

## **POLI 342 Politics of Africa Fall 2016**

Maybank Hall 207  
TR 9:25-10:40am

Professor Christopher Day  
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### **Course Syllabus**

#### **Course Description**

Africa matters. On one hand it might seem this way for the worst reasons. Many see a homogenous and tragic Africa in perpetual crisis, where images of collapsed states, grinding poverty, epidemics, and deadly armed conflict draw in intervening outsiders – at best reluctant donors and naïve relief workers, and at worst rapacious arms dealers and terrorist cells. On the other hand Africa matters for the best of reasons. Here, others see a diverse and dynamic Africa in transition, where resources and economic growth, political reform, and a decline in conflict produce real changes on the ground and strategic importance to big global players. Either way, Africa is a distinct and compelling region that is invariably connected to the wider world. This course will examine a range of political issues in contemporary Africa, and will consider how these issues are interconnected at local, regional, and global levels.

The course will situate the broader study of Africa more specifically within the discipline of Political Science. This means that we are not simply interested in learning historical facts about African politics and society. We are also interested in a range of academic theories designed to explain patterns of African politics, and the variations between and within African states that occur along a number of dimensions. The goal will be to understand this body of literature and to think about new research questions generated from a careful examination of empirical puzzles that appear at all levels of African politics.

The course proceeds in four parts. Part One will examine the historical institutions of pre-colonial Africa, the colonial states of European conquest, and the emergence of modern African states. We will then look at a range of challenges these states face. Part Two will look more closely at the nature of political authority in African states. We will examine what factors shape political identities and state-society relations, and how African states interact with one another and on the global stage. Part Three will look at how African states have constructed their regimes, have ushered in transitions to democracy, their various political ideologies, and how they deal with the more pressing issues of economic development and poverty. Finally, we will look at the politics of protest and revolt in Africa, comparing and contrasting popular protest with armed conflict. We will conclude the class with an overview of the African Studies Program and a practical guide for those who wish to travel to or conduct their own research on Africa.

## Course Objectives and Methodology

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE ALTERNATIVE:** This course has been approved to satisfy Category 3 of the Foreign Language Alternative program. Upon completion of this course, students will contextualize and analyze artifacts, practices, and perspectives from cultures in a *specific world region\**

In addition, students will come away from the course able to do the following:

- Demonstrate knowledge of African political systems including their institutions, processes, laws and constitutions and the relations between and among nations
- Demonstrate knowledge of the reasons why people behave in diverse political roles and spaces, especially in African countries
- Distinguish their own views from those of others and can defend their own perspective
- Demonstrate mastery of the independent research process

The course is taught through readings, lectures, discussions, and by following current events:

- *Readings.* This is an upper-level class, and students should expect to read 100 pages or more per week. Readings are drawn primarily from social science scholarship to show students this approach to the study of African politics. Students are expected to have completed the readings *before* the class sessions. Keeping up with these readings will be vital to your overall course performance, and it will be difficult to catch up if you fall behind. The knowledge acquired in the readings will be cumulative. That is, each week you will be introduced to new ideas that will become part of the "tool-box" you will use to analyze readings and lectures in subsequent weeks.
- *Lectures.* Each week will feature a specific topic and a corresponding lecture that will essentially serve as the "textbook" for the class, undergirding the readings and class discussions with key terms, concepts, cases, and historical context.
- *Discussions.* Class discussions will be fundamental students are expected to participate.
- *Current Events.* Each day, students are expected to independently follow current events and trends in African politics. In class, students should expect to discuss these events. Here are some good sources for African news:
  - BBC News Africa website at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/africa/>
  - Even better is to listen daily to the 23-minute BBC World Service Focus on Africa, found online at: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/2011/04/000000\\_focus\\_on\\_africa.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/2011/04/000000_focus_on_africa.shtml)
  - The most comprehensive source of African news online posts up to 700 stories per day from various news sites from the continent: <http://allafrica.com>

## Course Requirements

Evaluation will be based on the following exercises:

- *Map Quiz (5%)*. Geographical literacy of Africa is the baseline of this course, therefore students will have to know all of Africa's countries plus their capitals. This quiz will be the easiest part of the entire semester.
- *Weekly Quizzes (20%)*. Each week there will be an in-class quiz based on the course readings and current events in Africa. These will be multiple-choice and graded in class.
- *Research Proposal (40%)*. A Research Proposal will address a significant empirical puzzle in African politics. It will not be about simply describing a phenomenon. The exercise will ask a specific research question and argue why this question matters. The proposal will evaluate current approaches to addressing this question, will justify the need for additional research, and outline a research methodology. It will then develop a hypothesis to address this absence, but will stop short of conducting the empirical research. The exercise will give students a chance to focus on a particular country or set of countries, and on a particular topic in comparative politics that interests them, allowing students to explore what this topic looks like in Africa. Students will also learn and practice how to approach doing research in Political Science. It is hoped that students will use it as chance to develop a substantial writing sample for job or school applications. Students may also use this exercise as a vehicle to try out ideas for an Independent Study or a Bachelor's Essay. Others may wish to use it as a way to develop an actual grant proposal to fund a research trip to Africa.

Research Proposals should be 10-12 pages, typed, double-spaced typed, with regular margins, 12 pt font, in Times New Roman, with page numbers, with a word count at the bottom, and stapled in the top left corner.

Below are the important due dates for each step of the project:

- **September 22:** Finding the Puzzle (10%)
- **October 20:** Literature Review (10%)
- **November 10:** First Draft (5%)
- **December 8:** FINAL DRAFT (15%)

**More detailed guidance will be provided as the Fall Semester progresses.**

- *Cumulative Take Home Exam (25%)* This take home exam will test students' grasp of the larger concepts and basic vocabulary of African politics.
- *Class Participation (10%)*. The quality of this class depends on the quality of discussion, therefore students are expected to participate in class. Participation in the intellectual life of the campus is also part of this grade and students will receive credit for attending the key events that will be announced in advance.

## Course Policies

### Grading Scale

A	93-100	A-	90-92	B+	88-89	B	83-87	B-	80-82
C+	78-79	C	73-77	C-	70-72	D+	68-69	D	63-67
D-	60-62	F:	Below 60						

*Attendance Policy.* Attendance is **REQUIRED**. Tardiness is not cool.

*Submission of Work.* Late work will not be accepted. Work submitted electronically will not be accepted. “**My computer crashed**” = “**My dog ate my homework.**”

*Honor Code.* All students are expected be familiar with the College of Charleston Honor Code, and to abide by it. Violations will not be tolerated and will be dealt with appropriately. More is found here: <http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php>

*Learning Disabled.* If you have a documented learning disability, please let me know as soon as possible so special arrangements can be made for certain class requirements.

*Other Special Circumstances.* I normally will do business with anyone who lets me know in advance of any special circumstances. But please note that the expression “it is better to ask for forgiveness than permission” was not invented by a College Professor.

*Center for Student Learning.* The Center for Student Learning’s (CSL) academic support services give assistance in study strategies and course content. They offer tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, study skills appointments, and workshops. Students of all abilities have become more successful using these programs throughout their academic career and they are available to you at no additional cost. For more information regarding these services please visit the CSL website at <http://csl.cofc.edu> or call (843) 953-5635.

## Required Readings

The following books are available at the campus bookstore:

Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival* (Cambridge University Press 1996)

Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton University Press 2000)

Adam Branch and Zachariah Mampilly, *Africa Uprising: Popular Protest and Political Change (African Arguments)* (Zed Books 2015)

All other readings will be available on OAKS.

“Like” the Department of Political Science on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/CofCPoliticalScienceClub?ref=hl>

“Like” the African Studies Program on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/CollegeOfCharlestonAfricanStudiesProgram>

## Course Outline and Readings

### 1. August 23-25: Introduction

Binyavanga Wainana, "How to Write About Africa," *Granta* 92 (2005)

Field trip to the Avery Research Center.

## Part I: Setting the Scene

### 2. August 30-September 1: African Politics 101

\*\*\*MAP QUIZ THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 1\*\*\*

Herbst, Introduction and Chapter 1, pp. 1-31

Göran Hydén, "The Study of Politics and Africa," in *African Politics in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge University Press 2006), pp. 1-24

Naomi Chazan, "The Diversity of African Politics: Trends and Approaches," in Chazan et al, *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa* (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Lynne Rienner 1999) pp. 5-34

### 3. September 6-8: Pre-Colonial Africa

\*No class Thursday, September 8 for EISA Conference\*

Herbst Chapter 2, pp. 35-57

John Iliffe, "The Atlantic Slave Trade," in *Africans: History of a Continent* (Cambridge University Press 1995), pp. 127-158

E.E. Evans-Pritchard, "The Political System," chapter 4 in *The Nuer. A Description of the Modes of Livelihood and Political Institutions of a Nilotic People* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1940).

### 4. September 13-15: The Colonial State, Nationalism, and Independence

*Film: Mobutu King of Zaire Part I*

Herbst, Chapter 3, pp. 58-96

Mahmoud Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Colonialism*, Chapters 2 and 4, pp. 37-61 and pp. 109-137

Douglas Johnson, *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars: Peace or Truce?* (James Currey Press 2011), Chapters 1-3, pp. 1-38.

## **Part II: Authority, Identity, and African States**

### **5. September 20-22: Political Authority**

**\*\*Puzzle due in class Thursday, September 22\*\***

Herbst, Chapters 4 & 6, pp. 96-136 and pp. 173-197

Clapham, Chapters 1-3, pp. 3-74

J.P. Olivier de Sardan, "A Moral Economy of Corruption in Africa?" *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 37:1 (March 1999), pp. 25-52

### **6. September 27-29: The Politics of Identity**

Patrick Chabal & Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument*, pp. 45-76

Alex de Waal, "Who are the Darfurians? Arab and African Identities, Violence, and External Engagement," *African Affairs* 104/415 (2005), pp. 181-205

Daniel Posner, "The Political Salience of Ethnic Cleavages: Why Chewas and Tumbukas are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi," *APSR* 98: 4 (2004), pp. 529-545

Crawford Young, "Deciphering Disorder in Africa: Is Identity Key?" *World Politics*, 54:4 (July 2002), pp. 532-557

### **7. October 4-6: Africa's Regional and International Politics**

*Film: Mobutu King of Zaire Part II*

Clapham, Chapters 4-6, pp. 77-159

I. William Zartman, "The Diplomacy of African Boundaries," in Harbeson & Rothchild, eds. *Africa in World Politics*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, (Westview Press 2013), pp. 173-185

Ian Taylor, *China's New Role in Africa* (Lynne Rienner 2009), pp. 1-36, 161-185

## **Part III: Democracy and Development**

### **8. October 11-13: Military Regimes and Democratic Transitions**

Samuel Decalo, *Psychoses of Power: African Personal Dictatorships* (Westview Press 1989), pp. 1-29

Andreas Mehler, "Rebels and Parties: the Impact of Armed Insurgency on Representation in the Central African Republic," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 49:1 (March 2011), pp. 115-139

Joel D. Barkan, "African Legislatures and the "Third Wave" of Democratization," and Nelson Kasfir and Stephen Hippo Twebaze, "The Rise and Ebb of Uganda's No-Party Parliament," in Joel D. Barkan, ed. *Legislative Power in Emerging African Democracies* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Press 2009), pp. 1-31 and pp. 73-108.

Michael Bratton & E. Gyimah-Boadi, *Political Risks Facing African Democracies: Evidence from Afrobarometer*, Afrobarometer Working Paper No. 157, May 2015

## **9. October 18-20: Ideology and Development**

**\*\*Literature Review due in class Thursday, October 20\*\***

Crawford Young, *Ideology and Development in Africa* (Yale 1982), Chapters 1 & 6, pp. 1-21, 297-326

Julius Nyerere, *Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism*, pp. 1-43

Paul Nugent, "'Ism Schisms': African Socialism and Home-Grown Capitalism, 1960-85," in *Africa Since Independence*, pp. 138-203

## **10. October 25-27: Poverty and Economic Reform**

*Film: Mobutu King of Zaire Part III*

Clapham, Chapters 7 and 8, pp. 163-207

Robert H. Bates, *Markets and States in Tropical Africa: The Political Basis of Agricultural Policies* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1981) Chapters 2, 5-7, pp. 30-44, 81-118

Jeffrey Herbst, "The Structural Adjustment of Politics in Africa," *World Development* 18 (1990), pp. 949-958

Paul Collier & Jan Willem Gunning, "Why has Africa Grown Slowly?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 13 (Summer 1999), pp. 3-22

## **Part IV: Political Protest and Revolt**

### **11. November 1-3: Civil Wars in Africa**

Clapham, Chapter 9, pp. 208-243

Paul Williams, "Counting Africa's Conflicts" and "The Terrain of Struggle" in *War & Conflict in Africa*, pp. 15-52

Scott Strauss, "Wars Do End! Changing Patterns of Violence in sub-Saharan Africa, *African Affairs*, 111: 443 (April 2012), pp. 179-201

## **12. November 9-13: Solving Africa's Conflicts**

*\*No class Tuesday, November 8 for Fall Break\**

**\*\*First Draft of Research Proposal due in class Thursday, November 10\*\***

Matthew Brubacher, Erin Damman Kimball & Christopher Day, "The AU Task Force: An African Response to Transnational Armed Groups," Working Paper.

Christopher Day and William Reno, "In Harm's Way: African Counterinsurgency and Patronage Politics," *Civil Wars* Vol. 16 Issue 2 (July 2014), pp. 105-126

Tim Allen, "Bitter roots: the 'invention' of Acholi traditional justice," in Tim Allen and Koen Vlassenroot, eds., *The Lord's Resistance Army: Myth and Reality* (London: Zed Books 2010)

## **13. November 15-17: Popular Protest in Africa**

Branch & Mampilly, Chapters 1-4, pp. 1-85 plus case study of your choice.

## **14. November 22: African Studies I**

*\*No Class Thursday, November 24 for Thanksgiving Break\**

**\*\*Take Home Exam handed out November 22\*\***

Members of the College of Charleston's African Studies Program will visit our class.

## **15. November 29: African Studies II**

*\*No class Thursday, December 1 for ASA Annual Meeting\**

**\*\*\*Take Home Exam due November 29\*\*\***

Members of the College of Charleston's African Studies Program will visit our class.

**\*Final Draft of Research Proposal due December 8 at 11am at 114 Wentworth Room 105\***

**NOTE: Additional readings may be assigned and the course outline may be adjusted to serve the needs of the class.**