etc.)

- Learn the development of diverse civilizations across the continent, as well as commonalities and differences among them.

- Learn various ways in which African peoples have interacted with one another and beyond.

- Learn key terms and concepts, historical and geographical sites, historical events and figures.

- Learn the contributions of African women to the development and history of civilization.

- Identify global historical processes that have had a lasting impact on African civilizations.

- Gain a cultural and historical background to think critically and comparatively about African civilizations/cultures/societies/peoples.

- Develop an ability to read reflectively, analyze and synthesize scholarly material.

- Develop an ability to write a well focused essay organized around a sustained argument.

- Develop an ability to participate actively in class discussions, making informed arguments and treating peers’ contributions both critically and respectfully.

**COURSE FORMAT**

Lectures, readings, viewings, on-line databases, and class discussions -- drawing on historical, anthropological, sociological, linguistic, and literary sources, as well as oral traditions -- will be used to elicit new concepts and gain a better understanding of African civilizations.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Regular class attendance is mandatory. More than four unexcused absences will adversely affect your grade. You are expected to come to class prepared, i.e. having done all assigned readings and writings in advance, to take an active part in class discussions on the issues raised.

**COURSE ASSESSMENT**

- **Blackboard Discussion Forum** interactiveresponsesto every course unit: 2-3-paragraphposts

- **Team Work Project** **Presentation** on the case study: Jomo Kenyatta’s *Facing Mt Kenya: …Gikuyu*

**- Written Response Papers** to 2 designatedcourse readings and viewings – 1-**2 pages**.

- **Midterm Examination** and **Final Examination** cover course core concepts and new terms. Both in class tests consist of fill-in-the-blank exercise and essay questions. Exam essays are **2-3 pages**.

**AAS 232-AFRICAN CIVILIZATION IS A “ZERO TEXTBOOK COST” COURSE**

No textbook is required for this class. All course materials are Open Educational Resources (OER) and will be posted on our course Blackboard site for your perusal.

**RECOMMENDED READINGS:**

Cheikh Anta Diop, *African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality*? Ali Mazrui, *The Africans*.

Ivan Van Sertima, *Blacks in Science*; *They Came Before Columbus*; *Black Women in Antiquity*.

Claudia Zaslavky, *Africa Counts*. Tariq Sawandi, *African Medicine: A Complete Guide to Yoruba Healing*.

Henry Louis Gates, *Wonders of the African World*. Gus Casely-Hayford, *Lost Kingdoms of Africa*.

John G. Jackson, *Introduction to African Civilizations*. P. Bohannan & P. Curtin, *Africa and the Africans*.

Curtis Keim, *Mistaking Africa.* Christopher Ehret. *The Civilizations of Africa: A History to 1800*.

Schwarz-Bart, *In Praise of Black Women vol.1:* *Ancient African Queens & vol. 3: Modern African Women.*

**SAMPLE WEBSITES**

[www.journalofafricancivilizations.com](http://www.journalofafricancivilizations.com) [www.ancient-egypt.org](http://www.ancient-egypt.org)

[www.guide2womenleaders.com](http://www.guide2womenleaders.com) [www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org)

[www.pbs.org/wonders/fr](http://www.pbs.org/wonders/fr) [www.bu.edu/africa/outreach](http://www.bu.edu/africa/outreach)

[www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa) [www.mnh.si.edu/africanvoices](http://www.mnh.si.edu/africanvoices)

[www.schomburgcenter.org](http://www.schomburgcenter.org) <http://allAfrica.com>

<http://maps.nationalgeographic.com/maps/atlas/africa-geophysical.html> htpp://nmaahc.si.edu

**GRADING**

The following is a general guide to determining your final grade:

Attendance & Participation Evaluation \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 20%

Class Presentation \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_20%

Midterm Examination \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 30%

Final Examination \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 30%

A = 92+ A- = 90-91 B+ = 86-89 B = 82-85 B- = 80-81 C+ =76-79

C = 72-75 C- =70-71 D+ = 66-69 D = 62-65 D- = 60-61 F = 0-59

**COURSE OUTLINE --** I reserve the right to adjust the course outline if the need arises.

**Jan. 28-30 Introducing the Course. Correcting Terms, Myths and Stereotypes.**

Readings: Binyavanga Wainana: “How to Write About Africa.”

Videos: Tony Guida’s NY: Pamela Newkirk: *Spectacle: The …Life of Ota Benga*

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: *The Danger of a Single Story*.

The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, NYPL

The Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture

Brooklyn Museum, MET, MOMA, Museum of African Art, Studio Museum

**Feb. 04-06** **Africa and the Origin of Humankind.**

Readings: *Smithsonian*: “How Africa Became the Origin of Humankind?”

“Where Is the Birthplace of Humankind: South or East Africa?”

Video: *National Geographic* “Short Introduction to Human Evolution”

**Feb. 11-20 Nile Valley Civilizations:** Nubia, Kush, Aksum, Kemet/KMT/Ancient Egypt

Readings: *Boundless LibreTexts*: Ch. 4, 1-6; Ch.16, 2 & 5. Jackson Ch.3

Videos: Gus Casely-Hayford’s documentary film*: Lost Kingdoms of Africa: Nubia/Ethiopia*.

Henry Louis Gates’ documentary film: *Wonders of the African World I*

**Feb. 18 PRESIDENTS DAY. COLLEGE CLOSED. NO CLASSES.**

**Feb. 25-27 Niger River Civilizations:** Ghana, Mali, Songhai, Kanem Bornu, Hausa States, Benin

Readings: *Boundless LibreTexts:*Ch.16, 4*. J. Ch. 5; The MET, “*The Birth of Islam & Trade”

Videos*: The Legend of* *Timbuktu*. Casely-Hayford’s *Lost Kingdoms of Africa*: West Africa.

Henry Louis Gates’ *Africa’s Great Civilizations* I

**March 04-06 Bantu Expansion: Swahili Civilizations:** Lamu, Mombasa, Mogadishu, Kilwa

**Central & Southern Civilizations**: Great Zimbabwe, Kongo, Shona, Xhosa, Zulu

Readings: *Boundless LibreTexts,* Ch.16, 1 & 6; Jackson Ch. 8

Video: *Africa’s Great Civilizations 9k2: The Great Zimbabwe*. *Lost Kingdoms of Africa 3/4*

**March 11-13** **Africa and the Sciences**

Reading: Gloria Emeagwali, "The History of Science in Non-Western Traditions: Africa

Video: Ivan Van Sertima*, Afrikan Sciences. The Ishango Bone. Iboga to Ibogaine.*

Saki Mafundikwa, *Afrikan Alphabets.* Ron Eglash*, African Fractals.*

**March 18-20 MIDTERM EXAMINATION**

**March 25-4/8 Students’ Presentations on Gikuyu Case Study**: **Jomo Kenyatta’s *Facing Mt. Kenya***.

**April 10-17 African Women in the History and Development of Civilization**

Readings: Dinknesh – A Peek into the history of humankind. Smithsonian

Women Leaders in African History, MET. Dahomey Women Warriors, Smithson

Sylviane Diouf, “Remembering Women of Slavery”

Video: The Legendary Yaa Asantewa and the War of the Golden Stool

*Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai*

**April 19-28 SPRING RECESS**

**Apr 29-May 8 Africa in World Civilization**

Readings: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, MET.

Colonization of Africa and African Resistance, Schomburg Center

Africa Today, The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

Videos: Alex Haley’s *Roots I*. Bimbia Slave Port, Cameroon

*Mandela the Man*. The African Burial Ground in New York.

**May 13** Review**. Last Day of Class Meetings.**

**May 22** **FINAL EXAMINATION** (Wednesday, May 22, at **1:30-3:30**)

**GROUND RULES**

**Accommodating Disabilities:** Lehman College is committed to providing access to all programs and curricula to all students. Students with disabilities who may need classroom accommodations are encouraged to register with the Office of Student Disability Services. **For more information, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services, Shuster Hall, Room 238, phone number, 718-960-8441.**

**The Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) and the Science Learning Center (SLC)**  are two of the tutoring centers on campus. The ACE provides appointment-based and drop-in tutoring in the humanities, social sciences, and writing, as well as general writing and academic skills workshops. The SLC provides drop-in tutoring for natural science courses. Formore information, **please visit their websites or call 718-960-8175 (ACE) or 718-960-7707 (SLC).**

**The Counseling Center** (Old Gym Bldg, Rm 114) creates inclusive spaces and fosters open dialogue with students, faculty and staff by providing Counseling, Consultation, Confidential Therapy, Coaching, and Psycho-Educational services. All students are treated with respect and are seen as individuals with unique strength.

**Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy:** Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to the mission of Lehman College and are binding upon all its members. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources and for respect of others’ academic endeavors. Included among the most rigorous sanctions for student academic misconduct is a lowered overall course grade, a failing grade in the course, disciplinary probation, and/or expulsion from the College. **For more information on the academic integrity policy, please refer to the relevant College website.**

**Attendance/Absence/Lateness:** If you are going to be absent due to an emergency, please email me to let me know but remember it is your responsibility to get the lesson notes and/or assignments from one of your classmates. It is imperative that you **get contact information for at least three (3) of your classmates** to ensure that you keep up to date with course material. Students who are consistently late tend to not do as well as students who arrive on time. So be punctual! **Excessive absence and/or lateness will affect your participation grade.**

**Assignments:** With the exception of examinations, your assignments must be typed double spaced in 12 point Times New Roman font, contain one-inch margins, and be free of spelling and grammatical errors. **Assignments are due at the start of class on their due date**.

**Blackboard** is an excellent course tool that we will be using primarily for announcements, assignments, documents, links, and discussion boards. To have access to Blackboard, you need to activate your Lehman College e-address immediately at the IT Center located in the plaza level of Carman Hall or call # 718 960 1111.

**Cell Phones et al:** Please turn your cell phones on **silent** before class starts. Everyone can hear your phone on vibrate! Please **do not answer your phone and do not text during class**. If you must use your phone because of an emergency, discreetly and politely walk out to the hall. **Excessive attention to your phone during class will affect your participation grade.**