

This syllabus contains important information. Read it carefully and keep it. Changes will be announced in lectures and MyUB.

Political Science 370: African Politics

Spring semester 2009, 11-12:20, 148 Park

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This course introduces politics in the continent of Africa as a whole, with particular attention to tropical Africa. The cultural, economic and historic contexts will be examined, to determine their impact on political attitudes and change. No prior knowledge of Africa is necessary for success in this course. However, without attending lectures regularly and careful reading of the assigned readings, a good grade will be nearly impossible to achieve. So the recipe is plain: come, participate, read carefully, and be certain your writing is up to speed.

Required texts (available in the University Bookstore and the College Bookstore on Maple):

- Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* and *A Man of the People* (novels)
- Peter J. Schraeder, *African Politics and Society* (second edition)

Additional readings, on reserve and available electronically: ***others will be announced subsequently.***

- Bratton, "Second elections in Africa"
- Cohen, "The success that Failed"
- Des Forges, "The Ideology of Genocide"
- Diduk, "The Civility of Incivility"
- *The Economist*, "Nollywood Dreams"
- Harris, "Liberia 2005"
- Herbst, *States and Power in Africa* [in part]
- Ikelegbe, "Engendering Civil Society"
- Kelsall, "Shop Windows and Smoke-Filled Rooms" [Tanzania]
- Lemarchand, "Genocide in the Great Lakes"
- Lindberg and Morrison, "Exploring Voter Alignments in Africa" [Ghana]
- MacLean, "Mediating Ethnic Conflict at the Grassroots: Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana"
- Meagher, "Hijacking Civil Society"
- Santiso and Loada, "Explaining the Unexpected" [Burkina Faso]
- Singer, "Child soldiers"
- Van de Walle, "Presidential and clientelism in Africa's emerging party systems"
- Welch, "Civil-military agonies in Nigeria"
- Welch, "The context of human rights in Africa"
- Young, "Third Wave of Democratization"

Grading policy

General:

All examinations and papers will be graded numerically, with the numbers then used for APPROXIMATE letter grades. The cut-off points on exams will be announced, and are intended to give you a sense of where you stand. These cut-off points will be determined separately for each examination. However, the final determination of grades rests with me, including division points between (say) B- and C+. Presuming full attention, attendance, appropriate participation and regular study on your part, you should be able to get an A or B.

Exams:

Three hour tests will be given at roughly equal points during the semester. See dates below. Each will count each one third of the final grade, and will cover material emphasized since the start of the course or the previous test. Details for all will be announced in class and on MyUB at appropriate times.

General expectations

Academic integrity:

Central to this course—and indeed to all University-level education—is the expectation of academic integrity. You are expected to submit *only* written work you have completed by yourself. Yes, it's OK (and even advisable) to study with others, but when you write, it must be your own product. All students are expected to be familiar with and abide by the University's academic integrity policies, available in the Undergraduate Catalog <<http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/course/integrity.shtml>> or the Graduate School Policies and Procedures Manual <http://www.grad.buffalo.edu/policies/index.php> . Plagiarism detection software may be used by me or the institution to aid in determining the originality of student work.

Learning-related issues:

Students dealing with stress-related problems (e.g., break-ups, family difficulties) should visit the Counseling Center, 120 Richmond Quad, or the Office of Disability Services, 25 Capen. For assistance with math or writing for your classes, the Learning Center in 217 Baldy Hall is available. Students wishing formal assistance in critical thinking skills and improving study habits may consider enrolling in GSE 155, "Methods of Inquiry". Check with the College of Arts and Sciences advisement office [275 Park] for general academic help.

E-mail policy:

Every semester, especially at the beginning, end, and around test or paper time, a large number of students try to get in touch with me. Here are some important considerations, to ensure that any e-mail message you might need to have answered is actually read AND responded to. I get ~100 messages per day, including large amounts of spam. Hence, I almost automatically delete notes coming from persons I don't know or can't identify from the user name or subject line. Addresses such as MissKitty05, NuklHead07 to ShaboomWhizzer seem especially suspect. Use your UB address if possible and ensure that the *subject line* clearly mentions the course number and your purpose of writing. Also, if you have an address with a commercial server such as Hotmail or Yahoo, be sure to set up automatic forwarding from your UB address to it. Don't expect immediate responses—or indeed any at all. I may answer in class or via My UB, especially if several students raise essentially similar questions. Issues involving grading **must** be raised first with the TA.

If you have a problem, it's often best to suggest alternative solutions in the message. For example, if you need to see me or the TA outside our regular office hours, indicate specifically when you are available. Telephone or face-to-face contact is often better, in terms of speed and establishing rapport with me, than a (relatively) anonymous electronic note.

Come to office hours if you have problems—that's why the TA and I have scheduled them. Do NOT expect we will be readily available at other times, because we have many duties as well, unless you've made different arrangements (see above).

Personal responsibilities

Out of courtesy to others, please turn off cell phones, instant messengers and pagers *before* class; ditto for taking care of personal hygiene and nutrition needs.

Tape recordings

You may record lectures, to assist in reviewing. However, they are not to be shared outside this course.

Lectures:

PowerPoint presentations will be used for most classes. I shall try to keep each slide as simple as possible.

Approximate schedule of lectures (subject to change)

Dates	Lecture topics	Required readings
1/13-1/22	General background	<i>Things Fall Apart</i> ; Cohen; Herbst; Schraeder Chaps 1 & 2
1/27-2/17	Politics of independence	<i>Man of the People</i> ; Schraeder Chaps 3 & 4
2/19	Hour exam #1	Includes all readings, lectures and maps to this date
2/24-3/3	Problems of democracy	Schraeder Chaps 8-10; Bratton; van de Walle
3/5	African novels and cinema	Schraeder Chap. 7; <i>Economist</i> , 'Nollywood Dreams'

Spring break

3/17-4/2	Applying lessons learned During this period, we will examine specific states. These will include Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Liberia, Ethiopia, Rwanda, the DRC, Kenya, Senegal, etc.	Definite readings are listed above. Others will be added as necessary. You will be notified electronically about changes.
4/7	Hour exam #2	Includes all readings, lectures and maps to this date
4/9-4/11	Human rights in Africa	Welch, "Context"; Singer
4/16-4/21	Africa in world politics	Schraeder Chaps 11 & 12
4/23	Final hour examination	Includes all readings, lectures and maps to this date

Personal reflections

Above all, I hope you finish this course with knowledge and understanding about Africa that you can use for many years to come. PSC 370 is intended to kindle interest and build in you the basis for further understanding.

I hope that you will log on each day to the following sites: www.nytimes.com, www.guardian.co.uk or other quality newspapers from different countries. *The Economist* offers excellent insights, better than any weekly American news magazine (www.economist.com). If you read other languages, I suggest www.lemonde.fr and African newspapers (such as *Le Soleil* of Senegal <http://www.lesoleil.sn> or the Cape Times of South Africa <http://www.capetimes.co.za>) or others that you can readily find. Also check the BBC Africa service [<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/default.stm>] for more, as well as www.africafocus.org. <http://polisci.msu.edu/afrov25/> provides information on a dozen African countries, based on periodic interviews.

Many of you are seniors, thinking about the next stage in life. Study abroad opportunities are available, although unfortunately there are few in Africa except for summer or between semesters. Among the best opportunities seniors have are Fulbright grants (many of which are available for Africa) or the Peace Corps (ditto), in addition to programs such as Teach for America. Announcements about the Fulbright program will be made available on the course website. I urge you to search the Peace Corps website (<http://www.peacecorps.gov/>) for details.

And, finally, there are several opportunities to help our global community and become engaging citizens of the world. Below is a list of suggested organizations, some at no cost to you and others with minimal monetary donations, which are available online. Keep in mind, local Western NY charities, foundations and organizations are also eager for young, brilliant members of our community to be involved. These suggestions are entirely up your choice, as they have no influence on the course grade.

Voluntary donation accepted http://hrw.org (Human Rights Watch) http://amnesty.org (Amnesty International) www.doctorswithoutborders.org (Doctors w/o Borders) www.redcross.org (International Red Cross) www.oxfam.org.uk (Oxfam)	No cost; paid by sponsors www.thehungersite.com www.freerice.org <i>and another other suggestions you may have</i>
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