Africa’s recent history has an unfortunate and misleading reputation. The popular media, not to mention some academics, expound tirelessly upon the myriad troubles of Africa in the 21st century—that is, when they can be bothered to think of Africa at all. Yet in these exercises there is often tremendously little nuanced understanding of the way that both local and global changes have interacted to create the social, political, and economic order in Africa today, and they tend to overlook the immense adaptability and resilience of African systems of knowledge and support in the face of fundamental challenges. Answers to these challenges in the African present cannot be found without considering the African past. In the last century and a half, internal dynamics and global forces—the latter coming most notably via Europe and its settler colonies, including the United States—together profoundly transformed societies across the African continent in myriad ways. Knowledge of both the broader continental factors and specific local developments is essential to understanding the African past, present, and future.

This course is therefore a survey of the major historical processes unfolding in Africa since approximately 1870, focused on various facets of an increasingly globalized African continent and the experiences of people under colonial and national regimes. No one course can cover more than a tiny sliver of the complexity and variety in Africa, home today to over 1.2 billion people, 55 nations, and thousands of communities of language and culture. We will deal primarily but not exclusively with regions now south of the Sahara Desert, but the major developments of this era extend to the north as well as across the ocean basins beyond the margins of the continent. Students completing this course satisfactorily will, at minimum:

- Develop a broad understanding of how various African societies evolved in the colonial and independence eras of the 19th and 20th centuries;
- Recognize the important position of individuals in these societies and broader regional trends, within local and global historical processes alike;
- Interpret primary sources for major themes and episodes in African history within their own particular social, cultural, political, and economic contexts; and
- Demonstrate the ability to analyze and discuss material dealing with Africa’s recent past(s) in writing, with sensitivity to those African historical contexts and an eye to the bigger picture.

An Important Note about This Syllabus

Everything on this syllabus is important. Read it carefully and refer to it frequently. You alone are responsible for knowing its contents. I address most things here. The paper copy you receive at the beginning of the course is important, but sometimes the unexpected intrudes and we must change our schedule or due dates may slip backward. We will inform you of any changes in class and post syllabus–worthy alterations on Canvas. If you come to class reliably, read the syllabus, watch for Canvas announcements, and visit our class site (as you must for many of our readings), you should be fine.
Course Texts

The following three books are required and can be purchased at the Duck Store or online from your preferred retailer; if you need writing help, I also recommend Rampolla’s 9th edition *Pocket Guide to Writing in History*. **Make sure you get the exact edition of Shillington indicated.** For Shillington, radical revisions have attended each new edition since 2005, so be vigilant. We try to keep textbook costs between $40 and $80, but I don’t control the Duck Store’s markup. Yes, two are unchanged from HIST 325 earlier this academic year.


If permitted, a copy of each will be on reserve. All other readings marked (Canvas) in the syllabus (and there are many) should be in “Files” (and via “Modules”) a week before the relevant session. **All are required unless otherwise indicated.** If you have any trouble obtaining them, please let me know immediately.

Assignments and Grading

Because African history requires the mastery of unfamiliar bodies of knowledge for most students, and our interaction is limited in a class as large as ours, it is important for you not only to keep up with the reading but to think actively about it through writing. Therefore, **HIST 326 requires six short (400 to 600-word) response papers starting in weeks 3-5 and 7-9 (due Mondays) on thematic questions that require you to employ and analyze our course readings and films.** There is one longer midterm paper (1400 to 1800 words), centered on Achebe’s *Arrow of God* and your understanding of historical colonialism, due in week 6. Finally, there is a **cumulative final exam slanted a bit towards weeks 7-10,** with short ID essays plus one open essay question.

Aside from writing, there is also a **map quiz** on modern African nations on Monday of the second week, and pop quizzes based on the readings applicable to the current class session may be given at any time. Course grades are balanced as follows, with a presumed maximum total of 400 points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Map Quiz</td>
<td>20 pts</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Papers (x6):</td>
<td>120 pts (20 pts x6)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Paper:</td>
<td>80 pts</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam (ID/Essay, Cumulative):</td>
<td>120 pts</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance (2x15), Participation &amp; In-Class Quizzes (30+)</td>
<td>60 pts+</td>
<td>15%+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We may also offer a small amount of extra credit for special events or for exceptional engagement in the course, to be determined as necessary. This usually does not exceed 20 points in a term, but that’s half a grade. Late papers will be marked down 10% of the maximum per 24 hours late (or any portion thereof). At the end of the term, the first 32 points’ worth of late marks will be forgiven (see paper deadlines, page 4).

Course grades will follow percentages on a standard scale (93+ = A; 90-92.99 = A−; 87-89.99 = B+; 83-86.99 = B; 80-82.99 = B−; and so on). We reserve the award of A+ grades for extremely rare cases of special qualitative merit, not a mere point total. **We do not change paper, exam, or course grades** except in cases of arithmetical error. There is no grading curve up or down, and so no competition. Exceptional engagement may lead us to award small end-of-term boosts to individuals, at our initiative and discretion alone.
**Brief Advice for Success in this Course**

**Come to our office hours.** See me, or Ms. Brown, during our office hours whenever you have questions or just want to talk about material. We enjoy talking with students about course subjects that interest you, because they interest us too. We also want to know how you’re doing, and work with you wherever possible. Besides, that interaction also counts towards participation in the course. Even email discussion qualifies there.

**Show up to class.** As the term wears on and other pressures mount, class attendance can feel like a low priority. Attendance between weeks 2 and 10 is however part of your grade, and it’s very easy to tell which papers come from people who haven’t been in class regularly. Besides, missing class means you also miss our periodic discussions and quizzes, which can’t be made up easily. For those with unavoidable absences, however, our office hours (and extra credit talks) can fill in knowledge and recover some of the points. Our PowerPoint presentations will be available within a few days after each session to aid you in review, or to help fill gaps caused by absence, but they are not a substitute for regular class attendance.

**Ask and answer questions in class—and beyond.** Participation is a great way to improve grades and learn the material better. We have some planned discussions, but breakout questions during sessions are important too. The ability to contribute and foster discussion is important for success well beyond our classroom, although it’s not the only means to obtain participation credit.

**Make notes on the readings and their context.** This course is organized around a series of very roughly chronological themes, moving around the continent. The short papers due after most weeks are opportunities to make observations about the readings within the broader topics for the prior week, and are your best (or only) chance to demonstrate your mastery of the subjects. The effective use of our historical sources and supporting texts is a major grading criterion for your writing, so keeping up with the reading and understanding it are vital. If you’re struggling or want to talk further about course topics, we’re here to help!

**Policies and Notices (the fine print)**

- **COVID and Masking:** At the start of this term, the indoor masking requirement is no longer in effect on the UO campus. If that changes, we will adhere to University policy. However, individuals are permitted to wear masks if they wish, especially if there’s a cold or other illness going around that you don’t want to spread (or catch). Should you be diagnosed with COVID or another illness that requires absences, get in contact with us immediately so we can arrange to accommodate you during your time out of class. We do encourage all students to get periodic testing for COVID via our excellent MAP testing program, available through its gateway for scheduling.

- **Laptops & Phones:** Although I’m a technophile too, gadget use in class can be annoying and distracting. The biggest issue is honestly not for the user as much as for the others around them, who can hear your typing and whose eyes will drift inexorably, magnetically towards lit screens. An open policy on computers in fact has a demonstrably negative effect on learning and participation in large classes like ours, so I discourage their use.¹ However, I recognize that a growing percentage of people are adept with laptop note-taking, so I allow it on the condition that the user sits in such a location at the sides or back of class to minimize others’ screen exposure.

¹ See *inter alia* C. B. Fried, “In-class Laptop Use and Its Effects on Student Learning,” *Computers and Education* 50, no. 3 (2008): 906-914; Pam Mueller and Daniel Oppenheimer, “The Pen is Mightier than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand over Laptop Note-taking,” *Psychological Science* 25, no. 6 (2014): 1159-1168 (both available online via the UO Libraries). Their conclusions absolutely hold for this course, from my experience.
• **Special Needs:** The University of Oregon seeks to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify us if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. Substantial modifications of course policies or requirements, however, do require a letter from the Accessible Education Center (see its site for more information). The AEC is available at (541) 346-1155 or by email at uoaec@uoregon.edu for setting up a consultation. The Center deals not only with physical accessibility and learning differences, but also often-overlooked psychological, social, and circumstantial conditions that many of us suffer in silence. They are excellent advocates for your success, and I am happy to provide all suitable accommodations that confirmed AEC letters or communications with AEC case managers permit.

• **Writing Style:** All papers and other at-home writing for this course must be typed (unless otherwise noted) and should employ clear and grammatical college-level English. All non-lecture data or other material that is used in a paper must be cited properly. For citation format and writing tips, any humanities-based style guide should be fine. (If you don’t know what citations or style guides are, please ask.) I normally recommend M. L. Rampolla’s *Pocket Guide to Writing History*, 9th edition (available at the Duck Store or online), which includes citation models as well as other stylistic pointers that will greatly improve your work, but it’s also geared more for history majors than other formats. Other citation styles like MLA or APA are OK too, so long as you are consistent. We do not grade grammar, formatting, and prose directly but they will have indirect effects via ineffective communication. Content-related markdowns can also arise from analytically problematic language (like “tribe” and “primitive” if used uncritically) so please pay attention to our comments on your work.

For dedicated general writing assistance, also see the Teaching and Learning Center website.

• **Paper Deadlines and Extensions:** Unless specifically extended for the whole class, the paper deadlines fall at the time and date specified, with submission times as recorded by Canvas. Do not email us to ask for extensions; the late-forgiveness point system below covers those cases. It’s up to you to get your work to us in the proper format, at the time it is required. If Canvas is not accepting your work you may email it to us to make sure it will be seen on time, but you must still upload it in order for it to be graded because we can’t submit your work ourselves. To be on the safe side, try to tender your papers a few hours before the deadline.

This course however also has a standard allowance for unavoidable circumstances that may make work come in a little bit late. In prior terms, measured it by extension days; now, with a wider range of assignments, I am moving to a cushion of ‘late points’ to counteract markdowns. Every student will begin the term with a total of 32 points’ forgiveness towards late assignments across the term. An assignment must have been tendered in order to have points forgiven. This system does not apply to those with AEC-documented concessions; for that, we will discuss arrangements directly.

• **Using Unassigned Outside Sources for Your Papers:** The work for this course is built around the reading material we’ve chosen and the lectures that help to provide structure. We expect you to make exhaustive use of the provided materials—and demonstrate your understanding of them—before reaching to outside sources. Remember this basic rule: *supplement, don’t supplant.* If you feel you must incorporate something else, you must clear it with us first or it will be counted against you. There’s a lot of cringetacular crap about Africa online and even in print, and ignoring our sources in favor of something Google served up is a fast path to a failing mark.

• **Academic Honesty:** The information in this subsection isn’t necessary for 99+% of the students in my courses, but unfortunate experience dictates that we link to the UO academic misconduct guide.
here, where you can find relevant headings for policies on academic honesty and conduct. In practice, the issue of academic honesty that will arise most often in this course is plagiarism. If you’re unfamiliar with plagiarism, the UO has a guide available, but you can find many similar guides online.

It is a gross understatement to say that academic dishonesty will adversely affect your grade. At the very least, you will receive an automatic failing mark for the course and a permanent mark on your record. If you have any concerns or you’re not sure whether something is plagiarism, ask before you turn it in for a grade. Ignorance or time pressure are not valid excuses, and lack of malicious intent will not shield a person from the consequences.

The tempting crutch of the Internet has another liability, because if you can find something, so can we, and Turnitin does it very well and aggressively too. So resist the urge to cut those corners. Yes, use internet tools to orient yourself, but use them properly and judiciously. Accept nothing from an unaccredited source like Wikipedia or a non-academic webpage alone as reliable or authoritative—use our course texts (see above) or contact us and we’ll be happy to work with you.

We encourage you to work together, talk about the material, and even read each other’s papers—just make sure that what you turn in is your own writing and represents your own understanding of the material. Collaborative work is common in historical writing, and the results can be amazing.

- **Turnitin (Plagiarism Checking):** I use the Turnitin.com SimCheck plugin on Canvas as the primary method for tendering papers, in order to have an easy means of collecting essays and checking for duplication or file errors. Turnitin is a software tool designed to help students avoid plagiarism and improper usage. It encourages original writing and proper citation by cross-referencing submitted materials with an archived database of websites, essays, journal articles, and other published work, as well as papers submitted in prior years. **By enrolling in this course, you grant the instructor and any associated graduate employee permission to submit your work to Turnitin or similar analytical programs as needed.** See Canvas Help or ask me if you need that tool and its reach explained. See also “Academic Honesty” above.

Past years’ papers, adjudged via VeriCite, have already been imported to Turnitin—so any cross-year copying will be detected. It’s honestly much, much easier to write one’s own paper, in the end.

- **Everything Else:** In all other matters of classroom policy, we default to UO administrative requirements or History Dept. policy. If you’re not sure of something, or need to talk about a concern, just email us. We usually respond within 48 hours, if a response is necessary.
# HIST 326: COLONIAL & POSTCOLONIAL AFRICA

Class Schedule (subject to change based on pacing, class interests, reading availability, and COVID)

Readings are to be completed before the class assigned. I identify whether they are primary sources from contemporaries, later secondary texts (articles and chapters), or our core Shillington and Achebe books. We may discuss them, especially primary sources. Readings marked with (Canvas) will be on our course site.

## Unit I: Introduction

| M 28 Mar | Session 1: Introduction: The Image of Africa, or “What is Modern Africa?” |
| W 30 Mar | Session 2: African Worlds of the Late 1800s |

**Catching up:** Pier M. Larson, “Myths about Africa, Africans ...” (Canvas)

Binyavanga Wainaina, “How to Write About Africa” (2006). (Canvas link)

**Secondary Text:** John Iliffe, “Regional Diversity in the Nineteenth Century,” ch. 8 in *Africans: The History of a Continent* 2d. ed. (2007), 164-92. (Canvas);

## Unit II: Patterns of Colonial Invasion and the ‘Exceptions,’ c.1870-1920

| M 4 Apr | Session 3: The ‘Scramble for Africa’: Preconditions and Prospects for Invasion |
| W 6 Apr | Session 4: Accommodating, Resisting, and Managing the Colonialist Element |

**Primary Source:** Excerpt from Hertslet’s *Map of Africa by Treaty*, Royal Niger Co., 1887.

**Primary Source:** [Letter of] Khama, Sebele, and Bathoen to Joseph Chamberlain, November 4th, 1895, No. 33 in Correspondence Relative to the Visit to this Country of the Chiefs Khama, Sebele, and Bathoen, 1896, C. 7962, at 20.

| M 11 Apr | Session 5: The Special Case of Self-Reliant Ethiopia? (to 1946) |
| T* 12 Apr | Session 5.5: The Special Case of Atrocities in the Congo Basin? |

**Film:** *Congo: White King, Red Rubber, Black Death* (2004), 90 min.

*Watch streaming via Kanopy*, This film is REQUIRED. Be sure to see it by Friday for your papers. You must log in to the Library website.

**Optional Source:** I will make Roger Casement’s long report (Cd.1933) available via Canvas.
W 13 Apr  Session 6: The Special Case of Industrial South Africa?
Primary Source:  G. S. Preller, *Day Dawn in South Africa* (1938), 72-84. (Canvas) Note: Read this for its problematic settler-colonial and racial historical framings, not its factuality.

Unit III: The Experience of Colonial Rule, c.1900-1940 (Thematic Unit)

M 18 Apr  Session 7: The Practices of Colonial Administration: Philosophies and Applications
SHORT WRITING (WEEK 3) DUE BY CLASS TIME
Shillington:  Print edition: 388-402; review the previous chapter also, as needed.
Kindle edition: 719-744; review the previous chapter also, as needed.

W 20 Apr  Session 8: Cultural Exchange, Missions, and Syncretizing Religious Expression

M 25 Apr  Session 9: Struggles for Land, Labor, and Production
SHORT WRITING (WEEK 4) DUE BY CLASS TIME

W 27 Apr  Session 10: Gender, Generation, Society, and Culture in a Shifting Landscape
Achebe:  Finish reading Achebe, *Arrow of God*; be ready to discuss.
Unit IV: Global War, Politicization, and African Independence, 1940-1994

M 2 May  Session 11: Africans and Africa in World War I and the Depression (Prelude to 1940)

W 4 May  Session 12: World War II. Late Colonialism, and the Rise of African Mass Politics
MIDTERM PAPER (WEEKS 4-5 / Achebe) DUE VIA CANVAS, BY CLASS TIME
Shillington:  Print edition: 407-447. (After 417 is very relevant to the following session)
Kindle edition: 755-828. (After 775 is very relevant to the following session)

M 9 May  Session 13: The First Wave of Decolonization and its Resistors (The Settler Problem)
SHORT WRITING (WEEK 6) DUE BY CLASS TIME

T* 10 May  Session 13.5: Liberation in Film: Gillo Pontecorvo’s Battle of Algiers
Film: The Battle of Algiers (1966), 117 min. (Watch via stream from Kanopy.)
This film is REQUIRED. Be sure to see it no later than Friday. You must log in to the Library website.
Primary Source: Frantz Fanon, A Dying Colonialism (1965), 35-67. (Canvas)

W 11 May  Session 14: Late Decolonization, Settler States, and the “Thirty Years’ War” in the South
Kindle edition: 829-862.

Unit V: Independent Africa and its Challenges, 1957-2010

M 16 May  Session 15: The Economic and Political Legacies of Colonialism
SHORT WRITING (WEEK 7) DUE BY CLASS TIME
Secondary Text: George B. N. Ayittey, Africa Betrayed (1992), 233-64. (Canvas)
**W 18 May**  Session 16: African Socialism and the Search for an African Path  

**M 23 May**  Session 17: Cold War Geopolitics and the Monsters of Autocracy  
Secondary Text:  Martin Meredith, *The Fate of Africa* (2005), 293-308. (Canvas)

**W 25 May**  Session 18: Public Health, Sustainability, and the Challenges of Growth  
Kindle edition: 893-end.  

**M 30 May**  Session 19: MEMORIAL DAY – NO CLASS MEETING – NO OFFICE HOURS

**W 1 Jun**  Session 20: African Development in the “Globalized” World: into the 21st Century  
(Expect quizzes today!)  

---END OF THE REGULAR TERM---

**W 8 Jun**  FINAL EXAMINATION, 10:15AM-12:15PM, 229 MCKENZIE.

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**Recapitulation of Key Due Dates:**

Monday, 4 April 2022: Map Quiz  
Monday, 11 April 2022: Week 2 paper due, 12:00pm  
Monday, 18 April 2022: Week 3 paper due, 12:00pm  
Monday, 25 April 2022: Week 4 paper due, 12:00pm  
Wednesday, 4 May 2022: Midterm (Achebe) Paper due, 12:00pm  
Monday, 9 May 2022: Week 6 paper due, 12:00pm  
Monday, 16 May 2022: Week 7 paper due, 12:00pm  
Monday, 23 May 2022: Week 8 paper due, 12:00pm  
Wednesday, 8 June 2022: Final Examination, 10:15am-12:15pm
BLANK MAP FOR WEEK 2 MAP QUIZ: THIS IS THE SAME BLANK YOU’LL RECEIVE.

You will be asked to locate ten—and only ten—out of twelve nations on a list. If you do more, we will only count the first ten, right or wrong. More than 50 possibilities will be in play. For a quiz site that will train you well, practice with the “super difficult” mode here: http://www.youdontknowafrica.com

(Note: The only island nations you should expect are Madagascar, Comoros, São Tomé and Príncipe [one nation, two islands], and Seychelles. Cape Verde and Mauritius will not be asked.)