

## Methods, Sources and Historiography in African History (A006725)

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

Credits 5.0 Study time 150 h

**Course offerings in academic year 2026-2027**

null

**Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027**

De Coene, Pieter	LW03	staff member
Couttenier, Maarten	LW03	lecturer-in-charge

**Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027**

Offering	crdts
null	

**Teaching languages**

English

**Keywords**

Methodology of doing research in and about Africa

**Position of the course**

This introductory course teaches students critical reflexivity and independent research skills concerning the study of Africa and African societies in different spatial and temporal settings

**Contents**

- Critical exploration of the variety of sources used by historians and the challenges connected with interpreting them.
- Discussion of the relationship between history and other social sciences, of how they complement each other or diverge.
- Introduction and practice concerning the localization, selection, organization, analysis and the summarizing of diverse primary and secondary sources
- Introduction to how to delineate and develop a research question.
- Learning how to report in written form on historical research (source discussion, references, research question, bibliography).

Topics: (non-exhaustive): oral history, colonial archives, fieldwork, archaeology and material culture as a source for African history, images as a source, using footnotes, interview techniques, design a research question.

**Initial competences**

- 
- 1 The ability to localise, manage and use information in a systematic way
- 2 The ability to develop a research project with a clear research question, with proper guidance.
- 3 Acquisition of a basic ability to discuss and interpret a historical problem according to the standards of the profession.
- 4 Acquisition of a sound understanding of historical and other methodologies and research skills, in general, and specific for African history.

**Conditions for credit contract**

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

**Conditions for exam contract**

Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

## **Teaching methods**

Group work, Seminar, Excursion, Lecture, Independent work

## **Extra information on the teaching methods**

The course is taught through a mixture of lecturing, whole class discussion, small-group discussion and independent study.

The course is taught in English with facilities in Dutch. Written assignments can be handed in either Dutch or English.

## **Study material**

Type: Handbook

Name: Writing African History

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Author : Philips

ISBN : 978-1-58046-164-1

Online Available : Yes

Available in the Library : Yes

Available through Student Association : No

Usability and Lifetime within the Course Unit : not applicable

Usability and Lifetime within the Study Programme : intensive

Usability and Lifetime after the Study Programme : intensive

## **References**

Possible visit to museum or archive: 15 euro.

## **Course content-related study coaching**

- Interactive teaching and learning
- Recurrent feedback (Ufora or consultation hours)
- Guidance regarding research activities

## **Assessment moments**

continuous assessment

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

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

## **Examination methods in case of permanent assessment**

Participation, Assignment

## **Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment**

examination during the second examination period is possible

## **Extra information on the examination methods**

- Students are expected to attend and participate actively in class.
- Students choose a source on which to write a paper in which they give a critical appraisal of the source, how it can be used in historical research, what the methodological challenges are etc.
- This also means practicing how to cite primary and secondary sources in a correct fashion.
- This paper is then evaluated.
- Students are also expected to reflect orally and in written form on the literature they have read.

## **Calculation of the examination mark**

100% non-permanent evaluation

## **Facilities for Working Students**

1. Possible exemption from educational activities requiring student attendance.

2. The examination cannot be rescheduled

3. No alternative time for feedback

For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the faculty of Arts and philosophy

