Tufts University - Department of History
History 191 0 African History Research Seminar
Wednesday, 1:20 – 4:20  East Hall Lounge
Jeanne Marie Penvenne

SAMPLE SYLLABUS – THIS WAS FALL OF 2008
I WILL CHANGE MY READINGS BUT MY STRATEGY FOR THE COURSE WILL BE VERY SIMILAR

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Office Hours: Office Hours, Tuesdays, 1:30 – 2:30 and Wednesday 9:00 -10:30

Introduction/ Overview:
The essential tasks of this seminar are to define, research, write up, present and critique a substantive seminar paper. The class will work as a team, but I will meet each of you individually in the first several weeks to help you define your topic and work up a précis and research schedule. Although the exact focus of the seminar will depend upon the students’ research interests, I will encourage synergies and clusters so that we can build on one another’s work. At one level, we pursue these goals as a group through steps, but at another level, each of you will be pressing ahead with your individual research questions. The success of the course hinges on building an intellectual community where we share resources and trust each other to draw out our best efforts. The goal is to leave the course with better writing, thinking, research, presentation and critical skills.

In the first component we review African historiography and theory, while brainstorming topics. Defining your topic and how you will approach it will be, predictably, your most difficult task. In the second we interrogate sources and methods – figuring out how best to approach, analyze and flesh out our topics. In the third we write up, present, critique and polish our research papers. We experiment with writing as we hone our seminar papers draft by draft. Each student will gain experience as a researcher, presenter and critic. Those are all essential skills.

I will initiate and sustain a conversation about analysis, framing issues, lenses and discourses. Until quite recently, we took a lot as given, but over the past half century we have come to appreciate how many factors shape historians lenses.
I will introduce and guide a conversation about developing text, performance, image, microform and electronic sources to best effect. We will consider strategies appropriate to developing sources for our research. We will schedule a GIS session, and an ALUKA session so that you will be familiar with each as a research tool, and so at least some of you may incorporate it.

**Evaluation:**

**Map:** Africa is 20% of the world’s earth surfaces. It is politically, environmentally and otherwise a very big and complicated place. Geography and location matter so we will have a map exam.

**Research Paper:** Research happens in stages. The evaluations define the stages. The dates keep us on track, so you must stick to them. If you do not, predictably, you will have problems. We will work in drafts, not simply to emphasize process, but to be sure we scare up problems along the way, and not on the night before the final draft is due. Since we probably can not all present and critique in the same class, the syllabus gives sacrificial lamb points to those who go first.

**Class Discussion, Presentation, Critique**

Everyone should prepare and bring her/his brain as well as body to class so we can have good discussions.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Map exam</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Precis and Preliminary Bibliography</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Draft Research Paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Second Draft Research Paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critique of Presenter</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Revised Presentation Draft</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Discussion</td>
<td>20% (cumulative)</td>
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All discussion readings are available in a packet for purchase or in pdf files on Blackboard.

**Schedule of Classes**

**Week One - 3 September**

- Introduction, Overview and Diagnostics
- Group Discussion of Topics / One on One w/ Penvenne
- Reading for Week Two:
**Week Two - 10 September**
- African Intellectuals, Power Discourses, Networks & Change
- Discussion; Mama, Cooper, Burke
- Tisch - Interlibrary loan via ILIAD
- Continue / One on One w/ Penvenne in Tisch Cafe
- Reading for Week Three:

**Week Three - 17 September**
- **Map Exam 5%**
- African Historiography
- Discussion – Cooper & Atieno-Odhiambo
- Tisch Media - View Revising Prose, Richard Lanham, V4218 Continue One on One
- Reading for Week Four

**Week Four - 24 September**
- Women & Gender
- Discussion Scott / Zeleza
- Reading for Week Five

**Week Five - 1 October**
- **Précis & Bibliography DUE (15%)**
- New History & Masculinities
- Discussion – Zeleza / Miescher / Lindsay
- Tisch Research Electronic Sources – ALUKA / Press, Journals, Photos
- Reading for week Six
Leroy Vail & Landeg White, Power & Praise, Chapter 7, "Possession of the Dispossessed : Songs as History among Tumbuka Women."

Week Six - 8 October
Hearing Oralcy
Discussion Penvenne & Sitoe / Vail & White
Alternative Microfilm / GIS Workshop
Reading for week seven

Week Seven – 15 October
Feminist Theory and Oralcy
Discussion – What are Geiger’s key points
Alternative Microfilm / GIS Workshop
Reading for Week Eight

Week Eight - 22 October
First Draft of Research Paper DUE (10%)
Invisible Histories
Discussion of Feierman
Reading for Week Nine

Week Nine – 29 October
Expertise, Knowledge, Development and Power – Hearing One Another
Discussion Peters
One on One Meetings and Research

Week Ten - 5 November
Second Draft of Research Paper DUE (10%)
Presentation skills / Olin Language Lab
Meetings w/ Penvenne & Groups – What is missing with your draft?

Week Eleven - 12 November
Discussion of our Drafts – What is going well what is not.
Presentation Drafts Group 1 DUE EMAILED TO ALL BY NOON NOV. 17

Week Twelve - 19 November
Presentations & Critiques (10% of grade Presentation / 10% of grade Critique)

NO CLASS 26 November – Happy Thanksgiving

Presentation Drafts Group 2 DUE EMAILED TO ALL BY NOON DEC 1

Week Thirteen - 3 December
Presentations & Critiques (10% of grade Presentation / 10% of grade Critique)

Final Revisions DUE 20% of Grade
10 December at NOON - No exceptions.