

# **AFRICAN HISTORY**

## **PHD QUALIFYING EXAMINATION: GUIDELINES**

### **1. Expectations for students taking the oral examination in the major field**

The chair of the Africa field will serve as examination committee chair and the entire Africa field usually will be present for the examination. The Africa field will begin the examination and ask questions for up to two hours. The initial hour will cover the first part of the examination (the student's general knowledge of African history, with an emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa, from paleolithic times to the present) and the next hour will cover the second part of the examination (the student's specific knowledge in two themes (eg. imperialism, slavery, Islam, gender, or a theme or themes identified in consultation with the examination committee) with reference to the whole continent). The last hour will be devoted to the minor field examination.

For the first part of the major field examination, students should demonstrate general knowledge of the main historical developments, an awareness of key publications, and an understanding of critical scholarly debates sufficient to teach a two-semester undergraduate survey course in African history at an institution comparable to Indiana University. For the second part of the examination, students should demonstrate specific knowledge of the main historical developments, an awareness of key publications, and an understanding of critical scholarly debates sufficient to teach an advanced undergraduate course or beginning graduate course in African history at an institution comparable to Indiana University.

Students should meet with African history faculty members individually to discuss the examination no later than three months prior to the examination. For the first part of the examination, students should propose a comprehensive list of topics that they would cover in a two-semester undergraduate African history survey course, identify readings they would consult to prepare lectures on the listed topics, and revise both the list of topics and bibliography based on comments from the examination committee. For the second part of the examination, students should propose bibliographies for the two themes and revise them based on comments from the examination committee.

## **2. Expectations for students taking the oral examination in the inside minor field**

Two African history faculty members usually will be on the examination committee for the inside minor field. The oral examination will be in two parts. In the first part, students should demonstrate general knowledge suitable to teach an undergraduate survey course in sub-Saharan African history. That course may have a temporal orientation (precolonial, colonial/twentieth century) and cover all of sub-Saharan Africa, or it may have a regional focus (that is, west, east, central, or southern Africa) and cover a significant temporal range. In the second part of the examination, students should demonstrate specific knowledge to teach an introductory undergraduate course in one theme (eg. imperialism, slavery, Islam, gender, or a theme identified in consultation with faculty members on the examination committee) with reference to west, east, central and southern Africa.

In preparation for taking the examination, students should identify two African history faculty members and meet individually with them no later than three months prior to the examination. For the first part of the examination, students should propose a list of topics that they would cover in a survey course, identify readings they would consult to prepare lectures on the listed topics, and revise both the list of topics and bibliography based on comments from the examination committee. For the second part of the examination, students should propose a bibliography for the theme and revise it based on comments from the examination committee.

## **3. Guidelines for the prospectus**

The student's dissertation prospectus usually will take the form of a significant grant proposal (such as the Fulbright-Hays doctoral dissertation abroad grant proposal). The proposal should be at least 10 pages, define a research question and discuss relevant secondary literatures, methodologies, and sources to be consulted. It also should include a comprehensive bibliography. The timing for the prospectus defense will follow written History department guidelines.