



ANCIENT AFRICAN CIVILIZATIONS

ANTHRO 128 LEC 001 45159 · Tues/Thurs 3:30—4:59PM

2251 College Ave, Berkeley, CA 94720; Room 101

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY · DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

Fall 2017 Course Syllabus

Prof. William A. White, III

Email: wawhite@berkeley.edu

Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 10:00—11:30 AM or by appointment

What is this course about?

This course will survey the development of various ancient civilizations that emerged on the African continent prior to 1500CE. It starts with the assumption that civilization and human development in the early history of Africa resulted from a dynamic process that involved on climate change, migration, technological creations and innovations, sedentary (agricultural) and pastoral (herding) lifestyles, shifting cosmologies (or world views), social stratification, and long-distance trade. Other important themes in this class are the confluence of knowledge production, religion, and art; as well as ancient Africa's significant, yet often unacknowledged, contributions to global culture and scholarship. **3 Undergraduate**

Credit Hours

Why is this course important?

Did you ever wonder what Africans contributed to world history? What were all those people doing before European colonization? You've heard about the Pyramids in Egypt. Why didn't they build pyramids all over Africa? How come there are so many different cultures in Africa? This course will help you better understand the origins of today's African peoples so you can

make better sense of what's going on in Africa today.

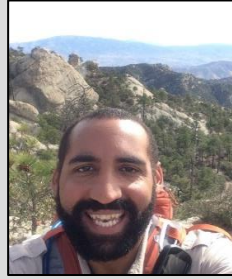
What you should be able to know and do by the end of this course?

- Craft a critical and informed perspective on aspects of African culture, society, and civilization before 1500 CE.
- Understand the role the environment and beliefs play in the development of African cultures.
- Read and interpret college-level resources and clearly convey your interpretation using the written English language.
- Build an understanding of new ideas and foreign human cultures while being aware of your own cultural lens.
- Understand how African prehistory has been studied by non-Africans.

What are the course policies?

- Readings form the core of our class discussions and activities. Please come prepared. I expect you to participate.
- Attendance is optional but you will not do well without attending lectures or group activity meetings.

- Restrict cell phone use to course-related activities. For emergencies, please take your phone outside.
- Late assignments will receive up to 50% of allotted points.
- I am a fan of respect and will do my very best to show you all respect. There may be times when, in discussion, you might disagree with me or the other students. This is okay. We are always free to disagree with others but I expect you to remain respectful in this class.
- Follow the directions on all assignments and be a good partner in all group activities



About the Instructor: For as long as he can remember, Bill White has always wanted to become an archaeologist. His professional archaeology career began in 2004 when he started working in cultural resource management. More recently, Bill's work has focused on community-based public archaeology with an emphasis on African American history and the racialization process. His current research interests include heritage conservation, historic preservation law and practice, cultural landscapes, and digital humanities.

Are there any required texts?

Yes, but you don't have to pay! I will provide course readings as PDF documents that you can access on the class bCourses site.

Notification of Objectionable

Materials: Some portions of the course content may be considered unsettling by some students, but such materials and subjects are important for the learning process. Students are not excused from interacting with such materials, but they are certainly encouraged to express well-formed opinions that express those objections and their reasons for them. These potentially objectionable subjects in this class include, but are not limited to: *human evolution, human skeletal remains, ethnocentrism, slavery, and visual depictions of violent events*. Please tell me in advance if you will have difficulties addressing any of these topics.

How will you be graded?

ASSIGNMENT	POINTS	YOUR SCORE	DUE DATES
Online Quizzes	150		Weekly
Writing Assignments	400		9/6; 9/27; 10/18; 11/8
Exams	200		10/12; 12/13
Final Project Poster	100		12/3
Final Group Presentation	100		TBD
Group Project Meetings	50		TBD
TOTAL	1,000	Your total points ÷ 900 = Your grade	

This class uses a flexible grading system. You might have noticed there are 1,000 points possible but my grade is based on the points I've earned divided by 900? *What's up with that?* While there are 1000 total points available, your final grade will be calculated based on a maximum score of 900 points. This means you have 100 extra points (a spread or margin or extra credit or whatever else you want to call it). I've found that providing a cushion of points helps students earn better grades while still working hard.

ANTHRO 128 GRADING SCALE		
A	>90%	1000-810
B	89-80%	809-720
C	79-70%	719-630
D	69-60%	629-540
F	<60%	539 and below

The flexible grading system in action:

Under this grading system, you have the choice to earn points beyond the maximum course grade. This means you could, hypothetically, get more than 100% in this class. This grading system gives you room to do less than your best on any given assignment because you don't need to score the highest grade on every assignment to get an 'A' in the class. *You could even get a 0% on a major project like an exam or writing assignment and still get an 'A.'* Most importantly, this system gives you options on which assignments you

should focus on and which ones don't need your full attention. I want you to do your best on every assignment but realize stuff happens; nobody's perfect. Try hard and you won't have to be perfect in order to earn a high grade in this class.

There is no extra credit or grading curves in this class because there are already 100 "extra" points available. Also, it is difficult to convince me to let you make up most assignments because you have a 100-point cushion. Contact me BEFORE you miss an assignment in order to schedule a make-up.

If you apply yourself consistently throughout the semester, you will benefit greatly from this grading system. There is no reason for you not to do well as long as you are putting forth effort on as many of the assignments as possible.

How is this class structured?

Thematically, content for this course is divided into three units:

1. **(Pre)History:** An overview of what archaeologists, anthropologists and historians know about African prehistory and early history prior to 1500 C.E.
2. **Art History:** An objective look at the unique architectural and artistic traditions of several African cultures before 1500.
3. **Epic Traditions and Oral History:** Oral histories chronicle most of Africa's history before 1500. This section is an overview of the role epic tales and oral histories have played in documenting the continent's past.

All units require attending lecture and diligently reading course content.

What do you have to do to get an 'A'?

Assignments in this class are designed to help students improve their technical writing and research skills. Your final project will also test your ability to collaborate with others. Course content will be used as the topics and datasets for writing assignments that focus on developing technical writing abilities, a skill that can be applied to any college essay, scholarship, grant application, or research project after graduation.

The grading system for this course provides flexibility and includes a number of different assignment types. As explained above, students are given the freedom to pursue

the grade they would like to earn because they can choose which assignments they would like to complete and how thoroughly they would like to complete them.

Your final grade will be based on how well you performed on four short essays, a take-home written midterm, 15 weekly quizzes, a take-home written final exam, attending group project meetings, and a final group project.

Weekly Quizzes: A 10-point quiz will be made available each weekend on the class bCourses site. Each quiz will cover course content from the week's readings and lectures.

Writing Assignments: The essays for this course are designed to push students to produce efficient, precise analytical writing that draws upon course content such as readings, other peer-reviewed sources, online videos, and the lectures. Your essays will center around the requirements for your final project (*more on the final project below*).

Midterm and Final Exams: You will have 48 hours to complete these tests at home and submit them to a folder on the class' bCourses page. These tests will cover key concepts from the first half of the course respectively.

What's the deal with this group project?

Your biggest grade for the class, worth 250 points, is a semester-long group project where you will complete a poster related to a hypothetical heritage conservation project:

Hypothetical Project 1: A community based archaeology project in ancient Aksum—You will research a possible public archaeology project related to the ancient Aksumite kingdom in Ethiopia.

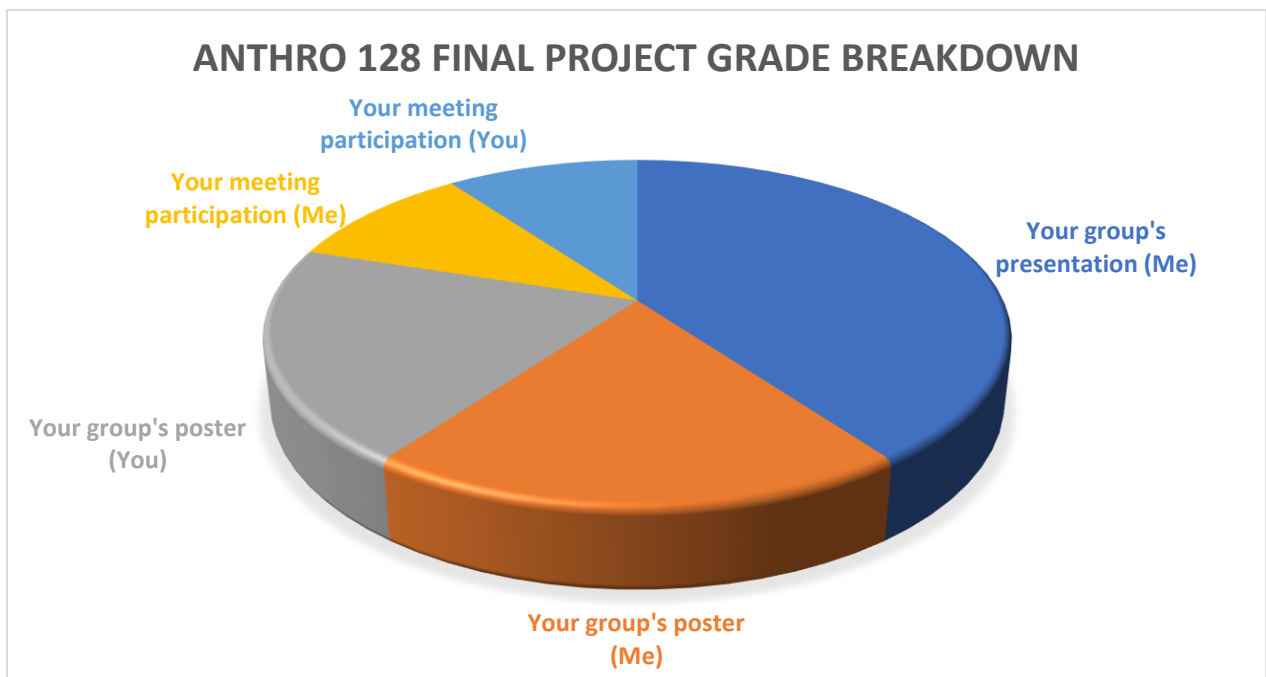
Hypothetical Project 2: Heritage tourism in Yorubaland—Here you will be writing in anticipation of the launch of a heritage tourism project focused on the ancient Yoruba city of Ile Ife in Nigeria.

Hypothetical Project 3: Literary heritage conservation in Mali—For this scenario, you will be contributing to a proposal for a digital humanities project devoted to preserving some of the literary and architectural heritage of medieval Mali.

Your group will have to study the archaeological, social, and cultural history of your project area, outline a hypothetical project, and create a poster like those shown

at professional conferences highlighting how you would tackle the issue. Your group will give a 15-minute presentation on your poster in the last week of class. To do well on this assignment, you will have to work together as cordial teammates and make contributions to the overall project.

For your final project, you will be graded based on: 1) your group's final project (200 points) and 2) how well you worked with your group (50 points). I will give your entire group a grade on how well you present your material and handle the question and answer period (100 points). For your group's final poster, I will also assign half of the points (50 points) and your group will assign the other half of the points (50 points). Your participation grade (50 points) will also be divided between my score and the one your group gives you.



*Reading and assignment schedule

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
1	8/23—8/26/2017	Introduction	Syllabus, Gilbert and Reynolds 2012 preface, Ch. 1	Quiz 1
2	8/27—9/2/2017	Archaeology: Environment, Evolution, and Prehistory	Gilbert and Reynolds 2012 Ch. 2—4	Quiz 2
3	9/3—9/9/2017 (Labor Day Weekend)	Archaeology: Ancient Egypt, Nubia, and the City-State	Connah 2001 Ch. 2; Shaw 2013; Shillington 1995 Ch. 2	Quiz 3; Writing Assignment #1 due 9/6
4	9/10—9/16/2017	Archaeology: Early Christianity and Islam in Africa	El Fasi and Hrbek 1995; Gilbert and Reynolds 2012 Ch. 6,7, and 8	Quiz 4,
5	9/17—9/23/2017	Archaeology: Ancient Mali and Aksum	Connah 2001 Ch. 3 and 4; Insoll 2015; Kobishanov 1995	Quiz 5
6	9/24—9/30/2017	Archaeology: Yorubaland and the Swahili Coast	De Maret 2013; Mekouria 1995; Sheriff 1995; Shillington 1995 Ch. 4	Quiz 6; Writing Assignment #2 due 9/27
7	10/1—10/7/2017	Art History: Ethnocentrism and African art appreciation	Visona et al. 2008 Intro and Aspects of African Culture; Abiodun 2001; Mark 1999; Musonida 1996	Quiz 7
8	10/8—10/14/2017	Art History: Saharan rock art	Ki-Zerbo 1995; Visona et al. 2008 Maghreb and Sahara	Midterm due 10/12; NO QUIZ
9	10/15—10/21/2017	Art History: Art, Islam, and Ancient Mali	Garlake 2002:96—115; Visona et al. 2008 Mali,	Quiz 8; Writing Assignment #3 due 10/18

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
			Ghana, Songhai; Wilson 2011	
10	10/22—10/28/2017	Art History: Art and expression in Yorubaland	Garlake 2002:116—139; Visona et al. 2008 Benin, Yoruba, and Dahomey	Quiz 9
11	10/29—11/4/2017	Oral History: Stories as text	Lyons 2013; Schmidt 2013; Stoller 1994	Quiz 10
12	11/5—11/11/2017	Oral History: West African Griot tradition	Belcher: Introduction & Chapter 1; Hale: Introduction and Chapter 2	Quiz 11; Writing Assignment #4 due 11/8
13	11/12—11/18/2017	Oral History: Epic of Sundiata	Niane's <i>Sundiata</i> (pg. vii-96)	Quiz 12
14	11/19—11/25/2017 (Thanksgiving Week)	Oral History: Ile Ife and Yoruba origins	Barber 1981; Olúpōnà 2011:86—107	Quiz 13
15	11/26—12/2/2017	Heritage Conservation in Africa	Alberts and Hazen 2010; Arazi and Thiaw 2013; Schmidt 2017	Quiz 14; Final presentation poster due Sunday 12/3
16	12/3—12/9/2017	Heritage Conservation in Africa	RRR WEEK (NO READINGS)	Quiz 15, Final Presentations TBD
17	12/10—12/16/2017	Final Exam		Final Exam due Wednesday 12/13; NO QUIZ

* Readings are essential to your success in this class. Please complete each week's readings by the start of class each Tuesday

University of California, Berkeley Course Policies

Safe Spaces

Lecture and group project meetings are open spaces for the discussion of topics that some may find controversial or sensitive. Active participation is both encouraged and expected. Please contribute to the discussion, ask questions, and feel free to disagree with your instructor, fellow students, and any of the course content in a respectful manner. The university takes threatening and/or disruptive behavior very seriously. Please see the appropriate sections of the Berkeley Campus Student Code of Student Conduct for discussions of threatening and disruptive behavior (http://sa.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/UCB-Code-of-Conduct-new%20Jan2012_0.pdf)

If you are concerned about the behavior of those in this class, you can view the many Safe Spaces for Students options offered by Cal Berkeley (<http://diversity.berkeley.edu/community-support-spaces-and-resources/services-and-safe-spaces-students>) or those offered by the Berkeley Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination (<https://ophd.berkeley.edu/>)

Academic Integrity

(<http://teaching.berkeley.edu/statements-course-policies#academic>)

Any test, paper or report submitted by you and that bears your name is presumed to be your own original work that has not previously been submitted for credit in another course unless you obtain prior written approval to do so from your instructor. *In this class, the only exception to this rule is the text on the poster for your final project.* In all of your assignments, including your homework or drafts of papers, you may use words or ideas written by other individuals in publications, web sites, or other sources, but

only with proper attribution. If you are not clear about the expectations for completing an assignment or taking a test or examination, be sure to seek clarification from your instructor beforehand. Finally, you should keep in mind that as a member of the campus community, you are expected to demonstrate integrity in all of your academic endeavors. The consequences of cheating and academic dishonesty—including a formal discipline file, possible loss of future internship, scholarship, or employment opportunities, and denial of admission to graduate school—are simply not worth it.

Cheating: Anyone caught cheating on a quiz or exam will receive a failing grade and will also be reported to the University Office of Student Conduct. Except for the final project in this class, please do your own work on writing assignments, quizzes, and exams in order to guarantee that you are not suspected of cheating. Make sure the documents you upload to bCourses were created by you on your own computer at an IP address associated with you.

Plagiarism/Self-plagiarism: I encourage collaboration, but you must be original in composing the writing assignments in this class. To copy text or ideas from another source (including your own previously, or concurrently, submitted course work) without appropriate reference is plagiarism and will result in a failing grade for your assignment and usually further disciplinary action. For additional information on plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and how to avoid it, see, for example: <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/instruct/guides/citations.html#Plagiarism> Here's what I have to do if you're caught plagiarizing <http://gsi.berkeley.edu/teachingguide/misconduct/prevent-plag.html>

Turnitin: UC Berkeley's honor code states "As a member of the UC Berkeley community, I act with honesty, integrity, and respect for others." As a tool to promote academic integrity in this

course, written work submitted via bCourses may be checked for originality using Turnitin. Turnitin compares student work to a database of books, journal articles, websites, and other student papers. This creates an opportunity for students to improve their academic writing skills, by ensuring that other sources have been properly cited and attributed. For more information about Turnitin at UC Berkeley, visit: <http://ets.berkeley.edu/academic-integrity>

Letters of Accommodation: I am dedicated to making this course available and passible to any student, regardless of disability. If you need accommodation to help with any of my assignments, please request a Letter of Accommodation from the university (<http://dsp.berkeley.edu/students/returning-students/letters-accomodation>).

Accommodation of Religious Creed: I respect all religious beliefs. If any of my assignments conflict with a religious event, please tell me in advance so we can make arrangements (<http://sa.berkeley.edu/uga/religion>).

Scheduling Conflicts: Life happens. I know. If you have a conflict with any of the assignments in class, please notify me BEFORE you need to miss class or an assignment. We can work something out.

Technology Disclaimer: This is not an online class but you will not be able to easily access course materials without: internet access (WiFi, Ethernet, 4G service) and a computer (PC or Mac), a tablet (Microsoft Surface, iPad, Samsung Galaxy Tab), and/or a smartphone (iPhone, Galaxy, whatever else there is in the world). I scanned all the course readings because I didn't want you to spend \$300—500.00 on books you will only use for 3 months. So, if you don't already have access to one of these devices and internet/4G reception, please use the money you saved on books for this class to get some internet and a digital device with Microsoft

Word. If you've already got this stuff, you're golden.

Likewise, this course heavily uses its bCourses site. There, you will find your readings, submit your written assignments, access quizzes, and collaborate with classmates on your group project. I will do my best to make sure the website is working, but please tell me if anything on the website does not work. Also, glitches with the website are not excuses for you to not complete course assignments. Back up any problems with an email with your assignment attached. I will help walk you through any problems but you still need to do the work.

The Department of Anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley

The anthropology department at Berkeley is [one of the top three anthropology programs in the world](#). Your school is at the cutting edge when it comes to archaeology, sociocultural anthropology, and biological anthropology. See what's going on in anthro: <http://anthropology.berkeley.edu/news>. Or, beat the rush and change your major or minor to anthropology:

<http://anthropology.berkeley.edu/undergraduate/anthropology-majors>

