

History of Africa (A006652)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 5.0

Study time 150 h

Course offerings in academic year 2026-2027

A (semester 1)

English

Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Mathys, Gillian

LW03

lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027

[Bachelor of Arts in African Languages and Cultures](#)
[Bachelor of Arts in History](#)
[Bachelor of Science in Political Science](#)
[Exchange Programme African Languages and Cultures](#)
[Exchange Programme Cultures and Languages in Context](#)
[Exchange Programme Global Studies and World Societies](#)
[Exchange Programme History](#)
[Exchange Programme in Political and Social Sciences](#)
[Linking Course Master of Arts in African Studies](#)
[Linking Course Master of Arts in Gender and Diversity](#)
[Linking Course Master of Arts in History](#)
[Preparatory Course Master of Arts in African Studies](#)
[Preparatory Course Master of Arts in History](#)
[Elective Set African Studies](#)
[Elective Set Culture and Society](#)

crdts

offering

5 A
 5 A
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 5 A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

African history, precolonial history, colonial history, postcolonial history, African politics, African culture.

Position of the course

This course provides students with an understanding of the main themes and directions in the history of Africa as currently understood, and introduces them to both the longer-term development and current debates in the study of African history. The course combines broad overview and case studies so as to make students sensitive to the diversity and variation within and among African societies.

Contents

The course will cover pre-colonial political formations in Africa, both states/empires and stateless societies, and the reasons for the relative rarity of the former in Africa. It will also consider the legacies of the slave trade. It examines the political dynamics of conquest, resistance and accommodation, and the economic, political, cultural and religious ramifications of colonisation. In the post-colonial period, it examines political violence and war, poverty and famine, dictatorship and democracy and the general crises of African states, as well as popular culture and social and religious movements.

Initial competences

As per requirements for inscription into the BA programmes of which the course forms part.

Final competences

- 1 To understand the main historical developments in Africa, including political, economic and cultural structures, institutions and interactions.
- 2 To be capable of reflecting critically on the African past.
- 3 To be able to apply the knowledge of the past to gain insight into contemporary African societies.
- 4 To be able to deal creatively and critically with different viewpoints and interpretations in the historiography of Africa.
- 5 To gain an appreciation of the diversity within and between African cultures and societies.
- 6 To begin to be able to read academic literature independently and critically; to be able to follow the structure of arguments, assess them and make connection between different ones.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Seminar, Excursion, Lecture, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

Lectures, seminar discussion, small-group work, self-guided study activities.

Study material

Type: Handbook

Name: Gilbert, Erik, and Jonathan T. Reynolds. Africa in world history. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education, 2011.

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Language : English

Number of Pages : 516

Online Available : Yes

Available in the Library : No

Available through Student Association : No

Usability and Lifetime within the Course Unit : intensive

Usability and Lifetime within the Study Programme : one-time

Usability and Lifetime after the Study Programme : occasionally

Type: Slides

Name: Slides for each class

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Language : English

Number of Slides : 300

Available on Ufora : Yes

Online Available : No

Available in the Library : No

Available through Student Association : No

References

Beside the reading materials, there are no specific references.

Course content-related study coaching

Feedback in class and through appointments

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Written assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Written assessment

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible

Extra information on the examination methods

Assessment Moment

Written exam (100%)

Assessment form

Written exam in line with the intended final competences (100%).

Calculation of the examination mark

Date-specific: exam (100%).

Facilities for Working Students

1. No exemption from educational activities requiring student attendance.
 2. The examination can be rescheduled
 3. Alternative time for feedback
- For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the faculty of Arts and philosophy