

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
DIVISION OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

**REQUEST FOR INCLUSION OF A COURSE IN THE
GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM:
EDUCATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY**

DEPARTMENT/SCHOOL: AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES COLLEGE: ARTS & SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT CONTACT: VICTOR O. OKAFOR CONTACT PHONE: 7-3460

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1. Subject Code, Number, and Title: AAS 102 Introduction to African Civilization (03 hrs)

2. Credit Hours 03 hrs

3. Course Description

AAS 102, African Civilization is designed to provide the students with an introductory knowledge of centers of African Civilization from antiquity to the 1960s. Among those centers are Ancient Egypt, Nubia, Axum, Ghana, Mali, Songhai, Kilwa, Sofola, Malinda, Mutapa (Monomotapa), etc.

4. This course is (check one):

- an existing course with no revisions (need not go through the input system)
- an existing course with revisions (attach this form to Request for Course Revision form)
- a new course (attach this form to Request for New Course form)

5. Check the General Education requirement this course is intended to meet. If the course is to be proposed for more than one requirement, submit a separate form for each one.

- Effective Communication**
- Quantitative Reasoning (*QR designation*)**
- Writing Intensive (*WI designation*)**

X Perspectives on a Diverse World

xGlobal Awareness

U.S. Diversity

Knowledge of the Disciplines

Arts

Humanities

Science

Social Science

Learning Beyond the Classroom (*LBC designation*)

- Self and Well Being
- Community Service, Citizenship, and Leadership
- Cultural and Academic Activities and Events
- Career and Professional Development
- International and Multicultural Experience
- Undergraduate Research

6. Rationale. Provide a concise, clear, jargon-free explanation of why this is a General Education course and how it fits into this specific area of the program. (The rationale should explain to students why they are taking the course. It should address both why it is part of the General Education program and why it fits into the particular category.) This rationale should appear on the general course syllabus provided here and should be included in specific course syllabi given to students.

AAS 102, African Civilization is designed to provide the students with an introductory knowledge of centers of African Civilization from antiquity to the 1960s. Among those centers are Ancient Egypt, Nubia, Axum, Ghana, Mali, Songhai, Kilwa, Sofola, Malinda, Mutapa (Monomotapa), etc. Apart from becoming familiar with such key centers of African Civilization, the students will explore the influence that African Civilization exerted on other cultures, as well as the impact of cross-cultural contacts on African Civilization itself. Preliminary subjects of discussion include historical and paleontological data examining the thesis of the African origin of humanity.

This course meets the Global Awareness category of the General Education Program because EMU students cannot achieve a comprehensive picture of "issues and perspectives"¹ in global awareness without acquiring knowledge of African civilization, given that Africans form a constituent part of the global humanity.

7. Clearly and concisely explain how this course meets each of the General Education outcomes for the requirement checked in number five (all outcomes should be addressed). To do this, (a) list the General Education outcomes for the requirement and explain how the course meets each outcome; and (b) explain, in general terms, the method(s) of evaluation to be used in the course and how these methods assess the degree to which students have met the General Education outcomes for this requirement.

a. In the Global Awareness course, students will:

1. Explore specific global issues influencing diverse nations and/or cultures, along with their interrelations within the global community.
2. Explore their own culture and cultural practices and how these relate to the cultures and cultural practices of others in the global community.

¹ General Education Reform Committee, p. 5.

3. Explore the social and historical dynamics that create and influence nations, governments, global alliances, and global conflicts.
4. Explore the causes and consequences of social, cultural, and racial intolerance in the world.
5. Analyze and synthesize information from diverse sources to make informed decisions regarding global issues.

Expected Learning Outcomes of AAS 102 & their Evaluation Methods

Learning Outcome 7a(1). First, the subject of the origin of humanity remains a contentious issue across cultural, national, educational and religious communities of the globe, which tend to embrace contrasting theories and perspectives of how humanity came about, such as creationism and evolution. Given that this course deals with African civilization and that evolutionary science, such as paleontology, points to Africa as the birthplace of humanity, without which there would be no civilization to talk of, AAS 102 students will examine and understand key paleontological findings that support the African-origin thesis.

Second, the question of the origin of human civilization also remains a contentious issue across cultural, national and educational institutions, particularly in the West whose educational systems were historically built on a foundation that was influenced by the hegemonic ideology of white supremacy. As part of their exploration of learning outcome #1, AAS 102 students will examine and understand extant debates about the origin of human civilization, including a controversy surrounding the thesis of an African-origin of human civilization.

Third, in addition to the global question of the origin of human civilization, there is also a related contentious issue of who really were the Egyptians. Although Egypt is located in the northeast corner of Africa, debate rages within academic circles, as to whether the Egyptians were black or white. In AAS 102, students will learn about an Ancient model of knowledge as to who really were the Egyptians, in contrast with what has been described as an Aryan model. In this regard, AAS 102 students will learn about ancient historians' eye-witness portrayals of Ancient Egyptians, such as those provided by Herodotus, the Diodorus of Sicily and Strabo.

Method of Evaluation 7b(1). To measure this outcome, the student is required to write expository and evaluative writing-to-learn essays (posted on the web caucus) in which the student summarizes, synthesizes and evaluates knowledge about the origin of humanity, knowledge about the origin of human civilization and knowledge about the question of who were the ancient Egyptians. In addition to these critical writing-to-learn assignments, specific knowledge and information pertaining to the origin of humanity, the origin of civilization and the question of who were the Egyptians are measured through a short pop quiz (made up of multiple choice and true or false questions) that is administered during one of the two major phases of this course. Finally, questions pertaining to the afore-mentioned specific knowledge and information are among the fifty questions contained in one of the two scheduled multiple choice and true or false question examinations that are administered during the semester.

Learning Outcome 7a(2). While recognizing that Africa itself is a continent of diverse 54 nations, boasting of more than 800 language/ethnic groups, AAS 102 students will compare and contrast common and dominant features of African traditional social structures, such as the family (extended and nuclear), marriage (monogamous and polygamous), political structures and economic systems with their counterparts from the students' own Western experience, as a means of exploring their own culture and cultural practices and how their cultural experiences relate to the cultures and cultural practices of others, such as Africans, in the global community.

Method of Evaluation 7b(2). In order to evaluate this outcome, the student is required to write expository

and evaluative writing-to-learn essays (posted on the web caucus) in which the student summarizes, synthesizes and evaluates knowledge about key and common African traditional social structures, such as the family, marriage, political structures and economic systems. In addition to these critical writing-to-learn assignments, knowledge and information pertaining to African traditional social structures are also measured through a short pop quiz (made up of multiple choice and true or false questions) that is administered during one of the two phases of this course. Finally, questions pertaining to the preceding learning outcome are among the fifty questions contained in one of the two scheduled multiple choice and true or false question examinations that are administered during the semester.

Learning Outcome 7a(3). AAS 102 will assist students in their exploration of the social and historical dynamics that create and influence nations, governments, global alliances, and global conflicts by exposing them to the social and historical dynamics that influenced the formation, governance, progress, regional commercial alliances, as well as the conflicts that led to the demise of a set of centers of ancient African civilization. Thus, there are three components of this learning outcome.

In part one, AAS 102 students will learn about how Pharaoh Menes created the first kingdom of ancient Egypt, known as the old kingdom (3200-2250 B.C.E) by amalgamating southern and northern Egypt in 3200 B.C.E.; they will learn about the old kingdom's development of farming communities, construction and use of sea-worthy ships, the building of houses with sun-dried mud bricks, the development of pictographic form of writing, the manufacture of paper from papyrus reed for record-keeping, the development of pottery, and advances in medicine that included the diagnosis and treatment of more than 200 diseases as dynamics that influenced the advancement of ancient Egyptian society.

In part two of the exploration of outcome #3 of AAS 102, students will see how a trans-regional trade, known as the Trans-Saharan trade (involving West Africans and North Africans), Islam, internal and external warfare served as dynamics that influenced the emergence, governance and expansion of three major empires in the medieval period of African civilization, namely Ghana empire (622 A.D. to 1203 A.D.), Mali empire (1235 A.D. to 1500 A.D.) and Songhai empire (1475 A.D. to 1600 A.D.).

In part three of the exploration of outcome #3 of AAS 102, students will learn about how another trans-regional trade, known as the Indian Ocean trade (which involved Africans as hosts, Arabs, the Chinese and Indians), served as a dynamic for the development and prosperity of a set of medieval East African coastal city states, namely Kilwa, Malinda, Mombasa, Sofala and Zanzibar, as from 810 A.D. to about 1500 A.D.

Evaluation Method 7b(3). In order to evaluate this outcome, the student is required to write expository and evaluative writing-to-learn essays (posted on the web caucus) in which the student summarizes, synthesizes and evaluates knowledge about the afore-mentioned developments during three kingdoms of ancient Egypt, knowledge about the trans-Saharan regional trade its impact upon the medieval empires of West Africa, and knowledge about the Indian Ocean regional trade and its impact upon the medieval coastal city states of East Africa. In addition to these critical writing-to-learn assignments, specific knowledge and information about those elements of this learning outcome are also measured through a short pop quiz (made up of multiple choice and true or false questions) that is administered during one of the two phases of this course. Finally, questions pertaining to the preceding learning outcome are among the fifty questions contained in one of the two scheduled multiple choice and true or false question examinations that are administered during the semester.

Learning Outcome 7a(4). African civilization eventually came under a set of destructive external influences, which students will examine, in two phases, as a means of exploring and understanding various causes and consequences of the social, cultural, and racial intolerance in the world. In phase one, AAS 102

students will learn about Europe's brusque and bloody second contact with Africa as from the 15th century, starting with the Portuguese. In this regard, they will learn about how Portuguese sailors inaugurated a trade in African captives, otherwise known as the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, by kidnapping Africans off the coast of Guinea as from the 1440s. Though it began in trickles, this dynamic eventually evolved into armed raids upon the African interiors by slaving companies, alliances between slaving Western companies and conquered African leaders, and widespread civil unrest in the affected regions of Africa. Though this trade in human captives was inaugurated by the Portuguese, all the other Western European powers eventually participated in it.

In phase two of their exploration of learning outcome #4 in AAS 102, students will learn about the Western colonial occupation and rule of Africa and how this dynamic led to the underdevelopment of Africa, the transformation of Africa into an economic hinterland, a technological debtor and a political satellite. Colonial domination involved cultural denigration, economic exploitation and political domination. Contemporary problematic Western perceptions of Africa and African capacities, along with lingering Western beliefs in African inferiority vis-à-vis lingering Western beliefs in racial supremacy are among the legacies of the propaganda and theories of African biological inferiority and cultural dysfunctionality used by missionaries and colonial authorities to justify their African adventures. Those legacies are among the causes of lingering social, cultural and racial intolerance that still plague the New World.

Evaluation Method 7b(4). In order to measure this outcome, the student is required to write expository and evaluative writing-to-learn essays (posted on the web caucus) in which the student summarizes, synthesizes and evaluates knowledge about the afore-mentioned facts and consequences of both the trade in African captives and the Western European colonial occupation of Africa. In addition to these critical writing-to-learn assignments, specific knowledge and information about those elements of this learning outcome are also measured through a short pop quiz (made up of multiple choice and true or false questions) that is administered during one of the two phases of this course. Finally, questions pertaining to the preceding learning outcome are among the fifty questions contained in one of the two scheduled multiple choice and true or false question examinations that are administered during the semester.

Learning Outcome 7a(5). By studying, summarizing, analyzing and synthesizing information and knowledge from a set of interdisciplinary sources, authors and materials, such as Cheikh Anta Diop's Civilization or Barbarism, his African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality, and Basil Davidson's African Civilization Revisited, the students of AAS 102 will strengthen their capacity to analyze and synthesize information from diverse sources in order to make informed decisions regarding the following global issues: international commerce, the role of religion in human civilization, cultural diffusionism, war and peace.

Evaluation Method 7b(5). Method of Evaluation: As a method of evaluation of this outcome, the students will write critical essays on my web caucus conference about international commerce, the role of religion in human civilization, cultural diffusionism, war and peace on the basis of the afore-mentioned texts.

8. Attach a syllabus (1-inch margins and 10-12 pt. font). The syllabus must include the rationale from #6 above and clearly reflect the outcomes and methods of evaluation detailed in #7 above.

Please submit all materials in electronic form.

Action of the Department/College

1. Department

Vote of department faculty: For _____ Against _____ Abstentions _____

Department Head

Date

2. College

College Dean

Date

Action of General Education Advisory Committee

Vote of General Education Committee: For _____ Against _____ Abstentions _____

Chairperson, General Education Advisory Committee

Date

Approval

Associate Vice-President for Undergraduate Studies and Curriculum

Date