Goals of the Seminar
The purpose of this seminar is to provide graduate students with an introduction to key themes, methods, sources, and debates in the historiography of Africa. The approach will be that of a reading seminar with an emphasis on analysis of method and the distinctive character of historical writing on Africa within North American, European, and African traditions of historical scholarship. Students in the seminar will receive guidance and peer support in writing a bibliographic paper, précis of major monographs, as well as assessing articles and review essays in the field.
Key thematic foci include:

- Methods and Sources for Pre-colonial History
- Pre-colonial State-building
- Africa and the Atlantic World
- Slavery and the Slave Trades
- South Africa

- Islam and Christianity in Africa
- Imperialism and the Scramble
- Colonialism and Social History
- Environmental History
- The History of Health

Seminar Project and Evaluation Criteria
This is a reading seminar. Its forms of evaluation will emphasize writing in two forms. The first will be weekly **one-page précis statements** that describe the central argument and evidence for monographs. Also each week students will submit a list of two questions on that week’s reading. The final writing exercise will be a **15-20 page bibliographic essay** (aka review article) that surveys the literature on either a particular theme (examples appear above) or a regional historiography related to the student's long-term research/teaching interest. That bibliographic essay should take the form of a review article intended for a professional journal, such as the *International Journal of African Historical Studies* or the *Journal of African History*.

Readings
Weekly readings will consist of innovative monographs that have contributed to the founding of national and regional historiographies of Africa as well as key themes within a broader continent-wide focus. In addition to monographs, the seminar may examine seminal periodical literature and review essays that fostered debate and statements by influential scholars in the field. For each weekly reading, students should also gather a corpus of book reviews as a means of placing a particular work within a professional framework. All readings – except those that are available online – have been put on 2-hour reserve in Mugar library and may be purchased from the BU Bookstore or on-line.

Seminar Leadership
Students will take part in weekly seminars as participants in discussions. Two times over the course of the semester students will serve as discussion leaders, framing questions and contributing to the seminar agenda for that week. Comparative titles listed below will serve as examples of related work, either by theme or by contrasting perspective. Seminar members will each select a comparative work and present a 10-minute summary that engages theme of that week.

Academic Integrity
Students are expected to observe the procedures and guidelines regarding plagiarism and academic integrity prescribed by the Boston University Graduate School. Those guidelines are provided on the following Graduate School website: [http://www.bu.edu/grs/academics/resources/adp.html](http://www.bu.edu/grs/academics/resources/adp.html).
Weekly Seminar Schedule

Sept. 9 (Week One)

**Introduction and Seminar Method**

Watch James Pritchett ASA Presidential Lecture
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdmXDYZPz8g

Sept 14 (Week Two)

**Methods and Sources in Pre-modern African History**

Reading: Jan Vansina, *Living with Africa*

Sept. 21 (Week Three)

**Formation of the Atlantic World**


Sept. 28 (Week Four)

**Slavery and the Slave Trades**


Oct. 7 (Week Five)

**Pre-modern Africa: women and legal sources**

Comparative: Heywood, *Queen Njinga of Angola*:

Oct 14 Columbus Day (no class we meet on Tuesday the 15th)

Oct. 15 (Week Six/Monday Schedule)

**Social History**

Comparative: Emmanuel Akyeampong, *Drink, Power, and Cultural Change, A Social History of Alcohol in Ghana from c. 1800 to the Present* (1996)

Oct. 21 (Week Seven)

**Mau Mau and the End of Colonial Rule in Africa**

Oct. 28 (Week Eight)
Individual meetings to discuss final review essay topic (sign up for times)

Nov.4 (Week Nine)
**The History of Health, Body, and Food**

Nov.11 (Week Ten)
**Religious Conversion and Politics**
Comparative: Debate on Peterson’s book to be found in *Social Science and Missions* 27 (2014), 267-280. (Essays by J.D.Y. Peel, Justin Willis and Mark Noll)

Nov. 18 (Week Eleven)
**Southern Africa:**
Comparative: Wylie, Art+Revolution (2008)

Nov. 25 (Week Twelve)
**African Environmental History**
Reading: James McCann, *Maize and Grace*

Dec. 2 (Week Thirteen)
4 Students will present a circa 15-minute summary of their Project Reports on a theme or region in African historiography. Students are also expected to comment critically on the reports of other seminar members. Papers will be due on Dec. 16 so you have time to adopt edits and suggestions

Dec 9 (Week Fourteen)
**Semester Project Reports: date to be arranged**
4 Students will present a circa 15-minute summary of their Project Reports on a theme or region in African historiography. Students are also expected to comment critically on the reports of other seminar members. Papers will be due on Dec. 16 so you have time to adopt edits and suggestions.