Course Description
This course provides a comprehensive survey of the politics of conflict, peace, and security in Africa. Colonialism, decolonisation, the Cold War, and international economic regimes, state weakness have had a profound impact on political authority and have created permission conditions for the way conflicts have been fought on the continent. Yet rather than look at their causes (poverty, patrimonial politics, ethnicity, religion, economic agendas), this course will instead approach the study of African wars from different levels of analysis. It will also consider the myriad actors that participate in African wars, as well as their consequences.

Course Objectives
• A broad understanding of Africa’s politics and society (class lectures and discussions)
• Knowledge of the causes and nature of conflict in Africa (class lectures and discussions)
• The ability to apply theories and concepts to new contexts and situations (class discussions, group project)
• Improved skills at team work (group project)
• The ability to comprehend the views of others and articulate and defend one’s own position (class discussions, group project)
• Strengthened skills in independent research (group project)
• Strengthened skills in writing, reading comprehension, and critical thinking and analysis (readings, research paper)
• Strengthened skills in oral communication (class discussions)

Technological Requirements
1. A computer with Internet access, sound card, microphone, and speakers. You must have a reliable Internet connection. Having to rely on the public library or Starbucks, for example, will likely make it challenging to have a consistent presence inside OAKS. If you are concerned, please contact me within the first week so we can determine if this course will be manageable for you.
2. OAKS and Zoom proficiency. This course is administered through OAKS, so students must have a thorough working knowledge of the platform. Please spend some time educating yourself about its organization and use. Tutorials are available here: http://blogs.cofc.edu/oaks/students/tutorials/
Course Methodology

- **Readings.** Students are expected to have completed the readings before the online 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.** Synchronous Zoom lectures serve as the anchor for this course. Each week will feature a specific topic and a corresponding lecture that will tie together the readings and class discussions with key terms, concepts, cases, and historical context.

- **Films.** Students will view films outside of class and be prepared to discuss them online.

- **Guest Interviews.** When possible, I will upload short interviews that I conduct with scholars and/or practitioners embedded within world politics.

- **Group work and Independent Research.** A significant part of this course will be dividing up into research "teams" and conducting research together.

Course Requirements

**Group Project (50%)** Students will work together in different team to conduct comprehensive a research on conflict one of the five regions covered of Africa – North, South, East, West, and Central. I will provide a separate guideline for this project. The breakdown is as follows:

- Group presentation (20%)
- Group paper (20%)
- Feedback on other group presentations (10%)

**Response Papers (30%)** For parts I-III of the course, students will write 1,000-word response papers that critically analyze and unify the central arguments of the assigned readings, and will also integrate lectures and films where appropriate.

**Discussion Threads (15%)** Students will be expected to engage with one another in discussions about certain topics.

**“Why it Matters” essay (5%).** In the first week of class students will write a short essay discussing why the study of African Wars matters.

Course Policies

**Communication.** This is an asynchronous course. At the beginning of each week I will provide a detailed prompt for the week’s activities.
Students are strongly encouraged to direct any substantive comments and questions about the course content to the discussion board in order to encourage the development of an online community.

All inquiries to me should be made via email, and I will make every effort to respond to emails promptly. Students can expect replies within 24 hours for messages received between 9am and 5pm on Monday through Friday. I generally do not respond to emails on weekends. Students are also encouraged to arrange a Zoom appointment with me anytime they would like during the week to discuss anything they would like.

Community Standards. While this class is online, you are sharing the experience of working through important issues with other people – not just usernames on a discussion board. Please bear this in mind when engaging with each other and be thoughtful in your contributions and generous in your interpretations.

Netiquette. Please bear in mind that online communication precludes many of the non-verbal cues that normally facilitate face-to-face communication. This being the case, it is important to err on the side of generous interpretation and civility. What was written as a simple statement can easily come across as aggressive or argumentative. Vignette: “Texting Confusion” from Key & Peele (Content warning: some spicy language): https://vimeo.com/121923151

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

Submission of Work. Students are expected to submit their work on the day it is due. In the event that students cannot submit work on time because of Life Circumstances, they must inform the professor at least 24 hours beforehand, and provide a concrete date for submission. After this date, work will not be accepted. Also, please note that “My computer crashed” = “My dog ate my homework”.


“Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when suspected, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Incidents where the instructor determines the student’s actions are related more to misunderstanding and confusion will be handled by the instructor. The instructor designs an intervention or assigns a grade reduction to help prevent the student from repeating the error. The response is recorded on a form and signed both by the instructor and the student. It is forwarded to the Office of the Dean of Students and placed in the student’s file.
Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive an XXF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This status indicator will appear on the student’s transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the XX to be expunged. The F is permanent.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at: http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php.”

*Accommodations for students with disabilities.* Any student eligible for and needing accommodations because of a disability is requested to speak with the professor during the first two weeks of class or as soon as the student has been approved for services so that reasonable accommodations can be arranged.

*OAKS.* OAKS, including Gradebook, will be used for this course throughout the semester to provide the syllabus and class materials and grades for each assignment, which will be regularly posted.

*Recording of Classes (via ZOOM).* Class sessions will be recorded via both voice and video recording. By attending and remaining in this class, the student consents to being recorded. Recorded class sessions are for instructional use only and may not be shared with anyone who is not enrolled in the class.

*Online Courses with Exam Proctoring.* This course will require the use of an exam proctoring service for the course exams. Students are responsible for registering, scheduling, and the cost of the service prior to each exam. Instructions and additional information on proctoring can be found at [https://academicaffairs.cofc.edu/distance-education/online-proctoring/index.php](https://academicaffairs.cofc.edu/distance-education/online-proctoring/index.php).

*Inclement Weather, Pandemic or Substantial Interruption of Instruction.* If in-person classes are suspended, faculty will announce to their students a detailed plan for a change in modality to ensure the continuity of learning. All students must have access to a computer equipped with a web camera, microphone, and Internet access. Resources are available to provide students with these essential tools.

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

*Mental & Physical Wellbeing:* At the college, we take every students’ mental and physical wellbeing seriously. If you find yourself experiencing physical illnesses, please reach out to student health services (843.953.5520). And if you find yourself experiencing any mental health
challenges (for example, anxiety, depression, stressful life events, sleep deprivation, and/or loneliness/homesickness) please consider contacting either the Counseling Center (professional counselors at http://counseling.cofc.edu or 843.953.5640 3rd Robert Scott Small Building) or the Students 4 Support (certified volunteers through texting "4support" to 839863, visit http://counseling.cofc.edu/cct/index.php, or meet with them in person 3rd Floor Stern Center). These services are there for you to help you cope with difficulties you may be experiencing and to maintain optimal physical and mental health.

Food & Housing Resources: Many CofC students report experiencing food and housing insecurity. If you are facing challenges in securing food (such as not being able to afford groceries or get sufficient food to eat every day) and housing (such as lacking a safe and stable place to live), please contact the Dean of Students for support (http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/about/salt.php). Also, you can go to http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/student-food-housing-insecurity/index.php to learn about food and housing assistance that is available to you. In addition, there are several resources on and off campus to help. You can visit the Cougar Pantry in the Stern Center (2nd floor), a student-run food pantry that provides dry-goods and hygiene products at no charge to any student in need. Please also consider reaching out to Professor ABC if you are comfortable in doing so.

Inclusion: The College of Charleston offers many resources for LGBTQ+ students, faculty and staff along with their allies.

Preferred Name and Pronoun Information
On Campus Gender Inclusive facilities
Campus Resources
College of Charleston Reporting Portals
National Resources for Faculty & Staff
GSEC Reports
Documenting LGBTQ Life in the Lowcountry (CofC Addlestone Library Special Collections Project)
College of Charleston Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)
Articles about CofC and LGBTQ+ Issues

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.

Extra Credit. Periodic extra credit opportunities may be available during the semester. Please note that these opportunities are EXTRA credit, not SUBSTITUTION credit for missed assignments. Also, keep in mind extra credit also does not mean extra work for your professor.

Attendance Policy. Attendance is required.
Course Outline and Readings


Welcome and Course Overview

Assignment: “Why does the study of African Wars matter?” essay due in Dropbox folder 8/28

Readings:

Robert Malley, “10 Conflicts to Watch in 2020,” Foreign Policy, December 26, 2019
https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/12/26/10-conflicts-to-watch-2020/


International Crisis Group, CrisisWatch: https://www.crisisgroup.org/crisiswatch


Part One: Setting the Scene

2. September 1-3: Overview of African Wars

Assignment: Discussion Thread – What do you know about African Wars? due 9/1

Short Film: Decoding African Conflict Trends (OAKS)

Special Class Zoom Session 9/1, 11-12am, APSA-APCG Research Development Group:

“To Negotiate or Not-to Negotiate with the FDLR Rebels? President Kikwete and Tanzania’s Foreign Policy in the Great Lakes Region”

Nicodemus Minde

PhD Candidate

United States International University – Africa

Nairobi, Kenya

Readings:

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


3. September 8-10: Levels of Analysis I-II (Local and State)

*Readings:*


4. September 15-17: Levels of Analysis III-IV (Regional and Global)

*Assignment:* Essay #1 due in the Dropbox folder 9/18

*Readings:*


**Part Two: Actors in African Wars**

5. September 22-24: Armed Groups


*Assignment:* Discussion Thread on Film due 9/22

*Readings:*


6. September 29-October 1: State Armed Forces

*Readings:*


7. October 6-8: Regional and International Players

*Assignment:* Essay #2 due in the Dropbox folder 10/9

*Readings:*


Denis Tull, “Rebuilding Mali’s Army: The dissonant relationship between Mali and its international partners,” *International Affairs* 95, 2 (2019), pp. 405-422


**Part Three: Consequences of African Wars**

8. October 13-15: Humanitarian Impacts

*Film:* War Witch – Rebelle (watch on Kanopy)

*Assignment:* Discussion Thread on Film due 10/13

*Readings:*


*Readings:*


10. October 27-29: Post-Conflict Dynamics

*Assignment: Essay #3 due in the Dropbox folder 10/30*

*Readings:*


**Part Four: Cases**

11. November 3-5: North Africa

**No class November 3**

11/5: Group Presentation North Africa

12. November 10-12: East and West Africa

11/10: Group Presentation East Africa

11/12: Group Presentation West Africa

13. November 17-19: Central and Southern Africa

11/17: Group Presentation Central Africa
11/19: Group Presentation Southern Africa

Part Five: The Future of African Wars

14. November 24: Some Final Thoughts

TBA

“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