

SYLLABUS TEMPLATE FOR A COMMON CORE WCGI COURSE

AFST 101: SURVEY OF AFRICAN CIVILIZATION I

General Information:

Queens College
Africana Studies Program
AFST 101 - 01
Day & Time: **TBD**
Location: Delany Hall Room **TBD**

Professor: TBD
Phone: (718) 997 – 4545
Email: **TBD**
E-mail policy: Email is checked twice a day Monday to Friday during the semester.

Course Description:

Undergraduate Bulletin:

An interdisciplinary survey of African Civilization from the earliest times to the sixteenth century. The course will focus on the origins and development of civilization in Africa (Egyptian, Sudanic, Ethiopic, Malian, Ghanaian, Songhai, Zimbabwean, etc.).

The aim of this course is to offer an introduction to the study of African Civilizations from pre-historic cultures in Nubia, Ethiopia, Ancient Egypt, through the rise and fall of the Great West African Empires, to the coming of the Europeans and its impact on African societies. Moreover, the course surveys the culture and regional history of several tribes of Western, Central, Eastern and Southern Africa.

Textbook Information:

- *Journal of African Civilizations* (JAC), Vol. 5, nos. 1 & 2.
- Basil Davidson, (1988) *The Lost Cities of Africa*, Replica Books, ISBN: 9780316174312
- John G. Jackson, (2001) *Introduction to African Civilizations*, New York Citadel Press, ISBN: 9780806521893
- Robert July, (1998) *History of the African People*, Waveland Press, Inc., ISBN-10: 0881339806
- Handouts will be distributed in class. Documentary films will be shown.
- **Suggested reading:** Cheick Anta Diop (1974), *The African Origin of Civilization Myth or Reality*, Chicago, Lawrence Hill Books, ISBN: 1556520727

Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to arrive to class on time, having completed the reading and/or documentary viewing in advance for each class meeting. Students are expected to be prepared to share thoughts or questions and discuss the assigned material. Arriving on time and being prepared to actively engage in class discussions shows respect for our shared

learning space and experience throughout the semester. If you are unable to attend class, notify the professor via email and contact a classmate to assist with securing notes for the missed class.

Course Specific Learning Objectives:

African Civilizations I, gives students a fundamental background, understanding and an appreciation of pre-colonial African history. It traces the history and culture of pre-historic man; analyzes the historical and societal structures of Ancient Egypt, Nubia, and Meroe, the political, cultural development of the empires of Ghana, Mali and Songhai, as well as Great Zimbabwe. It also examines the political structure and cultures of several tribes, exposing students to different ethnic groups and various cultural differences for better understanding and appreciation. Students acquire knowledge through their reading assignments, class lectures, handouts and documentary films. They will be exposed to different historians' viewpoints, they will engage in class discussions, and form their own opinion.

Students will:

- LO1. Develop an understanding of the early history of the African continent.
- LO2. Develop a basic understanding of the interdisciplinary grounding of Africana Studies.
- LO3. Develop a nuanced understanding of the social and cultural concepts of "race" and be able to analyze the factors that have contributed to shaping of the social construct.
- LO4. Engage in dialogue and an analysis of the assigned readings in which the importance of African History, culture, and peoples can be ascertained within a global context.
- LO5. Demonstrate, by writing a research paper, an increased ability to synthesize information to reflect their own point of view.

CUNY COMMON CORE

(do not modify the below statement – this statement must be included on all QC WCGI courses)

All Flexible CORE Courses must meet the following three learning outcomes:

FC 1: Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.
FC 2: Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.
FC 3: Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.

In Addition, all WCGI courses must satisfy at least three of the following learning outcomes:

WCGI 1: 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, communications, cultural studies, economics, ethnic studies, foreign languages (building upon previous language acquisition), geography, history, political science, sociology, and world literature.
WCGI 2: Analyze culture, globalization, or global cultural diversity, and describe an event or process from more than one point of view.
WCGI 3: Analyze the historical development of one or more non-U.S. societies.
WCGI 4: Analyze the significance of one or more major movements that have shaped the world's societies.
WCGI 5: 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.
WCGI 6: Speak, read, and write a language other than English, and use that language to respond to cultures other than one's own.

Course Grade:

Student learning will be assessed by periodic short answer quizzes (3); exams (2), a midterm and a final; and a research paper (1).

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percentage of final grade</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Class Participation	20%	Ongoing
Quizzes (3)	10%	Sept. 29 th , Nov. 3 rd , Dec. 1 st
Midterm exam (1)	20%	October 27 th
Final exam (1)	20%	Due date TBD
Research Paper (1)	30%	Dec. 1 st
Submit research paper topic		Sept. 29 th
Submit potential sources		Oct. 13 th
Submit outline and updated sources		Nov. 3 rd

Class Participation:

Class participation will account for 20% of your grade. Participation includes actively engaging in class discussions, and providing constructive commentary on classmate's work.

Excellent Class Participation (20%): Student is present in the class learning space (classroom or online) on time, with reading/viewing completed and is prepared with comments or questions and prepared to share; speaks frequently without monopolizing the class discussion; offers incisive and constructive feedback on classmate's work; acknowledges and respects other class members.

Decent Class Participation (15%): Student is usually present the class learning space (classroom or online), on time, with reading/viewing done; speaks often enough; offers feedback on classmates' work that is usually incisive and instructive; acknowledges and respects other class members.

Problematic Class Participation (5 – 10%): Student is frequently absent from the class learning space (classroom or online), late or comes to class without reading/viewing completed; never speaks, or speaks in a disrespectful way; doesn't offer feedback to classmates or offers disrespectful feedback; ignores or is rude towards other members of the class; is a non-engaged or destructive collaborator.

Quizzes (3):

Periodic quizzes will check student retention of information in intervals of 4 to 5 weeks to understand what information students understand and have retained. Quizzes will assess students' retained knowledge of the development of cultures in the countries, empires, tribes, and cultures including, Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, and Zimbabwe.

Short answer quizzes address the three **Flexible Core Learning Objectives** in the following ways: Course readings present different perspectives on the development and evolution of Africa's culture and society in the countries noted above. **(FC1)** Quizzes require students to recall data taught and discussed in classes **(FC2)**; students will provide reasoned responses to questions posed on the history, and culture of African societies studied that draw on the readings and discussions. Their answers must form a cogent argument that uses evidence from course readings. **(FC3)**

Short answer quizzes address the three **World Culture and Global Issues Learning Objectives** in the following ways: students will be introduced, through readings and discussions during class meetings, to the

methods of inquiry used by historians to study and explore the past. Materials used to teach the course include literature, images of artifacts, artwork, maps, etcetera that provide students a look into the cultures and societies being studied. Quizzes require the recall of historical methods to answer questions posed on period quizzes. **(WCGI 1)** This course is designed to teach students about the development of African cultures and societies over time. Quizzes require students to compare the development of one or more culture/country/society to another; or discuss the development of one culture/ country/society over time. **(WCGI 3)** Many African societies are historically matrilineal; quizzes require students to assess and describe the differences among African societies and also compare them to their experience in American society or their experience based on their own racial and ethnic identity, and cultural traditions. **(WCGI 5)**

Exams (2) – Midterm and Final:

Exams are designed to assess student learning near the midpoint and end of the course; gauging how they have retained material, and how they use that knowledge to analyze the subject in a broad comparative context.

Exams addresses the three **Flexible Core Learning Objectives** in the following ways: exams are based on course readings that present different perspectives on the development and evolution of Africa's culture and society in different countries. Students are required to study and retain this information and demonstrate their mastery of the materials by communicating it in response to instructor designed/developed examinations. **(FC 1)** Exams require students to recall data taught and discussed during course instruction and demonstrate the capacity to analyze, evaluate and compare the materials to analyze the differences or similarities across regions and cultures. **(FC 2)** Exams will require students to draw on the knowledge developed over the course of the semester to craft well-reasoned responses to questions posed on the history and culture of African societies studied that draw on the readings and discussion. Their answers must form a cogent argument that uses evidence from course readings. **(FC 3)**

Exams addresses the three **World Culture and Global Learning Objectives** in the following ways: students will be introduced, through readings and discussions during class meetings, to the methods of inquiry used by historians to study and explore the past. Materials used to teach the course include literature, images of artifacts, artwork, maps, etcetera that provide students a look into the cultures and societies being studied. Exams will require the use/recall of historical methods to answer questions posed on period the exams. **(WCGI 1)** This course is designed to teach students about the development of African cultures and societies over time. Exams will require students to compare the development of one or more culture/country/society to another; or discuss the development of one culture/ country/society over time. **(WCGI 3)** Many African societies are historically matrilineal; exams require students to assess and describe the differences among African societies and also compare them to their experience in American society, or their experience based on their own racial and ethnic identity, and cultural traditions. **(WCGI 5)**

Research Paper:

This course requires students to write an 8 - 10-page research paper on a student chosen topic that falls within the time period of the African civilizations studied during the semester. Students will complete the paper in stages – 1) select a topic- - September 29th, 2) submit potential sources and a research question – October 13th, 3) submit an outline and updated sources – November 3rd, and 4) submit the final paper – December 1st. Students are required to use Chicago Manual of Style citations for the research paper.

The **research paper** addresses the three **Flexible Core Learning Objectives** in the following ways: the research paper is written based on the student's self-selected topic of interest within the time period boundaries of the course. Each student is required to review and gather relevant sources, develop a thesis and well-reasoned argument that supports their thesis. **(FC 1)** In the process of selecting sources, students must select and decide which sources are most relevant to the subject and their thesis. **(FC 2)** The research paper requires students to draw on the knowledge developed over the course of the semester, along with selected

literature sources, to craft well-reasoned argument that supports their research question about the history and culture of African societies studied during the semester. The research paper must form a cogent argument based on evidence from selected literature and course readings if applicable to the student's selected topics. **(FC 3)**

The **research paper** addresses the three **World Culture and Global Learning Objectives** in the following ways: Students have been introduced, through readings and discussions during class meetings, to the methods of inquiry used by historians to study and explore the past. Materials used to teach the course include literature, images of artifacts, artwork, maps, etcetera that provide students a look into the cultures and societies being studied. The research paper requires students use their newly developed knowledge of historical methods and apply it to developing their research paper – thesis, questions, analysis, and draw conclusions based on the literature used to develop the research paper. **(WCGI 1)** Students may choose to focus on one or more of the following in their research paper - country, tradition, culture, or any other aspect that is germane to the course. Each student is responsible for crafting a narrative that analyses their selected topic and exiting literature. **(WCGI 3)** Depending on the selected research topic and question, students will analyze the role of race, ethnicity, class, gender, language, sexual orientation, belief, etc. in the African culture or society selected for their research paper. **(WCGI 5)**

Course Calendar:

Below is a suggested course calendar. While the format of the course calendar can vary from the one provided below, when submitting the course for general education requirement approval please be sure to include a column titled "objectives/criteria met". This column should be used to identify which class activities and assignments satisfy each of the general education criteria identified under the "Queens College General Education Statement" and any of the course learning objectives identified on the syllabus under the "Discipline/Course Specific Learning Objectives" section.

Class Meeting	Day & Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments	Objectives/Criteria Met
1	Wed., Aug. 25, 2021	Course introduction	Course overview and review of required texts	FC 1, FC2 LO 1, LO 4
2	Mon., Aug 30, 2021	The Origins of Humankind, Part I	<i>History of the African People</i> , Robert July <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The Genesis of Homo Sapiens,” Part 1: Chapter 1 – p. 8 – 25 	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 2, LO 4
	Wed. Sept. 1, 2021	The Origins of Humankind, Part II	<i>Introduction to African Civilizations</i> , John Jackson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction, Chapter 1, “Africa and the Origin of Man” p. 3 – 59 	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 4
3	Mon. Sept. 6, 2021		Labor Day/Rosh HaShanah – No Class	
	Wed. Sept 8, 2021	The Peopling of Africa	<i>Time Magazine</i> (on Blackboard) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Everyone’s Genealogical Mother” “Tassili” “The Nile’s Other Kingdom” “Ancient Alphabet” “African Symbols” <i>The Lost Cities of Africa</i> , Basil Davidson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preface, p. vii – xi Introduction “The Rediscovery of Africa,” xiii – xix 	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 2, LO 4

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 1 “The Peopling of Africa” Parts: 1 – 4 (p. 1 -21) 	
4	Mon. Sept. 13, 2021	Cradles of Civilization	<p>Lecture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Africa the Birthplace of Mankind and Cradle of Civilization” – <p>View and discuss documentary film “<i>Becoming Human</i>”- Handouts distributed</p>	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 3, LO 4
	Wed. Sept. 15, 2021		No class – Yom Kippur	
5	Mon. Sept. 20, 2021	Ethiopia	<p><i>Introduction to African Civilizations</i>, Jackson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 2, “Ethiopia and the Origin of Civilization,” p. 60 - 92 <p><i>The Lost Cities of Africa</i>, Davidson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 2, “<i>The Mystery of Meroe</i>,” Parts 1 – 5, (23 -50) 	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 2, LO 4
	Wed. Sept. 22, 2021	Sciences of Africa	<p>Journal of African Civilizations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Van Sertima “The Lost Sciences of Africa” “An Overview” p. 7 - 26 - Agricultural Science 	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 4
6	Mon. Sept. 27, 2021	The Human Tree, Part I	View and discuss documentary film “ <i>The Human Family Tree</i> ,” narrated by Geneticist Dr. Spencer Wells	FC 1, FC2, FC3 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 3, LO 4
	Wed. Sept. 29, 2021	The Human Tree, Part II	View and discuss documentary film “ <i>The Human Family Tree</i> ,” narrated by Geneticist Dr.	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 3, LO 4,

			Spencer Wells * Research paper topic due * Quiz #1	LO 5
7	Mon. Oct. 4, 2021	Egypt	<i>Introduction to African Civilizations</i> , Jackson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 3, "Egypt and the Evolution of Civilization," p. 93 – 156 	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO21, LO 4
	Wed. Oct. 6, 2021	Views of Africa	View and discuss Documentary film " <i>Different but Equal</i> ," narrated by Basil Davidson	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 2, LO 3, LO 4
8	Mon. Oct. 11, 2021	Ancient Egypt and the Nile	Journal of African Civilizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> F. Wendorf, R. Schild and A. Close, "An Ancient Harvest of the Nile" p. 58 - 64 Lecture on Ancient Egypt contributions	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 4
	Wed. Oct 13, 2021	The Pyramids	Journal of African Civilizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> B. Lumpkin, "The Pyramids: Ancient showcase," p. 67 – 82 K. Messiha, et al. "African Experimental Aeronautics," p. 92 - 99 * Potential sources for research paper due	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 4, LO 5
9	Mon. Oct. 18, 2021	Mathematics and Medicine	Journal of African Civilizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> B. Lumpkin, "Africa in the Mainstream of Mathematics History," p. 100 - 107 F. Newsome, "Black 	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 4

			Contributions to the Early History of Western Medicine,” p. 127 – 139	
	Wed. Oct. 20, 2021	Mastering a Continent	View and discuss documentary film: “ <i>Mastering a Continent</i> ,” narrated by Basil Davidson	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 2, LO 3, LO 4
10	Mon. Oct. 25. 2021	Medical Sciences	Journal of African Civilizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C.S. Finch, “The African Background of Medical Sciences,” p. 140 – 155 	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 4
	Wed. Oct 27, 2021	History of Physics The Moors	Journal of African Civilizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> J. Pappademos “An Outline of Africa’s role in the History of Physics,” 177 to 194 <i>Introduction to African Civilizations</i> , Jackson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 4 “Africa and the Civilizing of Europe: The Empire of The Moor,” p. 157 – 195 * Midterm Due	FC 1, FC2, FC3 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 2, LO 4
11	Mon. Nov. 1, 2021	West Africa and Old Sudan	<i>Introduction to African Civilizations</i> , Jackson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 5 “The Golden Age of West Africa,” p. 196 - 231 Lost Cities of Africa, Davidson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 3 “Kingdoms of the Old Sudan,” parts: 1 – 10 	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 2, LO 4
	Wed. Nov.3, 2021	Gold	View and discuss documentary film “Caravans	FC 1, FC2, FC3

			of Gold,” narrated by Basil Davidson * Quiz #2 * Research paper - Outline and updated sources due	WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 2, LO 3, LO 4, LO 5
12	Mon. Nov. 8, 2021	Ghana and Mali	Lecture on the Empires of Ghana, Mali Journal of African Civilizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Niangoran-Bouah, “The Ancient Akan Script,” p. 197 – 207 C-A. Winters, “The Ancient Manding Script.” p. 208 - 214 	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 4
	Wed. Nov 10, 2021	Niger and Congo Regions	View and discuss documentary film: “Kings and Cities,” narrated by Basil Davidson <i>Lost Cities of Africa</i> , Davidson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 4, “Between the Niger and The Congo,” Parts 1 – 4 (125 -148) 	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 2, LO 3, LO 4
13	Mon. Nov. 15, 2021	The Songhai, Bornu, and Yoruba	Lecture on the Empires of Songhai and Bornu Journal of African Civilizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C. Zaslavsky, “The Yoruba Number System” p. 110 - 126 Lecture on the Yoruba, the Ashanti and the Oyo kingdoms	FC 1, FC2 WCGI LO 1, LO 4
	Wed. Nov 17, 2021	Mariners and Merchants	<i>Introduction to African Civilizations</i> , Jackson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 6 “Africa and the Discovery of America,” p. 232 - 	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 4

			<p>263</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 7, “Mariners and Merchants of the Eastern Coast,” p. 264 – 282 Chapter 8, “Zimbabwe, Monomotapa and Other Kingdoms,” p. 283 – 295 	
14	Mon. Nov 22, 2021	East African Tribes	<p>Lecture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> East African tribes: The Massai, Kikuyu, Bantu Great Zimbabwe – Mashonaland Civilization <p><i>Lost Cities of Africa</i>, Davidson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 5, “To the Southward,” Parts 1 – 3, p. 149 – 167 	<p>FC 1, FC2</p> <p>WCGI 1, 3, 5</p> <p>LO 1, LO 2, LO 4</p>
	Wed. Nov. 24, 2021	Traders of the Indian Ocean	<p><i>Lost Cities of Africa</i>, Davidson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 6, “Traders of the Indian Ocean,” Parts 1 – 4, p. 169 - 191 Chapter 7, “Fair Cities of Stone,” Parts 1 – 3, p. 193 - 212 Chapter 8, “After Axum” Parts 1 – 5, p. 213-239 	<p>FC 1, FC2</p> <p>WCGI 1, 3, 5</p> <p>LO 1, LO 2, LO 4</p>
15	Mon. Nov 29, 2021	The Swahili and the Bushmen	<p><i>Lost Cities of Africa</i>, Davidson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 9, “The Builders of the South,” Parts 1 – 8, p. 241 - 283 <p>Lecture on the Swazi People</p>	<p>FC 1, FC2</p> <p>WCGI 1, 3, 5</p> <p>LO 1, LO 4</p>
	Wed. Dec 1, 2021	European Exploration and the Slave Trade	Lecture on the Swazi People	FC 1, FC2, F3

			Lecture on the Bushman, San people of the Kalahari Desert * Quiz #3 * Research Paper Due	WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 4, LO 5
16	Mon. Dec. 6, 2021		Lecture on Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert Introduction to African Civilizations, Jackson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 9, "The Destruction of African Culture," p. 296 - 316 Lecture on the European Exploration, the Portuguese The Slave	FC 1, FC2 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 2, LO 4
	Wed. Dec 8, 2021	African History Denied	LAST DAY OF CLASS View and discuss socumentary film " <i>African History Denied</i> ," narrated by Sam Waterston * Final Due date TBD	FC 1, FC2, FC3 WCGI 1, 3, 5 LO 1, LO 3, LO 4

* These statements come directly from the "Suggestions for an Effective Syllabus" proposal which was passed by QC's Academic Senate on March 13, 2009.
