Overview of Course
This survey course explores the history of West Africa from the earliest known agricultural and pastoral communities to the present modern states. The organizing theme is interaction and convergence. The idea here is that history is made when people converge or come together and interact, peacefully or otherwise. Accordingly, West Africans created their present culture through interactions among themselves, their environment, and with outsiders. The class will examine some of the most significant convergences to determine who West Africans interacted with, how they interacted, and the effects of these interactions.

Course Objectives
The general objective of the class is to acquire basic knowledge of pre-colonial, colonial, and contemporary West Africa.

Required Texts (all small-sized books and easy to read)
1. Boahen et al., Topics in West African History (primary textbook)
2. Keim, Mistaking Africa
3. Niane, Sundiata
4. Benjamin, A Student’s Guide to History

Course Requirement
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>% of Course Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 exams</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 quizzes</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 two-page-long paper</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Palaver Hut</td>
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<tr>
<td>News of Africa (NOA)</td>
<td>05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
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(Conversion of the final numerical grade is based on this formula: A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69; F=0-59.)
Attendance
You are required to come to class regularly and participate in the discussions. I will allow three penalty-free absences; all others have consequences. If you expect to miss more than the three absences, drop the class. Every absence means that you will miss the NOA, the Palaver Hut or the general class discussion: absences prevent you from taking part in these important class activities. Consequently, absences will adversely affect your semester grade. As a rule, there are no make-ups for missed exams and quizzes.

Exams
Exams will require that you write full, grammatically correct sentences. The exams will be drawn from a list of questions given to the class prior to the exam. Questions will be constructed in ways that will entail critical thinking and analysis. (For instance, you will be asked to discuss, justify, evaluate, etc.) Excellent tips for taking notes and studying can be found in A Student's Guide to History (Chapters 2 & 3). Dates of the exams and quizzes are listed below.

Quizzes
Quizzes are mostly objective questions, i.e., they will require answers that are directly from the readings and lectures.

Two-page-long paper: You will write a two-page long, single-spaced essay in 12 pt. Times New Roman font. I will post the assignment on GeorgiaView, and you will do likewise with the completed essay. Follow the format in A Student's Guide to History: Chapters 4 & 5 (especially the section on plagiarism, paraphrasing, and documentation); we will discuss the format in class. The consequence of plagiarism is simple: F. (See below: Academic Integrity.) A grade of “B” is the highest score you can earn on a late essay. You have two days from the original deadline (including Saturdays and Sundays) to turn the assignment in, otherwise you forfeit the points. It is your responsibility to make arrangement for turning in tardy assignments. If you need help with writing, go to http://www.kennesaw.edu/english/WritingCenter, or to Room 242 in the English Building.

Palaver Hut
The Palaver Hut is a class discussion. The term Palaver is derived from the Portuguese word Palavra or speech. It is a trade word that evolved when Portuguese and Africans traded for the first time on the Atlantic coast of West Africa. The Portuguese traders complained about what they saw as endless haggling with African merchants in their Gazebo-like Palaver Hut. The concept of the Palaver Hut remains central to West African social life. Almost every issue is discussed in large gatherings, and the talks tend to be long-winded. Palaver has taken on a variety of meanings, all of which center around intense discussions and conflict resolutions. The goal of our Palaver Hut is for a group of students to engage the class in a discussion. I will assign a topic to a four-person team (known as the Palaver leaders), along with corresponding questions. (Palaver leaders were chosen alphabetically; see GaView.) They must address the questions in ways that involve the class in the discussion. The rest of the class will also be required to answer the same questions in advance. So Palaver leaders must ask the students questions and engage them in the discussion; students in turn can earn points for Class Participation by being involved in the Palaver Hut. Always conclude the Palaver Hut with a question that is intended to provoke or stimulate further class discussion. Palaver leaders will be
graded on individual presentation within the group. Grades will be determined by the following: participation in the group, knowledge of the Palaver, and the capacity to engage the class in the discussion. You may ask to see your grade afterward.

Class Participation
To earn points for Class Participation, you must make consistent efforts to do the readings in advance and contribute to the discussions in class and in the Palaver Huts.

News of Africa (NOA)
You can earn points weekly by simply presenting in class one piece of news on Africa. It must be documented (i.e., give the source) and related to the topic under discussion in class. There are various authoritative news sources including the national cable networks. Others are http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/, The New York Times, and The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. Each news item is worth one point. In the end, the highest total number of news presented will equal A, the next B, then C, and D. No news, no points: F.

Academic Integrity
Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. Section II of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the University’s policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to University materials, misrepresentation/falsification of University records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program, which includes either an “informal” resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing procedure, which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct’s minimum one semester suspension requirement.

(October 12: LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY)

Tentative Schedule
Part I Introduction to class, syllabus; notes on answering essay questions; class write popular notions of Africa (anonymous)
Aug. 17-22 Readings: Keim Pp. 3-51; 53-164

Part II Is there one Africa, or many Africas?; Where is West Africa? How many nations in Africa; West Africa? How many indigenous languages are spoken in Africa; West Africa? how many European languages?
Aug. 24-29 Readings: Boahen et al., maps, Pp. 194-96; Niane, ix-x; Palaver I

Part III Recording history without writing
Aug. 31-Sep 7 Readings: Niane, begin at vii and complete text

Sep. 5 Labor Day: No Class
Sep. 12   Quiz #1

Part IV   Vegetation regions of Africa; West Africa; early societies; food production; environment, e.g., rivers and their role

Sep. 14-19   Niane, x-xii; Palaver II

Part V   The first major convergence with outsiders: Trans-Saharan or Caravan trade

Sep. 21-26   Readings: Boahen et al., Pp. 1-10

Part VI   New Religion in West Africa: Islam


Oct. 5   Exam # 1

Part VII   Black Africa’s first kingdom: Ancient Ghana


Part VIII   A Consequence of Convergence: The Jihads

Oct. 17-19   Readings: Boahen et al., Pp. 44-53; Palaver IV; assign topic for two-page-long essay

Part IX   The Asante Empire: The making of an African “nation” in the forest and savanna

Oct. 24-26   Readings: Boahen et al., Pp. 54-62

Part X   The Second interaction with outsiders: West Africans and Europeans

Oct. 31-Nov. 2   Readings: Boahen, et al., Pp. 102-06

Nov. 7   Quiz # 2

Part XI   Some effects of the interaction: the trans-Atlantic slave trade

Nov. 9-14   Readings: Boahen et al., Pp. 111-16; Palaver V

Part XII   Partition and colonization of West Africa

Nov. 16-21   Readings: Boahen, et al., Pp. 117-33

Nov. 18   Essay Due on GaView: 9:15am

Nov. 23   No Class: Fall Break

Part XIII   Nationalism: The Black Star leads the way

Nov. 28-30   Readings: Boahen, et al., Pp. 134-48; Palaver VI

Part XIV   West Africa today: Summary of politics, economics, sports, and entertainment

Dec. 5   (Last Day of Class) Readings: Boahen, et al., Pp. 164-93; lecture

Dec. 12   Final Exam   7:00 A. M-9:00 A. M.