

**University of Illinois at Chicago**  
**Politics and Government of Africa**  
**Political Science 245**  
**Spring 2007**

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Class Location: 369 BSB

Office: 1149 BSB  
Office Hours: M/W: 10:30 – 11:00 a.m.  
Class Meets: M/W: 9:00 to 10:15 a.m.

**Introduction & Overview**

Africa presents two faces. There is the Africa of lingering poverty, AIDS, intractable ethnic conflicts, irredeemable corruption, leadership failure and other social, economic and political ills. And there is the Africa of long human history, rich traditional culture, Olympic soccer champions, Nobel Laureates, great economic potentials, and more. However, much of what is known about Africa today in the outside world, including the United States, is based on the former than the latter- thanks to inadequate scholarship and media bias that have encouraged public generalizations and misconceptions about the continent.

With the goal of providing an informed and balanced view of Africa, this course will consider a broad range of empirical and theoretical questions about the continent. We will explore varied sources of information on Africa's colonial histories and legacies, as well as its socio-demographic, economic and political transformations. The hope is that at the end of this course students will have enriched their global perspectives and gained a capacity to analyze Africa objectively.

I assume students taking this course have some understanding of government, acquired through courses like POLS 130 (Comparative Politics), POLS 190 (Scope of Political Science) or introductory American Government. If you have not taken any of these but feel qualified, check with me.

**TEACHING METHOD**

This course will be taught as a part-seminar, part-lecture. Each class begins with an introduction of the topic and presentation of leading information from the readings. This will lead to a lecture/discussion in which the students are expected to participate actively.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Three rubrics have been adopted for evaluating performance in this course:

1.) Attendance/Participation. Regular attendance is mandatory. I will track the number of times you missed class and take it into consideration when calculating your final grade. Participation will be determined by your contribution to class discussion and general attitude toward the class. Students will submit a prior (Deadline: 6:00 p.m. Sunday) e-mail version of a 1-2 page reaction to the week's readings and come to class with a hard copy to guide their contribution to class discussion. This paper will try to answer questions such as the following: a.) What are the issues involved in the readings?

b.) What is the significance of those issues to understanding Africa c.) What are the authors' arguments/conclusions? e.) What do you conclude from the readings? Be prepared always to share your thoughts on the readings.

2.) An essay-only Midterm Examination intended to test the students' grasp of the issues and their ability to synthesize the readings.

3.) Research Project. The ultimate goal of this course is for students to distil all they've learned into a critical analysis of Africa. You will write a 17-20 page paper on two countries selected from *different regions* of the continent. Your paper has two parts. First, you will compare these countries in terms of political, economic and social transformations. Second, you will highlight a substantive policy issue of interest (administrative structure, judicial system, education system, democratic reforms, poverty alleviation, economic development, women empowerment, deforestation, urbanization, population control, AIDS awareness program, etc) in each country and propose a new policy or an amendment to the existing one. The idea here is an original research, and to that extent, although some background (i.e., colonial power, ethnic composition, independence movements, etc) is necessary, loading your paper with trite information easily lifted from the internet, will be penalized. In other words, I expect you to look beyond materials covered in class and use new, properly attributed information from documentaries, articles, journals, newspapers (no more than 3 internet citations allowed), interviews, and other relevant sources. Structurally, the paper will have separate pages for title and references and be written in font-size 12, double-spaced, with one-inch margins top, right, bottom and left. I encourage you to use graphical tools (tables, charts, etc) to illustrate important or interesting aspects of your paper, and to follow acceptable format. Questions regarding accessing written sources for your paper should be directed to the reference section at the UIC library. Be warned: spelling and grammatical errors will set you back in points. Most computers these days have spelling and grammar utilities; find and use them. You may also seek assistance from the university's Writing Center. Before embarking on this project you will submit for approval a proposal outlining what countries you plan to research and how you plan to go about it.

#### REQUIRED TEXTS

- 1.) Schraeder, Peter. 2004. *African Politics: A Mosaic in Transformation*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Belmont, CA: Thomas/Wadsworth
- 2.) Campbell, Greg. 2002. *Blood Diamonds*. Boulder: Westview Press
- 3.) Van de Walle, Nicholas et al, eds. 2003. *Beyond Structural Adjustment*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- 4.) Barnett, Michael. 2002. *Eyewitness to Genocide*. New York: Cornell University Press.

#### RECOMMENDED:

- 1.) Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost*
- 2.) Alex Thomson, *An Introduction to African Politics*
- 3.) David K. Leonard, *Africa's Stalled Development: International Causes and Cures*
- 4.) E. Gyimah-Boadi, *Democratic Reform in Africa: The Quality of Progress*
- 5.) Manthia Diawara, *In Search of Africa*
- 6.) Martin Meredith, *The Fate of Africa: A History of Fifty Years of Independence*

- 7.) Peter Lewis, ed., *Africa: Dilemmas of Development and Change*
- 8.) Wole Soyinka, *The Open Sore of a Continent*

These books are available at the UIC bookstore and possibly online at Amazon or Barnes and Noble.

#### OTHER SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

News sources available online:

- <http://allafrica.com>
- <http://www.africanews.org>

Journals available online or through the UIC library:

- *African Affairs*
- *African Studies Quarterly*
- *The Journal of Modern African Studies*
- *African Studies Review*

#### GRADE COMPOSITION

Attendance/Participation	= 30 percent
Midterm Examination	= 30 percent
Research Paper	= 40 percent

#### GRADING SCALE

Based on weighted scores in the above rubrics, the final grade will be determined as follows:

- A = 93 – 100 percent
- B = 83 – 92 percent
- C = 75 – 82 percent
- D = 65 – 74 percent
- F = Under 65 percent

#### INSTRUTOR'S POLICY

On Attendance:

For the goal of this course to be realized, you need to be here and on time. Class begins on time. I consider habitual late-coming disrespectful and it tells me you are not serious about the course. Three or more unexcused absences put you at risk for failure in this course no matter your other scores. Frivolous excuses, such as missing the train or car breaking down, will not be entertained. Academic accommodations will be given to students with documented disabilities, per university regulations. Such students should inform me of their condition early in the semester. Medical emergencies must be validated by an MD.

On Assignments:

Assignments are due on deadlines. Unexcused late assignments will be penalized accordingly. No exceptions.

#### On Academic Dishonesty:

A word of caution: Don't plagiarize or use a surrogate to do your work. Great variance between the skills shown in class and those displayed in take-home assignments will trigger an investigation that may lead to serious consequences for the student.

#### On Class Decorum:

Cell phones, pagers and related gadgets capable of setting off and distracting the class must be completely turned off before you enter the class. You may bring but not read newspapers during class. Stimulating and vibrant exchanges as part of class participation are encouraged; however, they must be conducted in a civilized fashion. Conversations that are irrelevant to the course will be shut down. Finally, while a cup of coffee or a bottle of soda may be allowed, chewable items (including gum) are forbidden.

#### On Course Information:

This syllabus is your primary source of written information for the course; consult it regularly. If you lose the copy given to you in class ask for a replacement or print one online.

#### COURSE CALENDAR

**Note: This calendar does not demarcate specific topics for each class meeting. Topics will be covered cumulatively; that is, we will pick up from where we left off the previous meeting.**

#### Week One – Wednesday -

1/17 Introduction and Course Overview. Relevance of course. Why take this course? Students' expectations from course. Myths and Realities of the African continent/Impromptu discussion on Africa.

Documentary on the history and nature of the African continent

Assignment: evaluate (for adequacy, balance and objectivity) random U.S. media reports on Africa

#### Week Two

1/22 The Nature of the African State. Read: Schraeder, Chapters 1-3; Van de Walle et al, Chapter 1

#### Week Three

1/29 Africa in Historical Context (1). Read: Schraeder, Chapters 4-5

#### Week Four

2/5 Africa in Historical Context (2). Read: Schraeder, Chapter 6

Documentary on colonialism and post-colonialism in Africa

#### Week Five

2/12 Nation-Building: Ethnicity, Class & Civil Society. Read: Schraeder, Chapters 7, 10; Van de Walle, Chapter 4

Documentary on civil wars and ethnic conflicts in Africa

Week Six

2/19 Political Economies & Institutional Trends (1). Read: Van de Walle, Chapters 2, 8, 9

Week Seven

2/26 Political Economies & Institutional Trends (2): Read: Van de Walle, Chapters 3, 5, 7

Week Eight

3/5 Political Economies & Institutional Trends (3): Read: Van de Walle, Chapters 6, 10

3/7 **Midterm Examination**

Week Nine

3/12 Models of Governance (1): Military Coups & Governments

Read: Schraeder, Chapter 11

Documentary on nature & dynamics of military juntas in Africa

Film: *The Last King of Scotland*

Week Ten

3/19 Models of Governance (2): Democratic experiments

Read: Schraeder, Chapter 12

Documentary on multi-party democracy in Africa

**- Last week to submit proposal for final research project**

Week Eleven

3/26 – 3/30 **Spring Break**

Week Twelve

4/2 Africa & World Politics (1)

Read: Schraeder, Chapters 13, 14

Week Thirteen

4/9 Africa & World Politics (2)

Read: Campbell, Chapters 1– End

Films: *Blood Diamond* and *Lord of War*

Week Fourteen

4/16 Africa & World Politics (3)

Barnett, Chapters 1 – End

Film: *Hotel Rwanda*

Week Fifteen

4/23 Literary & Socio-cultural Themes in African Politics. Read: Schraeder, Chapter 9  
Focus: scholar-activism; journalism in selected African countries

Week Sixteen

4/30 The New Africa: Economic Hopes, Political Optimism & Regional Cooperation. Read: Schraeder, Chapter 8; The African Union. 2001. *The New Partnership for Africa's Development* (NEPAD). Abuja, Nigeria. Available at <http://www.uneca.org/nepad/NEPAD.doc>; Yash Tandon. 2002. "NEPAD and FDIs: Symmetries and Contradictions." Nairobi, Kenya. Available at <http://www.geocities.com/ericsquir/articles/tandon-nepad.htm>

Documentary on economic and political cooperation among selected African countries.

Final Research paper is due in my mail box (no e-mail submissions!) at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 2, 2007.