

BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
The City University of New York
Center for Ethnic Studies

Title of Course: African Civilizations
AFN 121 – 1200 (27020) Spring 2021

Hours: Tue. / Thur. 12noon – 1:15pm

Instructor: Prof. Oluremi “Remi” Alapo

Online*Asynchronously / **Synchronously
Lab Hours Per Week: None

3 Credits/3 Hours

Virtual Office Hours:

Tue. / Thur. 10:30am – 12:00noon

Email: oalapo@bmcc.cuny.edu / Tel: 347 444 3256

***SYLLABUS IS TENTATIVE, AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

Course Description: This course has the basic goal of improving the understanding of African Civilizations through the exploration of the controversial issues such as pre-history, ancient Egypt, and West African Empires in the continent This course is a systematic examination of the participation of African people in the political, economic and cultural history of ancient Africa. The involvement of Africans in the development of social, intellectual and economic institutions is analyzed.

Course Objectives:

This course will provide students with a historical and interdisciplinary perspective of African history. Students are expected to participate actively in the formulation of knowledge about the African experience. From time to time students will be asked to lead a class discussion on a particular issue on African History topics.

- a. Familiarize students with major events, personalities and themes affecting the history of people of Africa.
- b. Encourage students to think critically about the development and significance of African History and Race.
- c. Develop an appreciation of African historical contributions and cultural values.
- d. Assist students in their understanding of the development of a multi-cultural African society.
- e. Analyze, compare and contrast significant events and issues in the history of African Americans.
- f. Cite and interpret roles of Africans relating to regional differences in Africa.

Basic Skills: Eng 088, ESL 062, ACR 094

Prerequisites: None

Co-requisites: None

Student Learning Outcomes, Related Assignments, and Assessments

Expected learning outcomes	Related Assignments	Assessment for outcomes
Students will become more knowledgeable about how social structures define African culture	Textbook Readings Course Discussion	Essay Assignments Final Assignment
Students will be able to think critically about how individuals are influenced by political, geographic, economic, cultural, and social institutions in other diverse cultures	Textbook Readings Course Discussion	Essay Assignments Final Assignment
Students will identify and define social structures of African culture.	Textbook readings Course participation Writing Assignments	Essay Assignments Final Assignment
Students will be able to think critically by contextualizing by comparing and contrasting how civilizations are influenced by	Textbook readings Documentary Films Course Discussion	Essay Assignments Final Assignment

political, geographic, economic, and cultural institutions in diverse cultures and explain how belief systems may differ.		
Students will articulate the relationship between the individual and society as it affects the personal and social development of the civilization related to the course material.	Textbook readings Class discussion Documentary Films	Essay Assignments Final Assignment
Students will examine and analyze the impact of social scientific research on African History.	Textbook readings Sharing discussion from readings and critical reflection	Essay Assignments Final Assignment

General Education Goals that will be covered and assessed in this course:	Measurements
Communication Skills	Students will write, read, listen and speak critically and effectively. From class participation to essay examination, students will hone their communication skills.
Social and Behavioral Sciences	Students will understand and apply the concepts and methods of the social sciences. Through the study of texts, audiovisuals and lectures, students will get familiarized with historical contents as well as historical and political concepts which they will be able to apply in answering exams.

Pathways - Learning Outcomes	
In the left column explain the assignments and course attributes that will address the learning outcomes in the right column.	
II. Flexible Core (18 credits) Six three-credit liberal arts and sciences courses, with at least one course from each of the following five areas and no more than two courses in any discipline or interdisciplinary field.	
A. World Cultures and Global Issues	
A Flexible Core course <u>must meet the three learning outcomes</u> in the right column.	
By contrasting the forces of change and continuity in African history and culture through primary and secondary sources, students have the opportunity to achieve this learning goal and are accordingly accessed through frequent content discussions.	Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.
This learning outcome is measured by the above content discussions on a smaller scale, but also historical research essays that required critical thinking around evidence and analytical writing in terms of presenting a clear argument on a larger scale.	Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.
This learning outcome is measured by content discussions, historical research essays, and oral presentations that require the presentation of an argument supported by clear reasoning and sufficient evidence. The research essay has a rubric.	Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.

A course in this area must meet at least three of the additional learning outcomes in the right column. A student will:	
Students comprehend and apply the concepts and methods of the social sciences and humanities as measured by historical research essays, simulation and enactment involving the application of critical thinking and historical context, and frequent content discussions.	Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring world cultures or global issues, including, but not limited to, anthropology, communication, cultural studies, economics, ethnics studies, foreign languages (building upon previous language acquisition), geography, history, political science, sociology, and world literature.
	Analyze culture, globalization, or global cultural diversity, and describe an event or process from more than one point of view.
Students analyze the factors that gave rise to early states and empires, and the peoples' daily lives herein, across historic Africa to the late sixteenth century. The analytical process occurs through and is often evaluated by simulation and enactment and project construction of life in early African societies.	Analyze the historical development of one or more non-U.S. societies.
Students analyze early proximate and distant factors that created and shaped the transatlantic slave system, a global and African historical process and thus far the largest forced migration of any people from their natal homelands. The major movement which has shaped the world's economies and many of its societies is analyzed through a range of captive and captor perspectives and is measured through content and map study, critical inquiry, and historical research essays.	Analyze the significance of one or more major movements that have shaped the world's societies.
	Analyze and discuss the role that race, ethnicity, class, gender, language, sexual orientation, belief, or other forms of social differentiation play in world cultures or societies.
	Speak, read, and write a language other than English, and use that language to respond to cultures other than one's own.

Required Text & Readings

Readings will be assigned from the course textbook or from e-reserves / OER notes but students must acquire the following text: **The History of Africa - Quest for Eternal Harmony. Molefi Asante ISBN-13: 978-1138710382 or ISBN-10: 1138710385 available at the BMCC bookstore or online via amazon etc.**

Other learning resources (including articles, videos) will be posted in each week's discussion folder on BB.

Evaluation & Requirements of Students

1. Participation for this course is generally defined as questions and statements of observation that specifically related to the material mentioned in the assigned readings. Specific questions and assignments will be part of the daily routine of course lectures and students should be prepared to respond accordingly and appropriately.
2. Students will participate in the course. Your participation will take different forms: From asking and answering questions to developing topics for course discussion.
3. There will be one essay assignment a midterm essay assignment and a final essay assignment.

***Asynchronous:** Asynchronous course meetings do not require you to log in to your virtual classroom at a specified time. Students do not have to follow a strict schedule to engage in live course or discussions, and the only requirement regarding when they turn in their work is the assignment deadline, not an arbitrary timeline. Assignment deadlines and exams days/times are maintained and included on the course syllabus. Per best practices, instructors should create non- mandatory opportunities for live interactions with and among students.

****Synchronous:** Synchronous course meetings resemble traditional on-campus In-Person classes in that students must be (virtually) present at the same time. Though they are conducted virtually, synchronous courses meet in real- time. Students must commit to scheduled course times and sign onto their virtual learning platform on schedule. During these courses, students will engage with the instruction during online lessons and presentations and even have virtual class discussions. Assignment deadlines and exams days/times are maintained and included on the course syllabus. All Synchronous courses meeting days/times must be listed in the schedule of courses for students. Per best practices, instructors should make effective use of learning management systems for the posting of course materials and submission of course assignment.

Writing Essay Assignments:

There will be a student collaborative design effort put forth in the creation of all required writing essay assignments indicated in the course schedule. Students will have the opportunity to create topics for the writing essay assignments based upon their synthesis asynchronous required readings, synchronous discussions, required websites, videos and documentaries. Thoughtful critical analysis and substantial context of course discussions will serve as the basis for the development of student designed writing essay assignments. Students will collectively decide the topics for the writing essay assignments after assessing the required course materials.

The collaborative engagement in the creation of this assignment provides students with the ability to increase their comprehension of topics covered in course and cultivate a cohesive frame of thought. Writing essay assignment instructions will be presented in Blackboard and will be discussed with students during synchronous course sessions. All writing essay assignments are graded assignments. Please note the information provided in this syllabus regarding the grading policy of the essay assignments.

Discussion Board response: All learning will take place via BB discussion board except for the designated zoom lecture dates / times. Students will have a set of questions from the instructor based on learning resources / content for each week that they must respond by posting on BB. Student will also need to respond to 2 different colleagues post each week. All assignments such as midterm, finals etc will be posted on BB.

Final Exam

You will select a civilization and work on this in the essay, midterm and final exams. At the end of the semester, you will be well versed with the history of at least one (or more) African civilization and conclude with an essay summary and ppt presentation. More specific details to be provided.

Grades

Assignment	Grading Scale	Your Score / Assignment
a) Average of course participation	25%	.25 x ____ =
b) Essay Assignment – due week 5	20%	.20 x ____ =
c) Mid Term Essay – due week 9	25%	.25 x ____ =
d) Final Essay / ppt– due after week 15 (tba)	30%	.30 x ____ =
e) Final course grade	100%	Total a)+ b)+ c)+ d)= e) (Final course grade)

*BMCC Grading Scale

A= 93-100% A- = 90-92 % B+ = 87-89% B = 83-86% B- = 80-82% C+ =77-79%

C= 73-76% C- = 70-72% D+ = 67-69% D = 63-66% D- = 60-62% F = 59% and Lower

AFN121: African Civilizations 1: Spring 2021 Schedule

Week Dates	**Asynchronous Activities	Synchronous Activities	Assignments All due in Blackboard	Due Dates: Sunday by 11:30pm
WEEK 1 [1/29 – 1/31]	Do the pre course assignment reading on Africa before 1500 Watch: Different but Equal – Basil Davidson pt.1 AFRICA Episode 1 Different but Equal Written & Presented by Basil Davidson Executive Producer-You Tube	Introduction/ Geographic Review- Google Maps via Zoom	Read: The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony Chapter 1 – African Origin of Humanity.	
WEEK 2 [2/1 – 2/7]	Watch: Different but Equal – Basil Davidson pt.2 AFRICA Episode 1 Different but Equal Written & Presented by Basil Davidson Executive Producer-You Tube	Zoom Meeting Discussion Topic: Africa	Read: The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony Chapter 1 - African Origin of Humanity.	
WEEK 3 [2/8 – 2/14]	Watch: Dr. Ben in Kemet Pt.1 You Tube (Rasjj)	Zoom Meeting Discussion Topic: What is Civilization	Read: The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony Chapter 2 – Africa and the Beginning of Civilization.	
WEEK 4 [2/15 – 2/21] [No classes 2/12 & 2/15]	Watch: Dr. Ben in Kemet Pt.2 You Tube (Rasjj)	Zoom Meeting Discussion Topic: Rise of Kemet / Egypt	Read: The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony Chapter 3 – The Rise of Kemet/Egypt	
WEEK 5 [2/22 – 2/28]	Watch: Dr. Ben in Kemet Pt.3 You Tube (Rasjj) Write: Create Essay Assignment using instructions posted in Blackboard	Zoom Meeting Discussion	Select an African civilization and write a 3 - 4 pages summary of its origins and importance based on the course learning resources from weeks 1 – 6. Due by 11:30pm More details tba	Essay due
WEEK 6 [03/01– 03/07]	Watch: Dr. Ben in Kemet Pt.4 You Tube (Rasjj)	Zoom Meeting Discussion Topic: Nubia and Egypt	Read: Chapter 4: The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony. The Elements of Early African Civilization.	

WEEK 7 [03/8 – 03/14]	Watch: Dr. Ben in Kemet Pt.5 You Tube (Rasjj)	Zoom Meeting Discussion Topic: African Societies	Read: Chapter 4 The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony. The Elements of Early African Civilization.	
WEEK 8 [03/15 – 03/21]	Watch: National Geographic: Africa's Black Pharaohs	Zoom Meeting Discussion Topic: Ancient African Governance	Read: Chapter 5 The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony. Governance and the Political Stability of Kemet.	
WEEK 9 [03/22 – 03 / 27] [Spring break: 03/27 – 04/04]	Watch: BMCC Kanopy - Africa's Great Civilizations. Episode 4: Cities. Henry Louis Gates. Write: Create Midterm Essay Assignment using instructions posted in Blackboard.	Zoom Meeting Discussion Topic: River Kingdoms	Read: Chapter 6 The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony. The Emergence of Great River Kingdoms Midterm Essay Assignment Due by 11:30 P.M 3/26 Select the same civilization from week 6 and expand on your research in a 4 - 6 pages essay to include: governance, politics, arts, development, commerce etc. Why were they important in these civilizations? (More details tba)	Midterm due
WEEK 10 [04/05 – 04/11]	Watch: BMCC Kanopy - Africa's Great Civilizations. Episode 4: Cities. Henry Louis Gates.	Zoom Meeting Discussion Topic: River Kingdoms	Read: Chapter 6 The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony. The Emergence of Great River Kingdoms.	
WEEK 11 [04/12-04/18]	Watch: BMCC Kanopy - Africa's Great Civilizations. Episode 2: The Cross and the Crescent. Henry Louis Gates	Zoom Meeting Discussion Topic: Empires	Read: Chapter 7 The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony. The Spread of Classical Empires and Kingdoms.	
WEEK 12 [04/19-04/25]	Watch: BMCC Kanopy – Africa's Great Civilizations. Episode 3: Empires of Gold	Discussion Board Submission Zoom Meeting Topic: The Western Sudan	Read: Chapter 8 The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony. The Sudanic Empires: Historians and their Narratives.	

WEEK 13 [04/26-05/02]	Watch: Caravans of Gold – Basil Davidson. You Tube.	Zoom Meeting Discussion Topic: Western Sudan	Read: Chapter 8 The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony. The Sudanic Empires: Historians and their Narratives.	
WEEK 14 [05/03-05/09]	Watch: Selected videos posted in Blackboard: Course Materials	Zoom Meeting Discussion Topic: Traditional Arts and Science	Read: Chapter 9 The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony. Generators of Traditional and Contemporary Africa. Read: Assigned Websites posted in Blackboard: Course Materials.	
WEEK 15 [05/10-05/16]	Watch: Selected videos posted in Blackboard: Course Materials Discuss: Final exam review	Zoom Meeting Discussion Topic: African Arts and Science	Read: Chapter 10 The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony. Farmers and Metallurgists. Read: Assigned Websites posted in Blackboard: Course Materials.	
WEEK 16 FINAL EXAM [05/17-05/24]	Write: Create Final essay/presentation using instructions posted in Blackboard TBA		Final Exam Assignment Due by 11:30 P.M – due 5/21 Summary of the civilization that you have been working on in a 3 – 5 pages essay and in a ppt presentation format (more details tba).	Final Exam due: Essay and ppt

A. MAIN TOPICS TO BE STUDIED

Assigned Readings (Asante, Molefi)

1. Chapter 1 African Origin of Humanity
2. Chapter 2 Africa and the Beginning of Civilization
3. Chapter 3 The Rise of Kemet/Egypt
4. Chapter 4 The Elements of Early African Civilization
5. Chapter 5 Governance and the Political Stability of Kemet
6. Chapter 6 The Emergence of the Great River Kingdoms
7. Chapter 7 The Spread of Classical Empires and Kingdoms
8. Chapter 8 The Sudanic Empires: Historians and Their Narratives
9. Chapter 9 Generators of Traditional and Contemporary Africa
10. Chapter 10 Societies of Secrets: Farmers and Metallurgists

Articles to be assigned from The Journal of African Civilizations, Ivan Van Sertima Ed.

Media presentations from The Africans: A Triple Heritage, Ali Mazrui

Media presentations from “Africa”, Basil Davidson

Media presentations from “Dr. Ben in Egypt”

Other learning resources (including scholars / guest speakers) info will be posted on BB. Students are free to inform the instructor of their synchronous preference for the course learning.

The schedule and procedures are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

BMCC is committed to the health and well being of all students. It is common for everyone to seek assistance at some point in their life, and there are free and confidential services on campus that can help.

Single Stop

www.bmcc.cuny.edu/singlestop, room S230, 212-220-8195. If you are having problems with food or housing insecurity, finances, health insurance or anything else that might get in the way of your studies at BMCC, come by the Single Stop Office for assistance and advice. Assistance is also available through the Office of Student Affairs, S350, 212-220-8130.

Counseling Center

www.bmcc.cuny.edu/counseling, room S343, 212-22-8140. Counselors assist students in addressing psychological and adjustment issues (i.e. depression, anxiety, and relationships) and can help with stress, time management and more. Counselors are available for walk-in visits.

Office of Compliance and Diversity

www.bmcc.cuny.edu/aac, room S701, 212-2201236. BMCC is committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive learning environment free of unlawful discrimination/harassment, including sexual harassment, where all students are treated fairly. For information about BMCC's policies and resources, or to request additional assistance in this area, please visit or call the office, or email olevy@bmcc.cuny.edu or twade@bmcc.cuny.edu. If you need immediate assistance, please contact BMCC Public safety at 212-220-8080.

Office of Accessibility

www.bmcc.cuny.edu/accessibility, room N360 (accessibility entrance: 77 Harrison Street, 212 220-8180). This office collaborates with students who have documented disabilities, to coordinate support services, reasonable accommodations, and programs to enable equal access to education and college life. To request an accommodation due to a documented disability, please visit or call the office.

BMCC Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity Statement

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's ideas, words or artistic, scientific, or technical work as one's own creation. Using the idea or work of another is permissible only when the original author is identified. Paraphrasing and summarizing, as well as direct quotations, require citations to the original source. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism. Students who are unsure how and when to provide documentation are advised to consult with their instructors. The library has guides designed to help students to appropriately identify a cited work. The full policy can be found on BMCC's Web site, www.bmcc.cuny.edu. For further information on integrity and behavior, please consult the college bulletin (also available online).

Requirements of Students

1. Students MUST have purchased the required texts no later than the end of the start of the 2nd week of the course. Students without the course text or additional assigned readings will have their final grade lowered by a half a letter grade.
2. Students must log in on time for the course and be prepared to work (textbook, assigned readings for the particular course session). Students are required to turn off all electronic devices such as cellular phones.
3. Students should plan to attend the course for the entire period. It is a distraction to have students consistently arriving late and leaving early. If you must leave early for a legitimate reason, please notify the instructor before the course session.
4. Talking during the course (which is not related to course discussion) is considered rude and will not be tolerated.
5. Course members are expected to treat other students with courtesy and respect. Follow appropriate netiquette standards.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

A. LEARNING RESOURCES CENTER

Room S500, 212-220-1376

The Learning Resource Center (LRC) provides students with services designed to strengthen academic skills and meet learning needs. The LRC coordinates a tutorial program, instructional computer labs, and tutor-conducted study skills workshops. All LRC services are available free of charge to registered BMCC students.

WRITING CENTER

Room S500, 212-220-1384

Writing assistants work with students to develop and refine written assignments in all subject areas. Assistants provide guidance in all aspects of the writing process: understanding the assignment, generating ideas, drafting, citing sources, revising, recognizing errors, and correcting grammar and syntax. CPE preparation information and workshops are also provided.

E-TUTORING

www.bmcc.cuny.edu/etutoring

212-220-1380

E tutoring is now available to all BMCC students. You can email your tutoring questions to e-tutors who will respond within 24 hours Monday to Friday. Questions submitted over the weekend, if not answered within 24 hours, will be answered on the following Monday.

INTERNET RESOURCES

Internet Search Engine: www.google.com

Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture: www.nypl.org/research/sc/sc.html

GRADING RUBRIC FOR ASSIGNMENTS

	EXCELLENT (A RANGE)	SATISFACTORY (B, C RANGE)	POOR (D, F RANGE)
ARGUMENT	The assignment presents a well-constructed statement and supports it with concrete examples effectively and fully throughout the assignment.	The assignment presents an adequate statement and supports it with concrete examples throughout the assignment.	The assignment has a vague statement or statement. The overall analysis is superficial, and it contains little or no concrete examples throughout the assignment.
BREADTH AND DEPTH	The assignment answer demonstrates breadth of knowledge of the topic, strong understanding of readings, effective synthesis of relevant course materials, and an intellectual rigor.	The assignment answer demonstrates adequate understanding of the topic and readings, as well as an attempt to synthesize relevant course materials.	The assignment demonstrates partial understanding or no understanding of the topic and readings.
INSIGHT AND ANALYSIS	The assignment demonstrates independent thoughts and keen analytical insights, as well as creative interpretations (that is communicating unexpected connections and relationships).	The assignment demonstrates some insightful analysis of readings and relevant course materials, as well as an attempt to reinforce the stated information throughout the assignment.	The assignment makes little or no reference to readings, and overall understanding is incomplete, incoherent, or flawed.
WRITING	The assignment shows utmost sensitivity toward grammar, spelling, clear sentence development, transitions, and documentation.	The assignment shows some sensitivity toward grammar, spelling, clear sentence development, logical organization, effective paragraphing, transitions, and documentation but basic sentence problems and awkward constructions, at times, impede comprehension.	The assignment lacks sensitivity toward grammar, spelling, clear sentence development, logical organization, effective paragraphing, transitions, and documentation. Sentences are unclear, sections are unfocused; and errors impede comprehension.

*Note

This syllabus is tentative and subject to change. At the instructors discretion, content can be added to or removed from it. All revised content and info will be posted on BB. It is important to check the announcement page every week for updates (I usually will post announcements for the following week every Sunday evening or first thing on Monday morning). Office hours are by appointment only on the days designated on the syllabus. Other learning resources (including scholars / guest speakers) info will be posted on BB. Students are free to inform the instructor of their synchronous preference for the course learning. All weekly discussion question responses and those to your colleagues should be posted no later than 11:30pm on Sunday of each week. Plan ahead, no INC grades giving for this course.