

Political Science 3353

States and Politics in Africa

February 1, 2016

Dr. Tracy L. R. Lightcap
Office: Room 204, Callaway Academic Building
Office Hours: Thursday, 11:00 - 1:30pm or by appointment.

Required Readings

We will be reading two books and many papers in this course. The books are:

- Alex Thomson. 2010. *An Introduction to African Politics*. New York: Routledge.
- Chinua Achebe. 1988. *A Man of the People*. New York: Anchor. (Any edition will do.)

The additional papers assigned can all be found on-line on CONNECT or at the URLs cited in this syllabus.

Course Objectives

This course is a focused comparative analysis of the dynamics of politics in Africa. It is intended to give students a basic understanding:

- of the basic ideas and theoretical approaches used in comparative political studies, particularly those applying to developing areas;
- of the traditional societies in Africa and how they were transformed in the colonial period;
- of the social environments and political cultures of African polities;
- of the historical basis for political power in modern African states;
- of the political processes and institutions in modern African states;

- and of the interaction of political and economic factors affecting the performance of political systems in Africa and the impetus for political change there.

To accomplish this will not be easy; the unfamiliarity of the continent to most Americans is difficult to overcome and the pace of political change in there has been breath-taking. In this course, we begin with an overview of the generalities we can establish about Africa politics and some of the theories that have been used to explain them. We will focus on the two major problems these new states have: fostering economic development and managing political change. As we shall see, these problems are particularly acute in Africa and the states that must handle them face immense problems. First, we will look at some aspects - and only some - of recent African historical experience. Here we will concentrate on the impact of the colonial experience on Africa and African politics. Next, we will examine predominant social forces impacting political processes in Africa: ideology, ethnicity, and the politics of class formation. This background should prepare us for examining the structure of African states, the policy choices facing them, and the difficulties with creating political order in contemporary Africa. Finally, we will look at some countries in greater detail to apply the frameworks we have earned to the particular experience of African states.

Course Requirements

Grades

Examinations (60%):

There will be a midterm examination (30%) and a comprehensive final examination (30%). Material from lectures, discussions, and the readings will be covered on your examinations. Don't assume that you aren't going to be questioned about a lecture topic isn't in the book or about part of the assigned readings that I didn't cover in class. Current events might crop up too. I will not give a make-up test due to an unexcused absence. You will find me willing to accommodate your scheduling problems, within reason, but I must be informed before hand if you must miss a test.

Country Reports and Presentations (25%):

In addition, the class as groups will pick one of the African countries as a group project. Each of you will be responsible for submitting a short paper (7 - 10 typed pages) describing the political system of the country chosen, with an emphasis on the particular aspect of its politics that you analyzed for the group. I want you to present an analysis on the subject (political parties, interest groups, state institutions, ect.) you have been assigned by the group (yes, that's right, the group). For groups of four, for instance, you might - I say, might - choose to look at: 1) the pre-colonial features of your country and how it was impacted by colonialism; 2) political processes and political parties; 3) state

institutions and how they work; and 4) policy choices and policy problems. You could do this; you could do something else. In all cases, however, your analysis must be based on background readings in scholarly journals and books. I want evidence that you have risen above the level of understanding found on the nightly news and only reading analytical articles will show it. I will give you a more complete guide for this later. Your group will be making a presentation and each of you will have to write a paper. The paper will be 15% of your grade, the presentation is the other 10%. Work hard on both. The due dates will be set after we begin class.

Participation (15%):

Class participation entails, first of all, coming to class. But just showing up isn't enough; you must have read the assigned readings and be prepared to discuss them (i.e. what's the authors main argument or point, what does his work tell us about Africa, how does it apply to your country, ect.) I'll be asking questions in every class; be warned: I won't be too patient with blank looks. Also, members of each group will act as rapportuers for their country; i.e. you will be asked to give us an update on what's going on regularly. Each of you will get these assignments in rotation. Keep your presentation to 5 minutes or so and be prepared to turn in a brief outline and a news article when you present.

Attendance

I will be taking attendance at each class. More than three unexcused absences will result in withdrawal from the course (either a W or WF depending). I will charge you with an absence if you are late twice (i.e. two late appearances = 1 absence). If you are late, be sure to check with me after class to see that you were marked present! This is your responsibility and yours alone. As is usual, I will not charge an absence for the occasional emergency or illness; we all have those. Any such absence must, however, be verified. I must be informed of all other absences in advance. Needless to say, if you miss a class with a graded component, you get a zero for the class unless it is an excused absence. Make-up examinations will be given at my discretion and I do not plan to be that forgiving.

Internet Resources

The amount of information on the internet about Africa is positively amazing and these data are an invaluable aid to any student of the place. We live thousands of miles from the nearest African country, but we can get news and videos about daily happenings on the continent easily and, for the most part, for free. You will find such sources extremely useful in preparing your weekly papers about your country and, of course, they will prove indispensable for your longer papers. Here are some of the more useful sites:

- allafrica.com - This is an unusually complete compilation of news in Africa. Covers virtually every country.
- news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/default.stm - As usual, the BBC rules on international news. You can - and should - listen to the Network Africa or Focus on Africa programs almost every day. That's an order, unless you missed it. After you read the articles, of course.
- www.irinnews.org - This is the United Nations Integrated Regional Information Networks site. There are sound articles here on virtually every aspect of the problems of contemporary Africa. Searchable archives too.
- library.stanford.edu/areas/african-collections/african-studies-resources - I suppose you could find a better list of links about Africa. I don't *where* you could find it, however. This is terrific research source! <http://library.stanford.edu/africa-south-sahara/browse-country>, breaks down this material for every country on the continent.
- www.crisisgroup.org, www.hrw.org, www.amnesty.org - These are the home pages for the International Crisis Group, Human Rights Watch, and Amnesty International. Each of these organizations conducts useful field research in African countries. ICG is conflict and policy oriented; the other two focus on human rights questions. Amnesty is now a subscription site, but it is free and you do get a decent return for signing up. And, of course, ...
- www.youtube.com - The number and variety of videos on Africa available here is simply amazing. Want to watch an interview with Kenneth Kuanda? It's here. Want to see what a car trip around Ghana looks like? It's here. Be careful, however; there are plenty of people on youtube with very large axes to grind.

Class Etiquette

I have concluded that I have to allow students to use laptop computers in class; occasionally we have exercises involving them or the student has a study handicap that requires their use. However, if students are using their computers for checking e-mail and websurfing during class, I will revisit this decision. This has an unfortunate effect on the student involved, of course, but it also invariably draws students around them into their activities. You are in class to learn, not to check your e-mail or update Facebook. Take notes and participate. Your grade will depend on this, as you might have noticed. And turn off your cell phones, i-Phones, and whatever else.

I have also decided that it is high time for everyone to stop eating in class. You have time set aside for that during the day. Use it. This doesn't apply to drinks, of course; we all get thirsty during the day. Be sure to dispose of your bottles and cups.

Course Outline

The course will follow the outline below. I will make every effort to stick to this schedule, but if revisions are required I will inform you before hand. If we must reschedule any aspect of this syllabus, you and your classmates will be consulted. Please be aware that you have to be logged in on a computer here at the college or logged into Galileo here to make these links work. You can log on to Galileo off campus and use the Journal Locator to find the article, of course, but the links below won't work off campus unless you have access to the password for using Galileo remotely.

1. Introduction: Why Should We Study African Polities? (Feb 3 - 5)

Thomson Chap. 1

Africa: The Heart of the Matter. *The Economist* 13 May 2000 (CONNECT)

Carol Pineau. 2005. "The Africa You Never See." *Washington Post* 17 April, B2 (CONNECT)

2. Empires, Colonies, and Africa's Historical Legacy (Feb 8 - 15)

Thomson, Chap. 2

Film: *Black and White in Color*

Samir Amin. 1972. "Underdevelopment and Dependence in Black Africa." *JMAS* 10: 503 - 24 (CONNECT)

Kathryn Firman-Sellers. 1995. "The Politics of Property Rights." *APSR* 89: 867 - 81 (CONNECT)

3. Ideology and Independence (Feb 17 - 22)

Thomson, Chap. 3

James Coleman. 1954. "Nationalism in Colonial Africa." *APSR* 48: 404 - 26 (CONNECT)

Martin Kilson. 1963. "Authoritarian and Single-Party Tendencies in African Politics." *World Politics* 15: 262 - 94 (CONNECT)

4. Civil Society and Class Formation (Feb 24 - Mar 2)

Thomson, Chaps. 4 and 5

Daniel Posner. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why the Chewas and

Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." *APSR* 98: 529 - 45 (CONNECT)

E. Gyimah-Broadi. 1996. "Civil Society in Africa." *Journal of Democracy* 7: 118 - 32 (CONNECT)

5. Parties, States, and Armies (Mar 4 - 11)

Thomson, Chaps 6 and 7

Achebe, *A Man of the People*

Julius Ihonvbere. 1996. "Are Things Falling Apart? The Military and the Crisis of Democratization in Nigeria." *JMAS* 34: 193 - 225 (CONNECT)

6. Introducing African Political Economy (Mar 14 - 18)

Thomson, Chap. 9

Paul Collier and J. W. Gunning. 1999. "Why has Africa Grown Slowly?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 13 (3): 3 - 22 (CONNECT)

Susan George. 1992. "The Uses and Abuses of African Debt." *Dissent* 39 (3): 335 - 43. <http://www.tni.org/article/uses-and-abuses-african-debt>

Asad Ismi. 2004. "Impoverishing a Continent: The World Bank and the IMF in Africa." Halifax: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. www.halifaxinitiative.org/updir/ImpoverishingAContinent.pdf

Midterm Examination - Mar 21

Spring Break - Mar 23 - Apr 1

7. Facing the African Political Dilemma (Apr 4 - 8)

Thomson, Chaps. 8 and 10

Robert Jackson and Carl Rosberg. 1982. "Why Africa's Weak States Persist." *World Politics* 35: 1 -24 (CONNECT)

P. Olivier de Sardan. 1999. "A Moral Economy of Corruption in Africa?" *JMAS* 37: 25 -52 (CONNECT)

David Harris. 1999. "From 'Warlord' to 'Democratic' President: How Charles Taylor Won the 1997 Liberian Elections." *JMAS* 37: 431 - 55 (CONNECT)

8. Democracy and Legitimacy in Africa (Apr 11 - Apr 15)

Thomson, Chap. 11

Micheal Bratton and Nicolas Van de Walle. 1994. "Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa." *World Politics* 46 (4): 453 - 489 (CONNECT)

Joel Barkan. 2002. "The Many Faces of Africa: Democracy Across a Varied Continent." *Harvard International Review* 24 (2): 72 - 77 (CONNECT)

Jennifer Widener. 2005. "Africa's Democratization: A Work in Progress." *Current History* 104 (682): 216 - 21 (CONNECT)

Issa Shivji. 2003. "The Struggle for Democracy."
www.marxists.org/subject/africa/shivji/struggle-democracy.htm

9. Governing Kenya (Apr 18 - 20)

Jeffrey Steeves. 2006. "Beyond Democratic Consolidation in Kenya: Ethnicity, Leadership, and 'Unbounded Politics'." *African Identities* 4: 195 - 211 (CONNECT)

Muuma Ruteere. 2006. "Politicization as a Strategy For Recognition and Enforcement of Human Rights in Kenya." *Human Rights Review* 7 (2): 6 - 16 (CONNECT)

Lotte Hughes. 2005. "Malice in Maasailand: The Historical Roots of Current Political Struggles." *African Affairs* 104 (415): 207 - 24 (CONNECT)

Stephen Brown. 2004. "Theorizing Kenya's Protracted Transition to Democracy." *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 22 (3): 325 - 42 (CONNECT)

10. Governing the Republic of South Africa (Apr 22 - 27)

Film: *A Dry White Season*

Rebecca Davis. 2007. "Rebuilding the Future or Revisiting the Past? Post-Apartheid Afrikaner Politics." *Review of African Political Economy* 34: 353 - 370 (CONNECT)

Roger Southall. 2000. "Opposition in South Africa: Issues and Problems." In *Opposition in South Africa's New Democracy*, ed. Roger Southall. Kariega Park: Rhodes University/Konrad Adenauer Foundation (CONNECT)

Susan Cook. 2005. "Chiefs, Kings, Corporatization, and Democracy: A South African Case Study." *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 12 (1): 125 - 37 (CONNECT)

Richard Ballard, et al. 2005. "Globalization, Marginalization, and Contemporary Social Movements in South Africa." *African Affairs* 104 (417): 615 - 34 (CONNECT)

12. Presentations

Apr 29 - May 4 - TBA

13. Final Thoughts on African Politics and the Prospects for Development
(May 6 - 9)

Thomson, Chap. 12

Amartya Sen. 1990. "Individual Freedom as a Social Commitment." *New York Review of Books* 37 (June 14, 1990): 49 - 54 (CONNECT)

Final Examination - May 13 at 11:30 a.m.