The purpose of this course is to introduce students to some of the major issues, themes and theories in the politics of contemporary Sub-Saharan Africa. The course begins by reviewing the nature and legacies of colonial rule and the politics of independence. From there, we move to the character of the African state, highlighting its personalism, its clientelism, and its simultaneous weakness and strength. Then, the course turns to the role of ethnicity in politics and society. From there, we explore the reasons for the region’s economic stagnation during the 1980s and early 1990s and the domestic and international politics of economic reform. We then address the state of “democracy” in the Africa, the difficulty of development interventions, and the issue of civil war. We conclude with a discussion of what the future may hold for the region.

REQUIREMENTS

The course is taught in two lectures each week, on Tuesday and Thursday from 11:00 to 12:15am in 220 Haines Hall. Attendance at lectures is mandatory.

Students are required to take a mid-term and a final exam. They are also required to attend and participate in weekly discussion sections. In addition, students will read Chinua Achebe’s novel *Anthills of the Savannah* and write a short (10-12 page) paper relating the novel to the themes of the course. Students will also be required to take a map test during the quarter’s second week. The relative weights accorded to these five requirements are as follows: midterm (25%), paper (20%), final (35%), section participation (15%), and map test (5%). [Note: to aid you in studying for the map test, I highly recommend any of the websites you will find if you Google “Africa map quiz.”]

The course involves a heavy reading load, the completion of which is essential to understanding the issues and controversies addressed in the lectures. With the exception of the Achebe novel, which is readily available at Amazon.com, all of the readings are posted on the course web page (UCLA login required) and are available to be downloaded for your own use.

Note that the final exam for the course is scheduled for Tuesday, December 6, 8am-11am. *All students must take the exam at this date/time. If you know that you have a conflict with this date/time, then you should not enroll in the course.*

UCLA is committed to providing help to students with disabilities. If you wish to request an accommodation due to a suspected or documented disability, please inform Professor Posner and/or contact the Center for Accessible Education at A255 Murphy Hall, (310) 825-1501. Website: [www.caes.ucla.edu](http://www.caes.ucla.edu).
LECTURE AND READING SCHEDULE

WEEK 1
Sept 22: Introduction

WEEK 2
Sept 27: The “Scramble for Africa” and the Nature of Colonial Rule

Sept 29: The Legacy of Colonialism

WEEK 3
Oct 4: National Independence Movements

Oct 6: The Centralization of Authority and the Rise of Personal Rule

WEEK 4
Oct 11: The Decay of the State
Oct 13: *Agricultural Policy*

**WEEK 5**

Oct 18 and 20: *Ethnicity in Africa*

**WEEK 6**

Oct 25: MIDTERM

Oct 27: *Explaining Slow Economic Growth in Africa*

**WEEK 7**

Nov 1: *The Domestic Politics of Economic Reform*

Nov 3: *The International Politics of Economic Reform: Aid*
WEEK 8

Nov 8: *Political Change in Africa in the 1990s*


Nov 10: No Class; *Anthills* paper due

WEEK 9

Nov 15: *“Democracy” in Africa*


Nov 17: *Development Interventions in Africa*


WEEK 10

Nov 22: *Civil Wars in Africa*


Nov 24: THANKSGIVING
WEEK 11  
Nov 29 and Dec 1: *An African Renaissance?*


