

## Syllabus: African Politics Fall 2016

*Last updated: August 28, 2016*

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### Course information

- Course title: African Politics
- Course number: POLSC-AD 161-001
- Credits: 4
- Term: Fall 2016 (14 weeks)
- Lecture Location: Building Comp Research (A2), Room 017
- Lecture Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 1025-1140pm
- Office Hours: Tuesday 3-4pm. And by appointment

### Instructor information

- Instructor: Dr. Peter van der Windt
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### Course description

The aim of this course is to teach students what answers, if any, social scientists have to questions that concern Africa: 1) Why is there democracy in some African countries but not in others? 2) Why is Africa so poor? 3) Why is violence used to resolve some disputes, but not others? 4) In what ways do African leaders build public support? 5) To what extent are outcomes in contemporary Africa a consequence of its history, culture, and geography? Political scientists seek to address these and many more questions. However, because Africa cannot be understood in isolation from its societies or its historical context, this course augments research by political scientists with research by historians, economists, and anthropologists.

### Course Setup

Each week we will have two classes of one hour and fifteen minutes. Each week we discuss one topic. Usually, the Tuesday classes will be a “lecture” class, where I will lay out the important ideas and problems in that weeks readings. You have to read all the material (see below) prior to the class. The goal of this class is to provide overall context. The Thursday classes, usually, are “discussion” classes in which we will spend discussing the reading together.

### Course material

The course builds on articles and book chapters. Some are required (R). Other material is optional (O) for those who want to go beyond the minimal reading requirement. The readings are listed below by week. There are also a large number of informative movies, I’ll list several of them below with the following indication: (F). Do make sure to get the following books. One is a textbook, and one is a novel:

- (R) Herbst (2000)
- (R) Achebe (1958)

### Requirements and evaluation

- Attendance, questions and class participation (20%): You are expected to come to the classes having done the required readings and I expect you to participate in discussions in class. Make sure you are on time. Also, I expect that you send two research questions the night before each discussion class (before 1159pm). These two questions should be questions that have after having done the reading. We will discuss them then in class. If you are always present in class, send in the questions and participate a bit, you receive a 'B+'. If you participate actively in class this grade will go up. If you cannot be present during a class, send me an email before the class and include the reason. You are allowed to miss one class. After that it will lower your grade at my discretion.
- Event summary and presentation (10%): Each student is one time assigned to a (historic) event that is related to one of the weeks' topic. The assigned student has to prepare a one page summary (single-spaced, no pictures) that he/she shares with the rest of the group (to be circulated before Tuesday 1159pm), and present the historic event in a 10 minute presentation at the start of the Thursday class. The student has to relate the event to that week's readings. The events are listed below. I will assign one event to each student. I will adjust the list of events based on the number of students in class.
  - (E) "Herero Massacre", 1904
  - (E) "Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba's Return from exile", 1905
  - (E) "Death of Dag Hammarskjold", 1961
  - (E) "Operation Green Sea", 1970
  - (E) "Election Nelson Mandela", 1994
  - (E) "Death of Samuel Doe", 1990
  - (E) "Ebola crisis", 2014-2015
- Map quiz (10%): You will be required to locate several African countries and their capitals on a map. We'll do the exam in class.
- Country memo (15% + 15%): You will be required to write a short memo (max 8 pages, single-spaced) that applies the course material and concepts to a specific country. You choose the country during the first week. During the course, you become the expert for that country. In the middle of the course, you'll hand in a first draft (of the topics thus far), I grade it and we'll meet to discuss the memo to make sure you're going in the right direction. More information about the memo can be found in the appendix.
- Final exam (30%): The final exam is a closed-book, in-class exam covering material from both the lectures and the required readings.

### Staying current

Often I will introduce my class with a reference to an event that took place that week. Africa is always in the news. There is no reason not to follow current events. I expect you to keep track of events in the country you chose. These are some good references:

- BBC Africa (<http://www.bbc.com/news/world/africa>)
- UNOCHA's Irinnews (<http://www.irinnews.org/africa>)

- All Africa (<http://allafrica.com/>)

### And more

Also on campus there is the “African Studies Seminar” and the SIG “Africa Global”. They actively organize interesting events related to the continent.

### Course schedule

The next part provides the course schedule by week. This is the course in broad lines: readings and topics can change as we go along (among others based on your input). The reading list contains book chapters and papers, both theoretical and empirical. Please read the assigned readings carefully and reflectively. I’ll try to keep the amount of required readings low and I really expect you to read carefully and reflect.

Note that there are also a large number of important topics that we do not cover in much detail but important to Africa: decentralization, firms, etc.

Week 1 (Tue, Aug30 & Thu, Sep1): Introduction and overview; and how to research Africa

- (R) “The Shape of Africa”: [http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0509/resources\\_geo2.html](http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0509/resources_geo2.html)
- (R) “How to Write About Africa”: <http://granta.com/how-to-write-about-africa/>
- (R) “Africa is Not a Country”: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jan/24/africa-clinton>
- (R) “Reviving the Heart of Wild Africa” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vAiP1i0v23M&feature=youtu.be>
- (R) “Getting to Know Africa: 50 Interesting Facts...” <http://voices.nationalgeographic.com/2013/10/31/getting-to-know-africa-50-facts/>

Week 2 (Tue, Sep6 & Thu, Sep8): Before colonialism

- Sep8: Map quiz
- (R) Chapter 2 in Herbst (2000)
- (O) Osafo-Kwaako and Robinson (2013)
- (O) Chapter 2 in Bates (1983)
- (O) Chapter 4 (“The Political System”) in Evans-Pritchard (1969)
- (O) Johnson (1981)
- (F) “King Solomons Mines”, 1950
- (F) “Battle of Algiers”, 1965

Week 3 (Tue, Sep13 & Thu, Sep15): Colonialism

- Sep13: No class (Eid Al-Adha)
- (R) Chapter 3 in Herbst (2000)
- (R) Crowder (1964)
- (O) Chapter 1 in Prunier (1997)
- (O) Chapter 9 and 10 in Oliver and Atmore (1972)

- (O) Part IV (“Documents”) in Chamberlain (2010)
- (O) Chanock (1991): 25 pages
- (F) “Camp de Thiaroye”, 1987
- (F) “Noirs et Blancs en Couleur”, 1976
- (E) “Herero Massacre”, 1904

Week 4 (Tue, Sep20 & Thu, Sep22): Nationalism and independence

- (R) Coleman (1954)
- (R) Chapter 17 (“A Year of Decision”) in Kaunda (1962)
- (O) Chapters 6 in Young (1994)
- (O) Berman (1996)
- (O) Joseph (2003)
- (O) Berg (1960)
- (O) Ade Ajayi (1982)
- (F) “Lumumba” 2001
- (E) “Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba’s Return from exile”, 1905

Week 5 (Tue, Sep27 & Thu, Sep29): Colonial legacies

- (R) Chapter 4 in Herbst (2000)
- (R) Lange (2004)
- (O) Chapter 8 in Young (1994)
- (O) Pages 249-311 (“Colonial War and Mental Disorders”) in Fanon (1963)
- (O) Ekeh (1975)
- (O) Firmin-Sellers (1995)
- (E) “Death of Dag Hammarskjöld”, 1961

Week 6 (Tue, Oct4 & Thu, Oct6): State and state-building

- (R) Chapter 5 and 9 in Herbst (2000)
- (R) Jackson and Rosberg (1982)
- (O) Boone (1995)
- (O) Chapters 7 and 9 in Young (1994)
- (E) “Operation Green Sea”, 1970

Week 7 (Tue, Oct11 & Thu, Oct13): Democracy in Africa

- (R) Moehler and Lindberg (2009)
- (O) Mattes and Bratton (2007)
- (O) Embaló (2012)
- (O) Arriola (2013)

- (E) “Election Nelson Mandela”, 1994

Week 8 (Tue, Oct18 & Thu, Oct20): Elections and policy choices

- Oct20: No class (Final exams for 7-week courses)
- (R) Wantchekon (2003)
- (O) Van de Walle (2003)
- (O) Ichino and Nathan (2013)
- (O) Barkan (1995)
- (O) Throup (2008)

Week 9 (Tue, Oct25 & Thu, Oct27): Economic Development

- Oct25: No class (Fall break)
- (R) Schatz (1994)
- (R) Collier and Gunning (1999)
- (O) Reinikka and Svensson (2004)
- (O) Mosley et al. (1995)
- (O) Ndulu and O’Connell (1999)

Week 10 (Tue, Nov1 & Thu, Nov3): Ethnic politics in Africa

- (R) Posner (2004)
- (O) Eifert et al. (2010)
- (F) “Hotel Rwanda”, 2004

Week 11 (Tue, Nov8 & Thu, Nov10): Religion in Africa

- Nov8: We’ll watch the movie “God Loves Uganda”
- (R) Grossman (2013)
- (O) Ellis and ter Haar (1998)
- (F) “Ceddo”, 1976
- (F) “Call Me Kuchu”, 2013
- (F) “God Loves Uganda”, 2013

Week 12 (Tue, Nov15 & Thu, Nov17): Violence, war and reconstruction

- (R) Collier (2004)
- (O) Chapters 2, 8, 9, 13 and 15 in Stockwell (1978)
- (O) Howe (1998)
- (F) “Blood Diamond”, 2006
- (E) “Death of Samuel Doe”, 1990

Week 13 (Tue, Nov22 & Thu, Nov24): Aid

- (O) Van der Windt (2016)
- (O) Easterly (2003)
- (E) “Ebola crisis”, 2014-2015

Week 14 (Tue, Nov29 & *Thu, Dec1*): “Things Fall Apart”

- Dec1: No class (UAE National Day holiday)
- (R) Achebe (1958)

Week 15 (Tue, Dec6 & Thu, Dec8): China in Africa

- (R) Brautigam (2010)

Week 16 (Tue, Dec13 & Thu, Dec15): Conclusion

- (R) “Is it Africa’s Turn?”: <https://fse.fsi.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/AfricaForum.pdf>

## Appendix: Additional info on the country memo

When writing your memo take the following into account.

The goal of this memo is to apply what we learn in class, to your country of choice.

- Structure your document using the same sections as the topics we discuss in class. So: “Before colonialism”, “Colonialism”, etc.
- Do not just add information from Wikipedia, relate it to what we learn in class.
- Within each section apply what we discussed in class (the concepts, the measures, etc.) to your country. What ELF does your country have? How does it score on the Polity IV? Etc.
- Even if some concepts are not relevant to your country, then say something like “We know that indirect and direct rule was important for several African countries because of XYZ. However, for my country it is not relevant.” With this memo you want to show off to me that you understand what we discussed in class, and can apply it.
- Per section, make sure you have at least one reference to a reading for that week.
- There is no need for an introduction or a conclusion. It is not a paper.

Some practical things:

- Include page numbers
- The maximum length is eight pages, double-spaced
- Margins a minimum of 1 inch
- Use Times New Roman, size 11
- Do references as follows, in the text use (Author, Year), and then as last page have a reference section.

## References

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