AAS 623/RPOS 623 AFRICA IN WORLD POLITICS
Department of Africana Studies
University at Albany
Fall 2010

Prof. Adegboyega (Ade) Somide
Office: 442-4730
Mobile: 469-5838
E-mail: asomide@albany.edu

Time: Thursday 5:45– 8:35 PM
Rm: ES 108
Office Hours: Thursday 4:15-5:30 PM
& by appointment: Rm: BA 118E

I. Course Overview

Despite having enormous natural resources, Africa remains the most marginalized continent in the political and economic affairs of the contemporary world. Moreover, recurrent violent communal and regional conflicts, coupled with high prevalence of HIV/AIDS and economic and environmental scarcity, has caused widespread human insecurity throughout the continent. Africa is constantly in need of humanitarian aid and is host to the largest U.N. peacekeeping mission in the world.

This course examines the evolution of the international system since World War II and the implications and ramifications for Africa. We will survey dominant theoretical approaches in international relations and their relevance for our understanding of concepts such as state, sovereignty, power and security in the African context. We will place emphasis on major topics and themes that have shaped Africa’s relations with global centers of power, e.g., colonialism and decolonization, national development and international trade, war and peace, regional integration and globalization, and democratization and good governance. Competing scholarly and policy perspectives on the role of external (structure of the international system) and internal (African domestic policies) factors in Africa’s continued marginalization will be examined. We will investigate shifts in the international system and how they impact foreign policies of major European powers, the United States, and China towards Africa and vice versa since the end of the Second World War.

The course also examines the rising role of non-state actors such as multinational corporations, regional trading blocs, ethnic militias, and international governmental and non-governmental organizations in conflict/cooperation and development in Africa. We will analyze a number of specific cases of international efforts at democratization, conflict prevention/resolution, and economic development in Africa to identify factors responsible for failure and success. At the end of the course, students will have a demonstrated understanding of the impact of globalization on the states and peoples of Africa, causes of conflict and cooperation in international relations, the impacts of the structure of international economy on economic development of African states, the emerging role of Africa in global energy security, and the U.S. national security interests and policies in Africa.1

II. Course Requirements

1. Complete a well-researched seminar paper on any topic covered in the course following consultation with the instructor no later than October 21. Your paper should be typed, double-spaced, approximately 20-25 pages in length. It must draw on a rich mix of

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1 This syllabus is subject to change by the instructor based on the needs of the class.
sources, including books, journals, magazines, newspapers and electronic media. You will receive further instruction for this project in class.

2. Actively/positively participate in class discussion of assigned readings.

3. Prepare a review essay (approximately 5-7 pages) of a single book or two books on the same topic. Books used in the course cannot be selected for review essay. You will receive further instructions for this assignment in class.

4. Choose 2 class meetings for which you will prepare a 2-3-page summary of assigned readings and give a 15-minute oral presentation. Your written work should summarize the main points made by the authors, as well as critique their major arguments. You are required to distribute copies of your write-up in class.

5. Observe required attendance rule and meet all standards of academic integrity as set forth by the University. Please refer to the Graduate Bulletin for pertinent information: http://www.albany.edu/graduatebulletin/requirements_degree.htm.

6. Take a final examination.

III. Course Materials

Books available for purchase


Additional reading materials are on reserve at the University library under AAS 623.

Helpful resources

International Organization, Third World Quarterly, and Journal of Third World Studies. You may also find the following Internet/electronic sources useful for background and up-to-date information on specific countries and for preparing your written assignments:

**Institutional Resources**

University of Pennsylvania: [http://www.sas.upenn.edu/African_Studies/AS.html](http://www.sas.upenn.edu/African_Studies/AS.html)
The Carter Center: [http://www.cartercenter.org/homepage.html](http://www.cartercenter.org/homepage.html).
Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance Democracy Links: [http://www.idea.int](http://www.idea.int)
InterAction: [http://www.interaction.org/alpi/](http://www.interaction.org/alpi/)
FPIF Foreign Policy in Focus: [http://www.fpif.org/fpifindex/africa/](http://www.fpif.org/fpifindex/africa/)
U.S. Department of State: [http://www.state.gov/g/rls/rls/64105.htm](http://www.state.gov/g/rls/rls/64105.htm)
News updates: [http://www.africanews.org/index.html](http://www.africanews.org/index.html)
Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) [http://www.cfr.org](http://www.cfr.org)
Afrobarometer: [http://www.afrobarometer.org](http://www.afrobarometer.org)

**Organizations**

ECOWAS: [http://www.ecowas.int/](http://www.ecowas.int/)
Southern Africa Development Community- SADC: [http://www.sadc.int/](http://www.sadc.int/)
UNHCR: [http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home](http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home)

### IV. Course Evaluation

Final grade for the course will be based on the following elements:
Review essay: 25%*
Mid-term: 25%*
Final examination: 25%*
Seminar paper: 25%*
Participation/Attendance: 10%
Summaries: 15%

You are required to complete all of the above components. However, if you take the final examination, your lowest grade among the four components denoted with an asterisk will be dropped. Upon request, you may be exempted from taking the final examination, in which case your grades in the three remaining asterisked components cannot be substituted and will
automatically be used in computing your final grade. I generally will not give an incomplete grade. If you have any problems/concerns, see me during my office hours to discuss.

**Important Dates**
- Summary of readings due: At class time
- Review essays due: October 14
- Seminar paper proposal due: October 28
- Seminar paper due: December 2 at 5:45 PM
- Final Exam: December 16 TBA
- *Turn in your work by the deadline! Late assignments will be assessed half a letter grade penalty per day.*

**V. Lecture/Discussion Topics and Reading Assignments**

**Week 1 (Sept. 2): COURSE INTRODUCTION**
- Course syllabus

**Week 2 (Sept. 9): NO CLASS**

**Week 3 (Sept. 16): OVERVIEW AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES**

**Week 4 (Sept. 23): OVERVIEW AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES**

**Week 5 (Sept. 30): CONFLICT AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**
*Cases: Sudan, Ivory Coast*

**Week 6 (Oct. 7): CONFLICT AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT (2)**
*Cases: Rwanda, Uganda, Somalia and Sudan/Darfur*


**Recommended**


**Week 7 (Oct. 14): GLOBAL INTEGRATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**


**Recommended**


**Week 8 (Oct. 21): CHANGING EUROPEAN AND ASIAN POLICIES IN AFRICA**

**Cases: Britain, France, China, and India**

• Ian Taylor, *The International Relations of Sub-Saharan Africa*. Chap. 2-8.

**Week 9 (Oct. 28): UNITED STATES AND AFRICA**

**Case: Zimbabwe, The Horn**


**Week 10 (Nov. 4): UNITED STATES AND AFRICA**

**Case: Somalia, The Horn**


• Read “Black Hawk Down: An American War Story,” online at http://inquirer.philly.com/packages/somalia/sitemap.asp

• Black Hawk Down (Film)

Week 11 (Nov. 11): **AFRICA AND GLOBAL DEMOCRACY PROMOTION**

**Cases: Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana**

• Immanuel Kant, “Perpetual Peace” Excerpts.


• Brendan Howe, Vesselin Popovski, Mark Notaras, ed. Democracy in the South: Participation, the State and the People, United Nations University, 2010, Chap 5, 6, & 7.


Week 12 (Nov. 18): **AFRICA AND GLOBAL ENERGY SECURITY**


Recommended


Week 13 (Nov. 25): **NO CLASS**
Week 14 (Dec. 2): **WRAP UP**

- Presentation of research