

The Politics of Sub-Saharan Africa

Colgate University

Instructor

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Office Hours:

Tues & Thurs: 10:00-12:00
in my office in Spear House, room
#6, or by appointment. Please feel
free to drop by any time – if I am in, I
would be glad to talk with you.



Class

POSC 331
Room: Persson 7
Time: TR 1:20-2:35

Class Description

This class is an introduction to sub-Saharan Africa, with a particular focus on the triumphs and challenges of the independence era. We will explore the overarching themes of sub-Saharan African political life and the historical circumstances which created them, looking for patterns in governance, economics, identity-formation and the role of ethnicity and gender in determining the distribution of political power. Our readings will also lead us into the relationship between religion, power and politics in Africa as well as Africa's changing relations with the rest of the world. Overall, we will seek to understand how Africans see themselves and their countries as well as how political scientists explain African political phenomenon. We will reflect on what the study of Africa can teach us about our own culture and assumptions, and what we can learn about the fundamental questions of political life and human nature.

Required Texts

Englebert, Pierre & Dunn, Kevin. *Inside African Politics*. Second Edition. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2019. ISBN: 978-1-58826-905-8

In addition, there will be multiple articles posted on Moodle. A full list of the reading schedule is attached at the end of the syllabus.

Class Methodology & Requirements

The class will be a combination of lecture and discussion.

Prior to every class session, it is mandatory that each student has read the assigned readings listed for that day. As part of your participation grade, keep up with a news source on Africa each week, such as BBC Africa. The other key assignments are 1) a quiz on African geography and some basic historical facts, 2) two short response papers (no more than two pages long) on specific class readings and 3) a final research paper (12-15 pages) on a topic of your choice (but approved ahead of time by the professor). In addition, students will take a midterm and a final exam.

Late work will be accepted with a penalty of one grade level per day. If there is an unforeseen emergency that conflicts with your progress in the course, please contact the professor.

Class Objectives

In this class, students will gain a basic understanding of the history of sub-Saharan Africa and especially the trends seen across the continent in the last sixty years. They will form the ability to think and write critically about how culture and history influence the way that government works and power is exercised, the relationship between spiritual and political leadership in African states, and the ups and downs of Africa's relations with the rest of the world.

Grade Breakdown

Geography Quiz: 5%
Participation & Attendance: 10%
Two Short Response Papers: 15% (7.5 % each)
Research Paper: 25%
Exam 1: 25%
Exam 2: 25%

Grading Scale

93%	A	73%	C
90%	A-	70%	C-
87%	B+	67%	D+
83%	B	63%	D
80%	B-	60%	D-
77%	C+	<60%	F

Please contact the teacher at any time to discuss your progress in the course. Grades for each assignment will be posted on Moodle as they are returned.

Academic Integrity

Needless to say, plagiarism (the use of someone else's work—a couple of sentences or a whole paper—without giving them explicit credit) will not be tolerated and will result in a grade of F on any piece of class work. See the Student Handbook for details. Similarly, cheating on an exam will receive an immediate F. More than one offense will result in a referral to the Dean. Avoid the need to cheat by contacting the professor for help ahead of time.

Learning Services

If you have a disability that prevents you from doing as well as you could in this class, be sure to contact Lynn Waldman, Director of Academic Support and Disability Services, to discuss your specific needs and set up arrangements with the professor. Lynn's office is in the Center for Learning, Teaching and Research, and you can email her at lwaldman@colgate.edu, or call her at 315 228 7375.

Classroom Etiquette

At all times, please act with respect toward the professor and toward your classmates. *Mentally set aside the entire class period as a time for pursuing greater knowledge of this subject.* Please no talking during lectures, no cell phones or other nifty electronic devices.

WEEKLY READING SCHEDULE

Week 1

August 29 (Thursday!) – Introduction

August 30 (Friday!) – Why Study African Politics?
E&D: Chp. 1 (pp. 1-16)

Week 2

September 3 – The Evolution of African States
E&D: Chp. 2 (pp. 17-28)

September 5 – The Evolution of African States
E&D: Chp. 2 (pp. 28-43)

Week 3

September 10 – The Evolution of African States
E&D: Chp. 2 (pp. 43-66)
Moodle: Crawford Young, "The End of the Post-Colonial State in Africa?" *African Affairs*, 2004, 103 (410): 23-49.

September 12 – Theories of Ethnic Identity
E&D: Chp 3 (pp. 67-86)

September 12: Geography Quiz on African States

Week 4

September 17 – Theories of Ethnic Identity

Moodle: Peter Ekeh, “Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 17 (1), January 1975, 91-112.
Moodle: Daniel Posner, “The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi,” *American Political Science Review* 98 (4), November 2004.

Week 5

September 24 – Religion

E&D: Chp. 3 (98-118)
Moodle: Gerrie ter Haar and Stephen Ellis, selections from *Worlds of Power: Religious Thought and Political Practice in Africa*.

Week 6

October 1 – Social Classes

E&D: Chp. 3 (118-124)
Moodle: Richard Sklar, “The Nature of Class Domination in Africa,” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 17 (4), December 1979, pp. 531-552.

Week 7

October 8 – Neopatrimonial Rule

E&D: Chp. 4 (141-156)
Moodle: Michael Shatzberg, Chp 1 of *Political Legitimacy in Middle Africa: Father, Family, Food*, 1-35.

Week 8

October 15 – No Class Meeting

Midterm Recess

Week 9

October 22 – Political Parties

E&D: Chp. 4 (pp. 141-166)

Week 10

October 29 – Executives & Patterns of Mixed Governance

E&D: Chp. 4 (173-198)

Week 11

November 5 – Economic Crisis

E&D: Chp. 6 (231-250)
Moodle: Stephen Brown, “Foreign Aid and Democracy Promotion: Lessons from Africa.” *The European Journal of Developmental Research* 2005

September 19 – Theories of Ethnic Identity

E&D: Chp. 3 (86-98)

***Response Paper Option #1 Due on Young’s “The End of the Post-Colonial State in Africa?”**

September 26 – Religion

Moodle: Deborah Bryceson, Jesper Jonsson and Richard Sherrington, “Miner’s Magic: Aritsanal Mining, the Albino Fetish and Murder in Tanzania,” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 2010 48 (3): 353-82.

October 3 – Gender & Civil Society

E&D: Chp. 3 (124-140)

***Response Paper Option # 2 Due on Religion**

October 10 – Neopatrimonial Rule

Moodle: Nicolas Van de Walle. 2007. Meet the New Boss, Same as the Old Boss? The Evolution of Political Clientelism in Africa.” In Herbert Kitschelt and Steven Wilkinson (eds.) *Patrons, Clients and Policies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 50-68.

October 17 – MIDTERM

In Class Midterm – October 17

October 24 – Coups and Military Regimes

E&D: Chp. 4 (pp. 166-173)
Moodle: Jeffrey Herbst, excerpts from *States and Power in Africa*

October 31 – Regime Types

E&D: Chp 5 (pp. 199-230)

November 7 – Aid and African Economies

E&D: Chp. 6 (250-287)
Moodle: Aid Debate Packet

November 7: Final Research Paper Due

Week 12

November 12 – War, Conflict and Security

E&D: Chp. 7 (pp. 289-313)

November 14 – Theories of War

E&D: Chp. 7 (pp.313-325)

Moodle: Crawford Young, Deciphering Disorder in Africa

Week 13

November 19 – Peacekeeping & Conflict Resolution

E&D: Chp. 7 (pp.325-341)

Moodle: Pierre Englebert and Denis Tull, “Post Conflict Reconstruction in Africa: Flawed Ideas about Failed States.” *International Security*, 2008, 32 (4) 106-139.

November 21 – Case Study: South Sudan

Moodle: Rachele Walker, “Secessionist Conflicts and New States,” in *African Insurgents*.

Response Paper Option # 3 Due on Stephen Brown

NO CLASSES 11/25-11/29 – THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 14

December 3 – Africa in the World

E&D: chp. 8 (pp. 343-365)

December 5 – External Bilateral Relations

E&D: chp. 8 (pp.365-403)

Week 15

December 10 – Student Paper Presentations

Paper Presentations

December 12 – Student Paper Presentations

Paper Presentations

Final Exam – Thursday, December 19, 3:00-5:00 p.m.

*For the Geography Quiz:

1. Know the 49 states of Sub-Saharan Africa (but not the southern edge of the Arab World: Western Sahara, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya or Egypt) (p. 59 of Inside African Politics)
2. Know who colonized which areas of Sub-Saharan Africa (p. 35 of Inside African Politics). Many countries had several colonizers – stick to what you see on page 35.