Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - 2024-2025

Exchange

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam offers many English-taught courses in a variety of subjects, ranging from arts & culture and social sciences, neurosciences and computer science, to economics and business administration.

The International Office is responsible for course approval and course registration for exchange students. For details about course registration, requirements, credits, semesters and so on, please [visit the exchange programmes webpages](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa and the World, 1800-present

Course Code	L_GABAGES226
Credits	6
Period	P2
Course Level	300
Language Of Tuition	English
Faculty	Faculty of Humanities
Course Coordinator	dr. W. Mwatwara
Examiner	dr. W. Mwatwara
Teaching Staff	dr. W. Mwatwara
Teaching method(s)	Lecture

Course Objective

- To give an intensive introduction to an unfamiliar period and/or approach to the study of history;
- To offer experience in the history and debates about sub-Saharan Africa and the world since 1800;
- To develop skills in analysing historiography; and
- To develop core skills such as: bibliographical search techniques; source analysis; essay writing; giving presentations; and, undertaking independent research.

Students who complete this module successfully will:

- Acquire insight into the history, historiography, and debates about the historical relationship between sub-Saharan Africa and the world since 1800;
- Comprehend how incorporation into/ participation in global networks has shaped sub-Saharan African societies over time.
- Work with primary and secondary sources, applying appropriate concepts and (digital) methodological tools;
- Effectively communicate their ideas in oral form, participating actively in class, preparing group presentations, and coordinating class discussions;
- Develop their academic writing skills, by preparing a book review, a primary source analysis, and a research paper based on primary and secondary sources.

Course Content

Africans and people for whom Africa has been a critical point of reference are actors on the world scene and have been for a long time. For this reason, sub-Saharan African countries, institutions, people, and economies are intertwined with the world in many ways. Its recent history has mostly been characterized by, among other things, violent conflict, abject poverty and governmental mismanagement. Despite its long painful and tragic engagement with the world, sub-Saharan Africa is probably one of the most misunderstood and misrepresented regions in the modern world. This module utilizes sub-Saharan Africa as a starting point from which to explore the spatial, technological, political and socio-economic location of Africa in global networks since 1800, and demonstrate how this has had an impact on the African condition. It seeks to inculcate a productive understanding of Africa's place (past and present) in the world. Special attention is given to the dynamics that produced generations of African facilitators, as Joseph Miller has argued, "from the suppliers of slaves through post-colonial "gatekeeping" elites brokering flows of funds and commodities between national economies and international capital, often to their and their clients' personal advantage." An understanding of the relationship between sub-Saharan Africa and the world enriches understanding of both global connections and specific regional, sub-regional and local contexts. Crucially, it encourages students to assess how Africans shaped as well as experienced such engagements.

Additional Information Teaching Methods

2 Seminars (4 hours per week) plus work in archives, independent and assisted by teachers (scheduled moments)

Method of Assessment

- Participation in class (10%)
- Research portfolio (40%), including
- a book review (20%)

- a primary source analysis (10%)
- a research pitch: an oral presentation of the research paper (10%)
- Research paper (50%)

Format: The teacher will provide a list of texts that students can select. Students are also allowed to suggest their own preferred texts. Within the broader theme, the reading list will be adapted to fit the interests and needs of the students who participate.

Meetings: weekly, by appointment.

Reading list as discussed with students (ca. 600 pages)