

**UCLA  
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

**POLITICAL SCIENCE 151A: GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS OF AFRICA**

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Fall 2020  
Tues, Thurs: 2pm-3:15pm  
Student Hours: Tues 10:30-11:30am; Thurs 3:15-4:15pm

**Zoom Meeting Room: <https://ucla.zoom.us/j/91722983372>**

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to some of the major issues, themes and theories in the politics of 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 roles of gender and ethnicity in politics and society. From there, we explore the challenges of economic reform and issue of foreign aid. 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.

#### TEACHING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students are expected to understand the prevailing answers to the course's central questions, and the prevailing methods used by social scientists to answer them. I also want students to appreciate why these answers are sometimes unsatisfying. In addition, I want students to use the course as an opportunity to refine their reading and writing skills.

#### COURSE STRUCTURE

The course is taught in two online lectures each week, on Tuesday and Thursday from 2:00 to 3:15pm. The zoom meeting room is provided at the top of the syllabus. Attendance at lectures is strongly encouraged but not mandatory. I will record the lectures and post them within an hour or two of the completion of the live lecture so that students who are unable to attend the lecture synchronously are not penalized, and so that those who want to go back and re-watch a lecture may do so.

The course also includes weekly discussion sections led by TAs. With limited exceptions, you should attend your section meeting during the scheduled time. The discussions that take place in section are a crucial supplement to the lectures, so synchronous attendance is important. If you are unable to attend your section meeting, please contact your TA. If you are living in a time zone that makes section attendance difficult (that is, in Europe, Africa, or Asia), let your TA know and we will discuss alternatives.

I will hold student hours (what are usually referred to as "office hours") immediately after lecture on Thursdays (from 3:15-4:15pm) and on Tuesdays from 10:30-11:30am. The Thursday sessions

will be held as open student hours. I will simply keep the zoom lecture open and be available to answer questions and discuss anything related to the course. The Tuesday sessions will be set up as more traditional “office hours,” allowing for private discussions with individual students. I will set up a zoom meeting with a waiting room and admit students one at a time.

*COVID-19, and the remote mode of instruction it has necessitated, has created enormous challenges for both faculty and students. Flexibility, patience, and understanding are the watchwords for a successful course under these conditions. I will ask you to be understanding of challenges I face as an instructor, and I will pledge to be understanding of the challenges you face as students.*

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

As notes, students are required to attend and participate in weekly discussion sections. Students are also required to take a mid-term and a final exam. Both will be take-home. The midterm will be made available online at the end of lecture on November 5 and will be due, via Turnitin, at 3pm on Saturday, November 7. The final exam will be administered in a similar format. It will be due during exam week, with the final date to be announced later in the quarter.

In addition, students will read Chinua Achebe’s novel *A Man of the People: A Novel of Political Unrest in a New Nation* and write a short (10-12 page) paper relating the novel to the themes of the course. The paper will be due, via Turnitin, at 5pm on Friday, December 4. The relative weights accorded to these four requirements are as follows: midterm (25%), paper (25%), final (35%), and section participation (15%).

The course involves a fairly heavy reading load, the completion of which is essential to understanding the issues and controversies addressed in the lectures. In addition to the readings, the course also includes several online assignments (TED Talks, recorded interviews, and a film). With the exception of the Achebe novel, which is readily available at Amazon.com and other booksellers, all of the readings are posted on the course web page (UCLA login required) and are available to be downloaded for your own use.

## OTHER COURSE INFORMATION

**INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY NOTICE:** All of the course materials that I have prepared, including the recorded lectures, slides, and exams, are my property alone and protected by state common law and federal copyright law. These materials are for your use in this courses only and shall not be shared or distributed without my written consent. Students shall not shall or distribute notes, or receive remuneration for taking notes, without my written consent.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** As a student and member of the University community, you are expected to demonstrate integrity in all of your academic endeavors. Accordingly, all work you do will be held to the highest ethical and professional standards. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, multiple submissions, or facilitating academic dishonesty. If you are unsure of what any of these entail, please consult the university guidelines below or ask me or your TA. *If you are even suspected of violating these standards, I am obliged to refer your case immediately to the Dean of Students, who will carry out an investigation.* Please carefully review the university guidelines regarding academic dishonesty at [deanofstudents.ucla.edu/Portals/16/Documents/StudentGuide.pdf](https://deanofstudents.ucla.edu/Portals/16/Documents/StudentGuide.pdf).

STUDENTS WITH DIASBILITIES: 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 me and/or contact the Center for Accessible Education at A255 Murphy Hall, (310) 825-1501; <http://www.cae.ucla.edu>.

## LECTURE AND READING SCHEDULE

### WEEK 0

#### Oct 1: *Introduction*

- Laura Seay. 2012. "How Not to Write About Africa." *Foreign Policy*.  
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. 2009. "The Danger of a Single Story." [TED Talk](#).  
Leslie Dodson. 2011. "Don't Misrepresent Africa." [TED Talk](#).

### WEEK 1

#### Oct 6: *The "Scramble for Africa" and the Nature of Colonial Rule*

- Thomas Pakenham. 1991. "Introduction." In *The Scramble for Africa, 1876-1912*. New York: Random House: xxi-xxiii.  
Jeffrey Herbst. 2000. "The Europeans and the African Problem." In *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*. Princeton: Princeton University Press: ch. 3.

#### Oct 8: *The Legacy of Colonialism*

- Peter Ekeh. 1975. "Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 17(1): 91-112.  
Wangari Maathai. 2009. "A Legacy of Woes." In *The Challenge for Africa*. New York: Anchor Books: ch. 2.

### WEEK 2

#### Oct 13: *National Independence Movements*

- Darin Christensen and David D. Laitin. 2019. "The Charismatic Founders and Their Dreams." In *African States Since Independence*. New Haven: Yale University Press: ch. 1.  
Martin Meredith. 2005. "L'Afrique Noir" and "Winds of Change." In *The Fate of Africa*. New York: Public Affairs: chs. 4-5.

#### Oct 15: *The Centralization of Authority and the Rise of Personal Rule*

- Todd Moss. 2007. "Big Men, Personal Rule and Patronage Politics." In *African Development: Making Sense of the Issues and Actors*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner: ch. 3.  
Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz. 1999. "W(h)ither the State?" and "Recycled Elites." In *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument*. Oxford: James Currey: chs. 1 and 3.

### WEEK 3

#### Oct 20: *The Decay of the State in the 1970s and 1980s*

- Martin Meredith. 2005. "The Slippery Slope." In *The Fate of Africa*. New York: Public Affairs: ch. 16.  
Uwem Akpan. 2010. "Baptizing the Gun." *The New Yorker*, 4 January.

Victor Azarya and Naomi Chazan. 1987. "Disengagement from the State in Africa: Reflections on the Experience of Ghana and Guinea." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 29: 106-31.

Oct 22: *Agricultural Policy*

Robert Bates. 1987. "The Nature and Origins of Agricultural Policies in Africa." In *Essays on the Political Economy of Rural Africa*. New York: Cambridge University Press: ch. 5.

WEEK 4

Oct 27: *Gender*

Kevin C. Dunn and Pierre Englebert. 2019. "Gender Inequality and Women's Participation." In *Inside African Politics*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner: 124-131.

Gretchen Bauer. 2013. "Gender Quotas and Women's Representation in African Parliaments." *democracyinafrica.org*, December 13.

Tiffany D. Barnes and Stephanie M. Burchard. 2012. "'Engendering' Politics: The Impact of Descriptive Representation on Women's Political Engagement in Sub-Saharan Africa." *Comparative Political Studies* 46(7): 767-790.

Oct 29: *Ethnicity I*

Robert Bates. 1983. "Modernization, Ethnic Competition and the Rationality of Politics in Contemporary Africa." In Donald S. Rothchild and Victor A. Olorunsola, eds. *State versus Ethnic Claims: African Policy Dilemmas*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press: 152-171.

Daniel Posner. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review* 98(4): 529-545.

Daniel Posner. 2005. "Ethnicity and Ethnic Politics in Zambia." In *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*. New York: Cambridge University Press: ch. 4.

WEEK 5

Nov 3: *Ethnicity II*

[readings from Oct 29]

Nov 5: *Special Lecture: Politics and the African Novel*

Chinua Achebe. 1964. "The Role of the Writer in a New Nation."

Chinua Achebe. 1965. "The Novelist as Teacher."

Nov 7: MIDTERM DUE at 3pm

WEEK 6

Nov 10: *The Challenge of Economic Reform*

Martin Meredith. 2005. "The Lost Decade." In *The Fate of Africa*. New York: Public Affairs: ch. 22.

Nicolas van de Walle. 2001. "Patterns of Reform Implementation, 1979-1999." In *African Economies and the Politics of Permanent Crisis*. New York: Cambridge University Press. ch. 2.

Nov 12: *Foreign Aid*

- Nicolas van de Walle. 2001. "The Crisis and Foreign Aid." In *African Economies and the Politics of Permanent Crisis*. New York: Cambridge University Press. ch. 5.
- Dambisa Moyo. 2009. "Why Foreign Aid is Hurting Africa." *The Wall Street Journal*, March 21.
- Andrew Mwenda. 2007. "Aid for Africa? No Thanks." [TED Talk](#).

WEEK 7

Nov 17: *Political Change in the 1990s*

- Peter Anyang' Nyong'o. 1992. "Africa: The Failure of One-Party Rule." *Journal of Democracy* 3(1): 90-96.
- Martin Meredith. 2005. "The Struggle for Democracy." In *The Fate of Africa*. New York: Public Affairs: ch. 23.
- Nic Cheeseman. 2015. "The Second Liberation: Economic Decline, the End of the Cold War, and the Struggle for Democracy." In *Democracy in Africa: Successes, Failures, and the Struggle for Political Reform*. New York: Cambridge University Press: ch. 3.

Nov 19: "Democracy"

- Larry Diamond. 2008. "The Rule of Law versus the Big Man." *Journal of Democracy* 19 (April): 138-149.
- Staffan Lindberg. 2010. "What Accountability Pressures do MPs in Africa Face and How Do They Respond? Evidence from Ghana." *Journal of Modern African Studies* 48(1): 117-142.
- Daniel Posner and Daniel J. Young. 2018. "Term Limits: Leadership, Political Competition and the Transfer of Power." In Nicholas Cheeseman, ed., *Politics in Africa: The Importance of Institutions*. New York: Cambridge University Press: ch. 11.

WEEK 8

Nov 24: Film: *An African Election: Ghana's Democracy in Action*

Nov 26: THANKSGIVING; NO CLASS

WEEK 9

Dec 1: *Development Interventions*

- Jean Ensminger. 2013. "Inside Corruption Networks: Following the Money in Community Driven Development." Unpublished paper.
- Carol Graham. 2015. "A Review of William Easterly's *The Tyranny of Experts: Economists, Dictators, and the Forgotten Rights of the Poor*." *Journal of Economic Literature* 53(1): 92-101.

Dec 3: *Civil Wars*

- Martin Meredith. 2005. "Where Vultures Fly" and "Blood Diamonds." In *The Fate of Africa*. New York: Public Affairs: chs 28 and 29.
- Jon Lee Anderson. 2000. "Letter from Angola: Oil and Blood." *The New Yorker*, 14 August.
- Paul Collier and Anke Hoefler. 2002. "On the Incidence of Civil War in Africa." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46(1): 13-28.
- Gary Niekerk. 2013. "Chips, Conflict and the Congo." [TED Talk](#).

Dec 4: *A Man of the People* paper due at 5pm

WEEK 10

Dec 8-10: *An African Renaissance?*

- Steven Radelet. 2010. "Success Stories from 'Emerging Africa.'" *Journal of Democracy* 21(4): 87-101.
- Brook Larmer. 2017. "Is China the World's New Colonial Power?" *New York Times Magazine*, May 2.
- E. Gyimah-Boadi. 2015. "Africa's Waning Democratic Commitment." *Journal of Democracy* 26(1): 101-113.
- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. 2016. "Nigeria's Failed Promises." *New York Times*, 18 October.
- Scott Straus. 2012. "Wars Do End! Changing Patterns of Political Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa." *African Affairs* 111(443): 179-201.
- Thandika Mkandawire. 2014. Interview.
- George Ayittey. 2007. "Africa's Cheetahs vs. Hippos." TED Talk.
- Fred Swaniker. 2007. "The Leaders Who Ruined Africa, and the Generation Who Can Fix It." TED Talk.
- Karen Attiah. 2020. "Africa has Defied the Covid-19 Nightmare Scenarios. We Shouldn't Be Surprised." *Washington Post*, 22 September.