UCLA
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

POLITICAL SCIENCE 241: AFRICAN POLITICS FIELD SEMINAR

Prof. Daniel Posner   Fall 2023
3248 Bunche   Tues, 2-4:50pm
dposner@polisci.ucla.edu   Student Hours: Mon, 10am-12pm

This course has two purposes: to introduce students to some of the major arguments, hypotheses and debates in the literature on African politics and development, and to help students develop the skills to become both more intelligent consumers and more effective producers of this literature. To accomplish these goals, intense discussions of an extensive set of readings will be combined with a series of written assignments designed to help students develop research strategies to evaluate the hypotheses they encounter in the literature, or are inspired by it. Throughout these exercises, and in our seminar discussions, we will pay special attention to the particular challenges—and opportunities—of doing research in a Global South setting such as Africa.

The readings for the seminar take up a set of key issues in African politics, economy, and society. The topics covered are not intended to be exhaustive but to emphasize either key foundational issues (e.g., colonialism and its impact; the weakness of political institutions and the implications of this weakness; the linkages between voters and politicians; the role of ethnicity; the role of traditional institutions; the impact of urbanization), areas of particularly interesting current research, or novel approaches to studying the politics and society of the continent. To this end, the readings are a mix of "classic" articles and very recent work that exemplifies the methodological and theoretical "cutting edge."

The course is designed principally for UCLA Political Science PhD students who focus their research on Africa and/or other parts of the developing world. PhD and MA students from other social science departments are also welcome if space permits. Non-social science MA students should consult with the instructor before enrolling in the course.

REQUIREMENTS

The course is taught in a single meeting each week on Tuesdays from 2-4:50pm. Given the seminar format of the course and the necessity for intensive discussion of the course materials, attendance at the weekly class meetings is mandatory. Students are required not just to attend the weekly seminar meetings but to have read and thought about the assigned materials for the week, and to participate actively in class discussions.

In addition to participation in seminar discussions, all students are required to prepare two 1-2 page research design memos (one during weeks 2-4; one during weeks 5-8). The memos will take a theory or hypothesis introduced in, or related to, the week's readings

and describe how one might go about collecting the appropriate evidence to test it, or one of its central observable implications. A detailed set of instructions for the research design memos will be distributed and discussed during the first seminar meeting. The memos will be due at noon each Monday (the day before the seminar), with copies posted to the class website. All students are expected have read the memos of their colleagues, as well as the assigned readings, prior to the seminar.

Students will also complete a short assignment in week 9 related to our discussion of the Afrobarometer. Further details of the assignment will be distributed closer to the date.

Finally, students will write a 15-20-page research paper that identifies variation in an important outcome of interest in Africa (not necessarily one that we have focused on in the course, although it may be), proposes a hypothesis/argument to account for that variation, and outlines a research strategy that would provide an empirical test of that hypothesis/ argument. The paper is due at 5pm on Monday, December 11. This assignment should be thought of as a substantive research proposal rather than a data collection and analysis project, although proposals may include a data analytic component in demonstrating the variation they wish to explain. All students will meet with the instructor at some point before week 7 to discuss their paper topics.

The weight accorded these assignments will be as follows: participation in seminar discussions (40%), research memos (20%), Afrobarometer assignment (10%), and finished research paper (30%).

READINGS

The readings for each week are extensive. They were selected because they are considered classic, because they develop useful analytical concepts or engage in important theoretical debates, because they represent particularly good examples of recent social science research on the topic in question, or because they make a point that I think is pedagogically important. Some of them will require a very careful reading; others can be consumed more quickly. Taken together, they constitute a useful, though far from complete or comprehensive, introduction to some of the theories and issues that make up the "canonical" literature on African political and economic development, and some of the approaches that scholars have adopted in recent years to study them.

Copies of all seminar readings have been posted to the course website, including Noah Nathan's *The Scarce State: Inequality and Political Power in the Hinterland*, which we read in its entirety. If you would like to purchase a copy of the book, it is readily available from Amazon.com and other online and local booksellers.

OTHER NOTES AND RESOURCES

Academic integrity: As a student and member of the UCLA 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 (including the use of AI platforms such as ChatGPT), 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. *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. Guidelines regarding academic dishonesty at UCLA are available at: deanofstudents.ucla.edu/academic-integrity.

Students with disabilities: If you need an academic accommodation based on a disability, please contact the Center for Accessible Education (CAE) at cae.ucla.edu, if possible within the first two weeks of the term.

Illness: If you get sick or have to care for someone who is sick, let me know as soon as you are able to. I will work with you to make up the work. Please do not come to class if you are ill and potentially contagious.

Religious observances: In the event of a religious holiday or any other form of observance, please contact me regarding your absence as soon as possible so I can make the appropriate accommodations for you.

Your wellbeing: I want you to succeed here at UCLA. The university has many resources available to help you, should you need them.

- UCLA Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) provides confidential counseling to support your mental health needs as you pursue your academic goals. Counselors available 24 hours a day by phone at (310) 825-0768. Further information is available at www.counseling.ucla.edu.
- UCLA CalFresh Initiative helps provide food security for students in need. Visit basicneeds.ucla.edu/services/calfresh for more information.
- Economic Crisis Response Team provides support to UCLA students facing financial hardship. Visit basicneeds.ucla.edu/services/economic-crisis-response-team.
- UCLA Student Legal Services provides confidential legal counseling and assistance regarding a wide range of legal issues. Visit studentlegal.ucla.edu for more information.
- UCLA Care Advocate provides confidential services for survivors of sexual or gender-based violence. Visit careprogram.ucla.edu for more information.
- UCLA Title IX Office: For reporting gender-based discrimination, including sexual harassment or sexual violence. Visit sexualharassment.ucla.edu for more information.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Oct 3: Logistics and Overview of the Course; History and Historiography

Michalopoulos, Stelios and Elias Papaioannou. 2020. "Historical Legacies and African Development." *Journal of Economic Literature* 58(1): 53-128.

Briggs, Ryan C. 2017. "Explaining Case Selection in African Politics Research." *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 35(4): 565-572.

Oct 10: Colonialism and its Legacy

Herbst, Jeffrey. 2000. "The Europeans and the African Problem." In *States and Power in Africa.* Princeton: Princeton University Press: 58-96.

Ekeh, Peter. 1975. "Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 17: 91-112.

Posner, Daniel N. 2003. "The Colonial Origins of Ethnic Cleavages: The Case of Linguistic Divisions in Zambia." *Comparative Politics* 35(2): 127-146.

Ricart-Huguet, Joan. 2021. "Colonial Education, Political Elites, and Regional Political Inequality in Africa." *Comparative Political Studies*.

Pengl, Yannick I., Philip Roessler and Valeria Rueda. 2022. "Cash Crops, Print Technologies, and the Politicization of Ethnicity in Africa." *American Political Science Review* 116(1): 181-199.

Ajayi, J. F. Ade. 1982. "Expectations of Independence." *Daedalus* 11(2):1–9.

Oct 17: Personalism and Patrimonialism

Chabal, Patrick and Jean-Pascal Daloz. 1999. "W(h)ither the State?" and "Recycled Elites." In Chabal and Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument*. Oxford: James Currey: 1-16 and 31-44.

van de Walle, Nicolas. 2001. "Decision Making in Postcolonial Africa." In van de Walle, *African Economies and the Politics of Permanent Crisis, 1979-1999*. New York: Cambridge University Press: 113-151.

Cheeseman, Nic. 2021. "Why We Should Be More Understanding of African Political Leaders." *The Africa Report*, 21 October.

Nel, Philip. 2021. "Why Africans Tolerate Income Inequality." *Journal of Modern African Studies* 59(3): 343-365.

Posner, Daniel N. and Daniel Young. 2018. "Term Limits, Political Competition and the Transfer of Power." In Nicholas Cheeseman, *Institutions and Democracy in Africa: How the Rules of the Game Shape Political Developments.* New York: Cambridge University Press: 260-277.

Oct 24: Ethnic Politics

De Maio, Jennifer L. and Daniel N. Posner. 2023. "Terms Matter: The Use of 'Tribe' in African Studies." In Jennifer L. De Maio, Suzanne Scheld, and Tom Spencer-Walters, *Critical Dimensions of African Studies: Re-Membering Africa.* Lexington Books: 17-29.

Posner, Daniel N. 2005. "Ethnicity and Ethnic Politics in Zambia." In Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*. New York: Cambridge University Press: 91-129.

Shilaho, Westen K. 2023. "Kenya's Politicians Continue to Use Ethnicity to Divide and Rule." *The Conversation*, 19 July.

Posner, Daniel N. 2007. "Regime Change and Ethnic Cleavages in Africa." *Comparative Political Studies* 40(11): 1302-1327.

Ichino, Nahomi and Noah Nathan. 2013. "Crossing the Line: Local Ethnic Geography and Voting in Ghana." *American Political Science Review* 107(2): 344-361.

Carlson, Elizabeth. 2015. "Ethnic Voting and Accountability in Africa: A Choice Experiment in Uganda." *World Politics* 67(2): 353-385.

Hassan, Mai. 2017. "The Strategic Shuffle: Ethnic Geography, the Internal Security Apparatus, and Elections in Kenya." *American Journal of Political Science* 61(2): 382-395.

Oct 31: Voter-Politician Linkages

Lindberg, Staffan. 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.

Wahman, Michael and Merete Bech Seeberg. 2022. "Paying to Play: How Parliamentary Candidates Fund Ruling Party Campaigns in Malawi." *Comparative Politics* 55(1): 95-118.

Burgess, Robin, Remi Jedwab, Edward Miguel, Ameet Morjaria, and Gerard Padro i Miquel. 2015. "The Value of Democracy: Evidence from Road Building in Kenya." *American Economic Review* 105(6): 1817-1851.

Brierley, Sarah and Noah L. Nathan. 2021. "The Connections of Party Brokers: Which Brokers do Parties Select?" *Journal of Politics* 83(3): 884-901.

Klaus, Kathleen, Jeffrey W. Paller and Martha Wilfahrt. 2023. "Demanding Recognition: A New Framework for the Study of Political Clientelism." *African Affairs* 122(487): 185-203

Nov 7: Traditional Authority

Baldwin, Kate. 2016. *The Paradox of Traditional Chiefs in Democratic Africa*. New York: Cambridge University Press: chs. 1-4.

Acemogu, Daron, Tristan Reed and James A. Robinson. 2014. "Chiefs: Economic Development and Elite Control of Civil Society in Sierra Leone." *Journal of Political Economy* 122(2): 319-368.

de Kadt, Daniel and Horacio Larreguy. 2018. "Agents of the Regime? Traditional Leaders and Electoral Politics in South Africa." *Journal of Politics* 80(2): 382-399.

Kramon, Eric. 2017. "Ethnic Group Institutions and Electoral Clientelism." *Party Politics* 25(3): 435-447.

Lechler, Marie and Lachlan McNamee. 2018. "Indirect Colonial Rule Undermines Support for Democracy: Evidence from a Natural Experiment in Namibia." *Comparative Political Studies* 51(14): 1858-1898.

Nov 14: "The Scarce State: Inequality and Political Power in the Hinterland"

Nathan, Noah L. 2023. *The Scarce State: Inequality and Political Power in the Hinterland*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Nov 21: Urbanization and its Implications

Gugler, Josef. 2002. "The Son of the Hawk Does Not Remain Abroad: The Urban-Rural Connection in Africa." *African Studies Review* 45(1): 21-41.

Resnick, Danielle. 2015. "The Political Economy of Africa's Emergent Middle Class: Retrospect and Prospects." *Journal of International Development* 27: 573-587.

Nathan, Noah. 2019. "Does Participation Reinforce Patronage? Policy Preferences, Turnout and Class in Urban Ghana." *British Journal of Political Science* 49(1): 229-255.

Koter, Dominika. 2013. "Urban and Rural Voting Patterns in Senegal: The Spatial Aspects of Incumbency, c.1978-2012." *Journal of Modern African Studies* 51(4): 653-679.

Baseler, Travis. Forthcoming. "Hidden Income and the Perceived Returns to Migration." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*.

Kramon, Eric, Joan Hamory, Sarah Baird, and Edward Miguel. 2021. "Deepening or Diminishing Ethnic Divides? The Impact of Urban Migration in Kenya." *American Journal of Political Science*.

Nov 28: Exploiting the Afrobarometer

Afrobarometer sampling: https://www.afrobarometer.org/surveys-and-methods/sampling/
Afrobarometer, Round 9 Questionnaire for Liberia (2022). [*for reference*]
Kasara, Kimuli. 2013. "Separate and Suspicious: Local Social and Political Context and Ethnic Tolerance in Kenya." *Journal of Politics* 75(4): 921-936.
Eifert, Benn, Edward Miguel and Daniel N. Posner. 2010. "Political Competition and Ethnic Identification in Africa." *American Journal of Political Science* 54(2): 495-510.
Depetris-Chauvin, Emilio, Reuben Durante and Filipe Campante. 2020. "Building Nations through Shared Experiences: Evidence from African Football." *American Economic Review* 110(5): 1572-1602.
de Kadt, Daniel and Evan S. Lieberman. 2017. "Nuanced Accountability: Voter Responses to Service Delivery in Southern Africa." *British Journal of Political Science* 50: 185-215.
Adida, Claire, Karen E. Ferree, Daniel N. Posner, and Amanda Robinson. 2016. "Who's Asking? Interviewer Coethnicity Effects in African Survey Data." *Comparative Political Studies* 49(12): 1630-1660.

Dec 5: Geocoded and Remote Sensing Data in the Study of Africa

Cage, Julia and Valeria Rueda. 2016. "The Long-Term Effects of the Printing Press in Sub-Saharan Africa." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 8(3): 69-99.
Harris, J. Andrew and Daniel N. Posner. 2019. "(Under What Conditions) Do Politicians Reward their Supporters? Evidence from Kenya's Constituencies Development Fund." *American Political Science Review* 113(1): 123-139.
Besley, Timothy and Marta Reynal-Querol. 2014. "The Legacy of Historical Conflict: Evidence from Africa." *American Political Science Review* 108(2): 319-336.
Briggs, Ryan C. 2018. "Poor Targeting: A Gridded Spatial Analysis of the Degree to Which Aid Reaches the Poor in Africa." *World Development* 103: 133-148.
Aiken, Emily et al. 2022. "Machine Learning and Phone Data Can Improve Targeting of Humanitarian Aid." *Nature* 603: 864-870.
Huang, Luna Yue, Solomon M. Hsiang and Marco Gonzalez-Navarro. 2021. "Using Satellite Imagery and Deep Learning to Evaluate the Impact of Anti-Poverty Programs." NBER Working Paper No. 29105.