



Department of History

HIST*3620: Modern Africa

Fall 2026

Credit Weight: 0.50

Pre-Requisites: 7.50 credits

1 Course Details

1.1 Course Description

The course will explore the crucial experiences of African societies from the late 19th century to the recent past. It will focus on African peoples' interactions with one another and with the expanding forces of global capitalism and European colonialism, as well as their struggles for political independence. It will also examine Africa's more recent post-colonial experiences, including the challenges of nation-building and state formation and the continuing struggle for economic development. Throughout, the course will emphasize African agency and the internal historical dynamics of the continent, even as African societies grappled with the global social, economic, political, and cultural currents that shaped their experiences during this period. A significant component of the course will involve experiential learning, providing students with opportunities to engage actively with the historical past through simulations, in-class analysis of primary sources, and other hands-on activities.

1.2 Delivery Method

Face-to-face, classroom.

1.3 Timetable



2 Instructional Support

2.1 Instructional Support Team

Instructor: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]
Telephone: [REDACTED]
Office: [REDACTED]
Office Hours: [REDACTED]

3 Learning Resources

3.1 Required course materials:

Links to all assigned course materials, including primary source documents, are available on Course Reserve or will otherwise be freely available via OMNI or Google search.

3.2 Costs of all mandatory and optional learning materials

No purchases are required.

4 Learning Outcomes

4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Become conversant with the basic subject matter of the history of the people and states of Africa since the 19th century.
 - Learn to appreciate the different perspectives that inform the interpretation of historical texts and evidence.
 - Learn to relevantly use primary source evidence in historical interpretation and reconstructions of the history of modern Africa.
 - Be able to critically analyze and synthesize information by doing the required reading and written assignments.
 - Develop and improve writing and oral presentation skills by completing the required writing and presentation assignments.
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5 Teaching and Learning Activities

Course Schedule

Sept 10/15 **Introduction**
Henry Louis Gates Jr., [*Africa's Great Civilizations* \(PBS video\). Episode 6](#)

EUROPE COLONIZES AFRICA

Sept 17/22: The Scramble & Africa

- a. [R. O. Collins, & J. M Burns](#), *The European Conquest of Africa. In A History of Sub-Saharan Africa* (pp. 263–278)
- b. [\[Source document\]](#) General Act of the Berlin Conference on West Africa, 26 February 1885
- c. [\[Source document\]](#) 1889 Treaty of Wuchale [Ethiopia]
- d. [\[Source Document\]](#) Menelik II's Circular Letter to European Powers (1891)
- e. [\[Source document\]](#) Excerpts of Petitions by King Khama - Botswana

Sept 24/29: Colonial rule

- a. Femi J. Kolapo, “The Political Impact of European Rule”, in Toyin Falola, *Africa: vol. 3. Colonial Africa, 1885-1939*, pp. 87 – 105 [PDF](#)
- b. [\[Source document\]](#) Djebbar, Women, Children, Oxen Dying in Caves

COLONIALISM & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE

Oct 1/6: Land, Labour and Colonial Economies

- a. [Chuku, G. \(2018\)](#). Colonialism and African Womanhood. In: Shanguhyia, M., Falola, T. (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of African Colonial and Postcolonial History*
- b. [Byfield, J.A. \(2018\)](#). “African Women in Colonial Economies” In: Shanguhyia, M., Falola, T. (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of African Colonial and Postcolonial History*
- c. [\[Source document\]](#) Native land act, south Africa 1913 and report of the Natives Land [Beaumont] Commission, October 2, 1916

Oct 8: Family, Colonial Governance and African Agency

- a. [Barbara Bush](#). “Motherhood, Morality, and Social Order: Gender and Development Discourse and Practice in Late Colonial Africa.” In *Developing Africa*
- b. [\[Source document\]](#) R. Mugo Gatheru, *Child of Two Worlds A Kikkuyu's Story* (New York Praeger, 1964), pp. 88-95
- c. [\[Source document. Literature\]](#) “Ngugi Kimathi on [colonial] law”
- d. [\[Source document\]](#) Charlotte Maxeke describes the impact of colonialism on women and the family (1930).

Oct. 12-13:

Fall Study Break

POST-INDEPENDENCE NATION-BUILDING & DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTS

Oct 15/20: Independence & Dependency

- a. [Walter Rodney](#), *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Verso, 2018. Chapter 6
- b. [\[Source document\]](#) The 1945 Manchester Pan-African Congress Resolution
- c. [\[Source document\]](#) K. Nkrumah, *I Speak of Freedom: A Statement of African Ideology*
- d. [\[Source document\]](#) Organization of African Unity (OAU) Charter (1963)

Oct 22/27: Divergent Development Paths

- a. Guy Arnold, *Africa: A modern history 1945-2015* -Chapter 5. "Problems of Development" [Course Reserve]

- b. [Young, Crawford.](#) *The Postcolonial State in Africa: Fifty Years of Independence, 1960–2010*. Chapter 5. Anatomy of State Crisis
- c. [\[Source document\]](#) Y. K. Museveni. *What is Africa's Problem*. Chapter. 21 The Crisis of the State in Africa
- d. [\[Source document\]](#) U.S. President Barack Obama Address to the African Union (Addis Ababa, 2015)

AFRICA & THE COLD WAR

Oct 29/Nov 3: Insertion into the Cold War

- a. [Jeffrey James Byrne,](#) "The Cold War in Africa" pp.149-161
- b. [Kalu, K. \(2020\).](#) The Cold War and Africa's Political Culture. *Vestnik RUDN. International Relations*, 20 (1), 11—21. DOI: 10.22363/2313-0660-2020-20-
- c. Kwame Nkrumah Speaks on the Congo Crisis & His Support for Patrice Lumumba [\[Source video\]](#)
- d. [\[Source document\]](#) National Security Directive 75 (NSD-75): American Policy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1990s

Nov 5/10: Africa and Agency during the Cold War

- a. [Zuberi, T.,](#) *African independence : how Africa shapes the world*, "Chapter 3. Africa in the Cold War" pp.91-123
- b. [\[Source document\]](#) Fidel Castro Speech on Cuba's Role in Angola (1988) +IN SPANISH! (Translate into English using GOOGLE TRANSLATE)
- c. [\[Source document\]](#) Address by Mr. Mikhail Gotbachev, General Secretary ... Communist Party of the Soviet Union Dec. 7. 1988 [DOWNLOAD]
- d. [\[Source document\]](#) Angola Peace Agreement Document (Bicesse Accords, 1991)

AFRICA & GLOBALIZATION

Nov 12/17: Dependency or South–South Cooperation

- a. [Carmody Padraig,](#) *Globalization: Recolonization or Renaissance?* Lynne Rienner Publishers, (2010), pp. 11-33
- b. [\[Source document\]](#) The Lagos Plan of Action (Organization of African Unity, 1980).
- c. [Buba, I. A. \(2019\).](#) [Review of *Aid, Intervention, and Neocolonial "Development" in Africa*]. *Journal of Intervention and State Building*, 13(1), 131–138

Nov 19/24: China, the United States and African Agency

- a. [Rajen Harshé, & Harshé, R. \(2019\).](#) Unravelling complex shades in the Sino-African ensemble: Altruistic, neo- imperialist or just
- b. [\[Source document\]](#) Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Beijing Action Plan (2025-2027)
- c. [\[Source document\]](#) Address by Hu Jintao at the Opening Ceremony of the FOCAC Beijing Summit, 4 November 2006
- d. [\[Source document\]](#) Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want

Final Exam – Dec 7 -22

6.1 Assessment Details

- Students will complete **five** (5) two-week experiential learning activities based on the course syllabus that will integrate collaborative historical and theoretical analysis, and role play. Each module will include pre-classroom preparations (written reading evidence), in-class activities (simulations & written document interpretation), and after-class hour writing, e.g., exit questions /short essays.)
- There is no make-up for in-class experiential activities missed.

- It will assess your ability to synthesize course readings, interpret historical evidence, apply competing theories, and to write persuasive scholarly arguments.

Assignments (after class hour written assignments) submitted late will not be graded, except for sudden emergencies and ill-health.

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing.

with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.

8.3 Drop Date

The final day to drop Fall 2026 courses without academic penalty is the last day of classes: December 4th.

After this date, a mark will be recorded, whether course work is completed or not (a zero is assigned for missed tests/assignments). This mark will show on the student's transcript and will be calculated into their average.

This applies to all undergraduate students except for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Associate Diploma in Veterinary Technology (conventional and alternative delivery) students. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in the Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses: <https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

8.4 Copies of Out-of-class Assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

8.5 Late Penalty Policy

Assignments submitted late will not be graded, except for sudden emergencies and ill-health.

8.6 Artificial Intelligence Use Policy

The use of ChatGPT, Aria, or other AI systems to mimic independent analysis and generate text for all assignments in this course is strictly prohibited. The unauthorized use of AI systems will be considered a violation of the university's academic misconduct policies. These AI systems must be treated as any other secondary source which, when used, must be cited.

Your course assignments must reflect your own intellectual work and demonstrate the application of critical thinking and analysis.

8.7 Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required; however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability. Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to make a booking at least 10 days in advance, and no later than the first business day in November, March or July as appropriate for the semester. Similarly, new or changed accommodations for online quizzes, tests and exams must be approved at least a week ahead of time. For students at the Guelph campus, information can be found on the [SAS website](#).

8.8 Academic Integrity

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The [Academic Misconduct Policy](#) is outlined in the Undergraduate Calendar.

8.9 Accommodation of Religious Obligations

If you are unable to meet an in-course requirement due to religious obligations, please email the course instructor within two weeks of the start of the semester to make alternate arrangements.

See the Academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for [Academic Accommodations of Religious Obligations](#).

8.10 Recording of Materials

Presentations that are made in relation to course work - including lectures - cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

8.11 Resources

The [Academic Calendars](#) are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

8.12 Health and Wellbeing

The University of Guelph provides a wide range of health and wellbeing services at the Vaccarino Centre for Student Wellness. If you are concerned about your mental health and not sure where to start, connect with a Student Wellness Navigator who can help develop a plan to manage and support your mental health or check out our mental wellbeing resources. The Student Wellness team are here to help and welcome the opportunity to connect with you.

8.13 Illness

Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g., final exam or major assignment).
