POLS 360 (390)

Africa & World Politics

COURSE OBJECTIVES

If you are like most people, you know next to nothing about Africa. The first objective of this course is to remedy that. If you have taken other courses that deal with Africa, I hope to add to your understanding by focusing on a select few issues and problems that concern students of African politics. This class will focus largely on *contemporary* African politics, but no understanding of where we are now is complete without an appreciation of where we’ve been. Thus, throughout the course the weight of the past will be present in our deliberations on the current state of African politics, broadly understood.

The principal concerns we address are the problem of power (how it is constituted, how it gets exercised, and its role in regime change, etc.), violent conflict (its prevalence, its origins, and its management), political and economic development, relations between state and society, and Africa in the changing international political economy.

GRADES

There are four areas of graded performance.

Reflection papers: At three points in the semester you will be required to submit a 3-5 page essay outlining and commenting critically on the preceding section of reading. The papers will allow me to gauge the level of your comprehension of the reading material. Additionally, there will likely be much in the reading we will not have time to discuss in class. These will be your opportunities to engage with that material. Each paper is worth 10% of the final grade.

Tests: There will be two tests and one final examination. Tests 1 and 2 are worth 12.5 each. The final examination is worth 15% of the grade.

The research paper: You will be required to submit a 15-20 page, double-spaced, typewritten research paper on any topic related to contemporary African politics. I will discuss in class the specific requirements for the paper, including the process for gaining approval of your topic. However, it is important that you realize early that the project *has three components*.

* First, a one-page, single-spaced typed written précis will be submitted no later than **October 14**. The précis will lay out the research question you wish to explore, what types of materials you expect to use and how these materials will help you answer the question. The précis is my opportunity to approve the topic you have chosen. (2%)
* Second, an annotated bibliography is due on **November 22**. The bibliography will summarize each entry and indicate *how* the entry is supportive (or perhaps even contradictory) of your thesis. (3%)
* Third, the final paper is due **on the last day of class**. (15%)

Participation: This is a requirement. I have no formal attendance policy, but I expect you to come to class, to come prepared to engage with the material (e.g., ask and answer questions related to assigned material). Participation accounts for 10% of the final grade.

Summary:

Reflection Papers 30%

Tests 40%

Research Paper 20%

Participation 10%

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

From the Student Handbook:

“Academic integrity refers to the ethical standards and policies that govern how people work and interact in the academic enterprise at a college or university. These standards and policies attempt to do more than define and condemn what is wrong or unethical; they also attempt to provide a foundation for the mutual trust and individual responsibility necessary in a healthy academic community….

Academic integrity is not solely the responsibility of students. Rather, faculty members and administrators have the responsibility of creating an environment in which honesty is encouraged, dishonesty discouraged and integrity is openly discussed.”

From Charles Lipson, *Doing Honest Work in College*:

Academic honesty boils down to three simple but powerful principles:

* When you say you did the work yourself, you actually did it.
* When you rely on someone else’s work, you cite it. When you use their words, you quote them accurately, and you cite them, too.
* When you present research materials, you present them fairly and truthfully. That’s true whether the research involves data, documents, or the writings of other scholars.

Consistent with these remarks, please understand that I view academic integrity as the moral foundation of the university experience. In recent years the presumption of integrity has suffered some very serious blows. A professor at Mount Holyoke College admitted he falsified information in his lectures regarding service in the US Armed Forces during the Vietnam War. He was subsequently suspended from the college. More recently, noted historian Stephen Ambrose admitted to using without proper attribution sentences and phrases from others’ work in his book *The Wild Blue*. It would seem we have a problem of national scope.

We cannot be responsible for what others may do, but we can see to it that our own efforts are of the highest caliber. To pursue such a course, we must be familiar with the University’s policy regarding Academic Integrity. In this, as in all my courses, I apply the University’s policy fully. In short, no violation of the integrity policy will be excused.

READINGS REQUIRED FOR PURCHASE

Much of the reading for this class is found posted on the Moodle site. There are, however, four books for you to purchase. They are available at the University Bookstore and, of course, online.

Achebe, Chinua. *A Man of the People*. 1967/1989. New York: Ancor.

Chabal, Patrick, and Jean-Pascal Daloz. 1999. *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Leonard, David K. and Scott Strauss. 2003. *Africa’s Stalled Development: International Causes & Cures.* Boulder: Lynne Rienner Press.

Ousmane Sembene, 1960. *God’s Bits of Wood*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.



Please note. I reserve the right to change, amend, or otherwise transform the syllabus in order to meet course objectives.

DATES, TOPICS AND READING

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| Dates | Topic | Tuesday | Thursday |
| 8-25 | Introduction to African Politics: (mis)representation and “variation in the data”  |   | Achebe, “Africa’s Tarnished Name” |
| 8/31-9/2 | Pre-colonial political economy; Colonial governance  | Van Allen, “ ‘Sitting on a Man’: Colonialism and Lost Political Institutions of Igbo Women”Mamdani “Decentralized Despotism” LeVine, “The Colonial Context” (29-38) | LeVine, “The Colonial Context” (38-55)Young, “Zaire: Shattered Illusions of the Integral State (pp: 247-256)Mamdani, “The Racialization of the Hutu/Tutsi Difference under Colonialism” |
| 9/7-9/9 | Nationalism and the discrete impacts of *de*colonization | Mamdani, “The ‘Social Revolution’ of 1959”leVine “Political Life and Institutions, 1944-1960” | Young, “Heritage of Colonialism”Hyden, “The Movement Legacy”Young, “Zaire: Shattered Illusions of the Integral State” (257-263) |
| 9/14-9/16 | Politics and the African Novel | Reflection Paper 1 dueOusmane Sembene, *Gods Bits of Wood* | Ousmane Sembene, *Gods Bits of Wood* |
| 9/21-9/23 |  | Test 1 | Young, “On the State” |
| 9/28-9/30 | Seizing the “Political Kingdom” | Boone, “Consolidation of a regime: Neocolonialism in the 1960s”Skinner, “Sankara and the Burkinabé Revolution”  | Clapham, “The Ethiopian Coup d’Etat of December 1960”Baynham, “*Quis Custodiet Ipsos Custodes*? The Case of Nkrumah’s National Security Service” |

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| 10/5-10/7 | Governance in the Post-Colony | LeVine, “Experiments in Power, 1958-2003” Joseph, “Class, State and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria” | Jackson and Rosberg, “Personal Rule: Theory and Practice in Africa”Gardinier, “The Historical Origins of Francophone Africa” |
| 10/12-10/14 | The Modern State in Africa | Leonard and Strauss, “The Contemporary African State”Chabal and Daloz, “Whither the State” and “The Illusions of Civil Society” | Chabal and Daloz, “The Illusions of Civil Society”Widener, “States and Statelessness in Late Twentieth-Century Africa” |
| 10/26-10/28 | Class and Ethnicity | Chabal and Daloz, “Recycled Elites” and Kasfir, “Explaining Ethnic Political Participation” | Chabal and Daloz, “Of Masks and Men, The Question of Identity”Posner, “The Political Salience of Cultural Difference” |
| 11/2-11/4 | Political Culture(s)and Politics of the African Novel | Chabal and Daloz, “The Taming of the Irrational: Witchcraft & Religion”Achebe, *A Man of the People* | Achebe, *A Man of the People*Reflection Paper 2 due |
| 11/9-11/11 | Critical Issues in Africa I (Development) | Test 2 | Leonard and Strauss, chapters 1-3 |
| 11/16-1118 | Development/Conflict | Arrighi, Giovanni. 2002. “The African Crisis: World Systemic and Regional Aspects,” New Left Review 15 (May/June): pp: 5-36Bates, Robert. 1981. “Rental Havens and Protective Shelters,” and “The Origins of Political Marginalism” | Chabal and Daloz, “The Productivity of Economic ‘Failure’ ”(93-138) Chabal and Daloz, “The Profits of Violence” |
| 11/23 | CRITICAL ISSUES: Conflict | deWalle, “Tragedy in Darfur”Leonard and Strauss, “The Causes of Civil Conflict” and “Civil Conflict and Humanitarian Intervention” | ----- |
| 11/30/12/2 | CRITICAL ISSUES: REGIME CHANGE AND HIV/AIDS | Gyimah-Boadi, E. 2004. “Africa: The Quality of Democratic Reform,” in his (ed.) *Democratic Reform in Africa: The Quality of Progress*, 5-27. Ihonvbere, Julius O. 2002. “Military Disengagement from Politics and Constitutionalism in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities” | Boone and Batsell, “Politics and AIDS in Africa”More reading TBA (awaiting publication of securitization articles)Reflection Paper 3 |
| 12/7-12/9 | Africa and the Global Century | TBA | TBA |