RPOS 355: Government & Politics of Sub-Saharan Africa
Spring 2012

Instructor = Robert Tynes
Email = rtynes@albany.edu
Meeting Time = Tues. & Thurs., 1:15-2:35 pm
Meeting Place = HU 109
Office Hours = Before and after class and by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

This course is an introduction to the theories about, and history and practices of, African politics. The class presents several overarching questions, which we will explore throughout the semester: What are the assumptions embedded in the notion of an African politics? How do these assumptions shape the political and economic dynamics within/between the 53+ African countries existing today? What is an African state and how does it fit into the international relations arena? By the end of the course you might not have a definitive answer for any of these questions, but you should have developed a more complex intellectual picture of what African politics is and what it means in today’s world.

Required Texts

The class is reading intensive, and coming to class fully prepared is essential to your intellectual growth. The following texts have been ordered through the university bookstore and are also available new/used from Amazon.com and several other textbook websites. Other articles will be posted on Blackboard.


Assignments

- Attend all sessions
- Reading the required texts before the class meets
- Participation
- Geography Quiz
- Focus of Africa responses
- Research coding
- Midterm
- Analytical Paper w/Appendix
- Final
Participation includes being present for class, reading the assigned chapters/articles, quizzes and engaging in discussion.

Focus of Africa responses: each week you will listen to the BBC program at least once and write up a 1-page, single-spaced response to the news presented. You must hand in four (4) summaries total during the semester—one (1) per week of your choosing. The Focus on Africa website url is:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/

Research Coding: As part of the applied portion of the class, you will be given a small project that requires gathering data on the oil industry in Africa.

The Analytical Paper is an argumentative essay based on a single case study of an African state. Each student will be assigned their own country to research throughout the semester. The final paper will address a research question using the African state already studied.
(For papers, hand in one hard copy and send one e-copy to Blackboard)

The Midterm and the Final will include material from the lectures and the readings.

Class Schedule

WEEK 1: Introduction: What is Africa?
Jan. 19, Thursday = Read Schraeder, Chapter 1.

WEEK 2: Pre-colonial Africa
Jan. 24, Tuesday = Read Austen, Introduction (Blackboard); Read Schraeder, Chapter 2.
Jan. 26, Thursday = Read Austen, Chapters 1-4 (Blackboard).

WEEK 3: The Scramble/the Partition and Colonial Rule
Jan. 31, Tuesday = Read Schraeder Chapter 3.
Feb. 2, Thursday = Read Austen Chapter 5-7 (Blackboard).

GEOGRAPHY QUIZ: States and Leaders

WEEK 4: Independence
Feb. 7, Tuesday = Read Schraeder Chapter 4.
Feb. 9, Thursday = Read Austen Chapter 8 (Blackboard).

WEEK 5: The State
Feb. 14, Tuesday = Read Shraeder Chapter 8-9.
Feb. 16, Thursday = Read Austen Chapters 9-10 (Blackboard); Read Ferguson Chapter 4 (Blackboard).

WEEK 6: Religion, Ethnicity and Class
Feb. 21, Tuesday = Read Schraeder Chapter 5.
Feb. 23, Thursday = Read Mezlekia, Notes from the Hyena’s Belly.

WEEK 7: Democracy and Development
Feb. 28, Tuesday = Read Schraeder Chapters 6 & 10.
Mar. 1, Thursday = Read Ferguson Chapter 3.

ANALYTICAL PAPER APPENDIX DUE
WEEK 8: Midterm
Mar. 6, Tuesday = Midterm review.
Mar. 8, Thursday = MIDTERM

WEEK 9: Spring Break
Mar. 13, Tuesday = NO CLASS
Mar. 15, Thursday = NO CLASS

WEEK 10: Pan-African Politics
Mar. 20, Tuesday = Read Schraeder Chapter 11.
Mar. 22, Thursday = Read Nyerere (Blackboard); Read Clapham, “Solidarity” (Blackboard).

WEEK 11: Africa and International Politics
Mar. 27, Tuesday = Read Schraeder Chapter 12.
Mar. 29, Thursday = Read Clapham, “Superpowers” (Blackboard).

WEEK 12: Globalization I
April 3, Tuesday = Read Ferguson, Introduction, Chapters 1 & 7.
April 5, Thursday = Read Ferguson, Chapter 8.

WEEK 13: Globalization II
April 10, Tuesday = read Saro-Wiwa, A Month and a Day.
April 12, Thursday = read Saro-Wiwa, A Month and a Day.

WEEK 14: Oil
April 17, Tuesday = read Saro-Wiwa, A Month and a Day.
April 19, Thursday = read Saro-Wiwa, A Month and a Day.
CODING PROJECT DUE

WEEK 15: South Africa
April 24, Tuesday = Read Krog, Antjie, Country of My Skull.
April 26, Thursday = Read Krog, Antjie, Country of My Skull.

WEEK 16: Genocide
May 1, Tuesday = Read Diop, Murambi, The Book of Bones.
May 3, Thursday = Read Diop, Murambi, The Book of Bones.
ANALYTICAL PAPER DUE

WEEK 17: Synopsis
May 8, Tuesday = Review for Final

FINAL — May 15, 10:30-12:30.
Grading

All assignments must be handed in order to receive credit for the class.

- Attendance and Participation………………………10%
- Focus on Africa summaries and Geography Quiz……10%
- Research Coding……………………………………10%
- Appendix for Analytical Paper……………………10%
- Analytical Paper…………………………………20%
- Midterm……………………………………………20%
- Final………………………………………………20%

Policies

- **Attendance** is required. If you must be absent (or tardy/leave early), please let me know.

- **Academic dishonesty** will NOT be tolerated. Students who violate the University’s policies on academic dishonesty may be subject to suspension. Pay special attention to the use of other sources to avoid accusations of plagiarism. Please acknowledge others’ works when writing your paper (ideas or direct quotes) by using either footnotes or in-sentence citations. Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their college work. Cheating forgery and plagiarism are serious offenses, and students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action. More information on plagiarism and university policies can be found at: http://www.albany.edu/studentsuccess/ALBANY_Handbookfinal.pdf

- Students with documented physical, learning, psychological and other disabilities are entitled to receive reasonable accommodations. If you need classroom or testing accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center (Campus Center 137), http://www.albany.edu/disability/. The DRC will provide forms verifying the need for accommodation. As soon as the instructor receives the form, you will be provided with the appropriate accommodations. Students are encouraged to request accommodations as close to the beginning of the semester as possible.