

PSCI 3082-001: POLITICAL SYSTEMS OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

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University of Colorado at Boulder
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Ketchum 234
TWR 6:00 – 8:30 PM

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COURSE OBJECTIVES: Why is sub-Saharan Africa so poor, and why has democracy been such a rarity on the continent? In this course, students will explore and assess a variety of answers to these questions while surveying many of the main events and people in the region's recent political history. Is it the fault of the West and centuries of exploitation of the continent? Or is it the fault of Africa's disastrous post-independence leadership, as embodied in figures such as Idi Amin, Joseph Mobutu, Kwame Nkrumah, and Julius Nyerere? Alternatively, is it the fault of Africa's geography, with its high disease burden and difficult terrain? While not providing definitive answers to these questions, the course will give students more tools for thinking about them. The course will also consider the events and causes of recent African tragedies, namely the HIV/AIDS epidemic and the Rwandan genocide. Not all of Africa's recent history, however, is so tragic. As such, the course will also focus on some African success stories, with the hope of presenting a balanced portrayal of the continent's politics and of assessing seeds of hope for its future.

REQUIRED READING: All readings listed on this syllabus are required. Four books are available for purchase at the CU Book Store, and one copy of each is also available on course reserve at Norlin Library. You can also purchase any of these books at Amazon.com. They are as follows:

- (1) *Africa: Altered States, Ordinary Miracles* by Richard Dowden
(2) *King Leopold's Ghost* by Adam Hochschild
(3) *We Wish to Inform you that Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with our Families* by Philip Gourevitch
(4) *Playing the Enemy* by John Carlin (also published as *Invictus*)

GRADES: Overall, the final grade will be allocated in the following manner:

1) Examinations	60%
o Midterm:	30%
o Final:	30%
2) Quizzes:	15%
3) Participation	15%
4) Attendance	10%

First, 60% of the overall grade is based on two open-book, open-note, take-home examinations. The *Midterm* will cover Unit 1 material and the *Final* will cover unit 2 material. These all-essay examinations will be emailed to you at 5PM on the evening of the exam and must be completed and emailed back to me by 9PM of that same evening. You are welcome to refer to readings and notes as you write your answers. The only thing you may not do is consult with other human beings, especially classmates.

Second, 15% is based on four closed-book, in-class multiple choice quizzes. The dates of these quizzes are already specified on this syllabus and will not change. With one exception, quiz questions will be based on the assigned readings for that day. I will drop the lowest of your four quiz grades (including zeroes for non-attendance) and calculate your quiz grade based on your highest three scores.

Examinations and quizzes will not be given to anyone at a day or time other than that already specified on this syllabus, unless students have discussed with me IN ADVANCE special arrangements due to disability or time conflict. Students with disabilities must show me authorization from the Office of Services to Disabled Students during the first week of class and must still take the examination with special arrangements at the specified time.

Third, the *Participation* (15%) component of the grade is based on student engagement and participation in class discussions. This is a very small class, so student engagement will be essential. All students are expected to come prepared to each class session.

As always, academic dishonesty is not tolerated; you will receive an "F" in the class and may be expelled. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, passing off the work of others (especially current or former students or published work) as your own.

Please turn off your cell phones in the classroom. Also, please do not read newspapers, surf the internet, bring your dog(s), or chat with your neighbor during class.

Midterm	June 17
Final	July 1

Week 1

June 2 The West: Colonialism

- Reading assignment: Dowden chapter 4 and pp. 266 to 283.
- Discussion: Do slavery and colonialism explain African underdevelopment?

June 3 No Class: Watch Parts 1 and 3 of *Guns, Germs, and Steel*

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-4008293090480628280#>

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-4008293090480628280#docid=-3449100874735282191>

- Reading assignment: Start reading Hochschild.

June 8 The West: The Cold War, Trade, and Aid

- Reading assignment: Continue reading Hochschild. Chapter 8 in Dowden is recommended but not required.
- Discussion: Overall, what has been the impact of the West on Africa?
- QUIZ 1: On the map of Africa

June 9 Mother Nature: African Geography and Development

- Reading assignment: Finish Hochschild

- Discussion: Do you find geographical explanations for underdevelopment convincing, outlandish, or something in between?

June 10

Africa's "Big Men": Nationalism and Independence

- Reading assignment: Dowden chapter 3 and 13. Start reading Gourevitch.
- Discussion: Why did nationalist dreams fall so short?
- QUIZ 2: On Hochschild

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Week 3

June 15

Africa's "Big Men": Military Rule and Economic Failure

- Reading assignment: Continue reading Gourevitch

June 16

A case study: Rwandan Genocide

- Reading assignment: Dowden chapter 9 and finish reading Gourevitch
- Discussion: Is the West responsible for the Rwandan genocide?
- QUIZ 3: On Gourevitch

June 17

MIDTERM EXAMINATION

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Week 4

UNIT 2: AFRICA'S FUTURE: TRAGEDY OR TRIUMPH?

June 22

Tragedy: HIV/AIDS in Africa

- Reading assignment: Dowden chapter 12
- Discussion: How did the HIV/AIDS epidemic get to be so bad? What is the most effective way to address it?

June 23

Tragedy: History and apartheid in South Africa

- Reading assignment: Dowden chapter 14 and start reading Carlin
- Discussion: What are the historical roots of South Africa's racial strife?

June 24

No Class: Watch *Endgame* on line through course reserves.

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Week 5

June 29

Triumph: South Africa's Miracle

- Reading assignment: Continue reading Carlin
- Discussion: Do you consider South Africa a success story?

June 30

Triumph: Glimmers of hope elsewhere?

- Reading assignment: Finish reading Carlin
- Discussion: Do you believe in an African renaissance?
- QUIZ 4: On Carlin

July 1

FINAL EXAMINATION

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO POLICIES:

Students with Disabilities

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act, students with disabilities should ask for "reasonable and timely" accommodations. You are welcomed to do so in the first two weeks of the semester either during my office hours or after class. These accommodations can be extended if you are a student with a disability and are registered with the Office of Services to Disabled Students. Please refer to the web link www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices or contact 303-492-8671, Willard 322 for information. University regulations on this issue will be strictly observed. If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities.

Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating or plagiarizing will be treated according to the University regulations which will be strictly observed. All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Students are strongly advised to familiarize themselves with the University of Colorado's Code for Academic Honesty at www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/.

Religious Observances

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Students in this situation can ask for "reasonable and timely" accommodations. Please review the syllabus closely and try to find out whether you have time conflicts with any of the assignments. I encourage you to do so in the first two weeks of the semester and inform me about your concerns either during my office hours or after class. Full details can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html.

Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and at http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code.

Discrimination and Harassment

The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment, the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>.