Government 42: Politics of Africa

1. Course Description:
This course provides an introduction to several major debates in the study of contemporary African politics. We will focus on four main themes: 1) colonialism and its legacy, 2) the transition to democracy, 3) the political economy of development, and 4) conflict. In examining these themes, we will draw on a wide range of materials from particular countries, as well as more general political science and economics literature.

2. Course Goals:
The main goals for the course are:
• To cultivate an interest in African politics and developing areas more generally.
• To provide an introduction to several of the main debates in the study of African politics since 1960, and scholarly approaches to these debates.
• To provide exposure to background and historical material students need to understand the context for current debates about African politics.
• To provide students with greater exposure to social science methodologies: how we go about posing questions, developing answers, and testing our ideas in rigorous ways.
• To provide a foundation for further exploration of topics that may be of particular interest.

3. Assignments

Pop Quizzes
During the quarter, I will give six pop quizzes. The goal is to provide an incentive that encourages students to keep up with the readings and to reward those who do so. The quizzes will take just a few minutes, and will consist of a few basic questions about the readings for that day (main arguments, key facts, results, conclusions, etc.). Filling in your name will count as one question, which is to say you’ll get some credit for showing up. Each student’s lowest quiz grade will be dropped before the total quiz grade is calculated. If you know in advance of a class session from which you will be absent because of a Dartmouth obligation (e.g., sports team on the road) or an excusable personal event (e.g., family emergency), send me an email and I will excuse you from the quiz if held on the day you miss.
Map Quiz
Studying African politics requires some familiarity with the continent’s most basic political feature: the location of its countries (including the islands). The map quiz will test your ability to identify a random sample of countries. To aid your learning, a blank map and a list of countries will be placed on canvas.

Exams (midterm and final)
Each exam will draw from assigned readings and class discussions up to that point. The final will inevitably focus more heavily on material from the last part of the term, given that you will already have been tested on earlier material, but the whole term is fair game on the final. Exams are generally a mixture of short answer questions (multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, or identification questions) and an essay.

Paper
Each student will produce a final paper (roughly 10 pages). The goal of the paper is to apply the concepts and theoretical arguments from the class to a particular country case study. You will have the option of writing about one of the three major themes explored in the latter portion of the course: 1) democratization, 2) economic development, or 3) conflict and violence. Additional details will be provided.

Grades will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pop quizzes</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map quiz</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Course Materials:
The following books are available for purchase at Wheelock Books (hard copies will also be placed on reserves in the library). All other readings can be accessed through canvas.


5. Additional resources:

*PowerPoint slides*: I will place my PowerPoint slides on canvas every now and again. I do not post these before class because note taking is a valuable exercise, and I do not want my slides to substitute for your own notes.

*The Academic Skills Center*. The Academic Skills Center provides a variety of services designed to help students excel academically (e.g., tutors, study groups, skills-building workshops, etc.). For more info, visit dartmouth.edu/~acskills/

*The Student Center for Writing, Research, and Information Technology (RWIT)*. RWIT provides students with assistance in conceptualizing, researching, and proofreading written work. For more info, visit dartmouth.edu/~rwit/

6. Class Policies:

*The Honor Principle*. All students are reminded of their obligation to conduct themselves in accordance with the Standards of Conduct in general and with the Academic Honor Principle in particular. The Academic Honor Principle is available at www.dartmouth.edu/~uja/honor/. Please review the section on plagiarism in particular and contact me if you have any questions.

*X-Hours*. I reserve the option of using x-hours if we need extra time to cover the material on the syllabus. Students should not schedule other obligations that conflict with the x-hour for this course.

*Late papers* will be penalized one-third of a grade per day. If you anticipate that you will have a problem meeting a deadline due to an excusable issue (e.g., family emergency, grave illness, etc.) contact me before the assignment is due to make appropriate arrangements.

*Disabilities*. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact me before the end of the second week of the term to arrange appropriate accommodations.

*Religious Observance*. If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please contact me before the end of the second week of the term to discuss appropriate accommodations.

*Office Hours*. I will be available during the times noted on the first page for meetings with students. If you are unable to meet during these times, please email me to set up an appointment at an alternative time.
**Week 1: Colonialism and independence**

Monday, March 24 – Introduction

Wednesday, March 26 – Colonialism
- WATCH: Africa – States of Independence – The Scramble for Africa: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbT44HwzNrl](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbT44HwzNrl) [45 minutes]

Friday, March 28 – Guest speaker (Richard Joseph): Democracy in Africa

**Week 2: Politics in Africa’s New States**

Monday, March 31 – Independence
- Meredith, chapters 1, 4, 5, 7.

Wednesday, April 2 – Authoritarianism
- Meredith, chapter 9.

Friday, April 4 – NO CLASS

**Week 3: From Authoritarianism to Democracy**

Monday, April 7 – Single-party regimes [MAP QUIZ TODAY]
- Meredith, chapter 13.
- WATCH: The Last King of Scotland
Wednesday, April 9 – Democratization
- Meredith, Ch. 23.

Thursday, April 10 [optional x-hour] – Interpreting statistical findings

Friday, April 11 – Democratization II

Week 4: Democracy: An Interim Balance Sheet

Monday, April 14 – Does democracy deliver?

Wednesday, April 16 – Is democracy compatible with ethnicity?

Friday, April 18 – MIDTERM EXAM

Week 5: Dominant parties – South Africa

Monday, April 21 – Race and politics in South Africa
- Meredith, chapter 24.

Wednesday, April 23 – Race and politics in South Africa II

Friday, April 25 – Race and politics in South Africa III

Week 6: Political Economy of Development

Monday, April 28 – Development strategies
- Meredith, chapters 10, 14, 16 & 22.

Wednesday, April 30 – History and institutions

Friday, May 2 – Structural constraints
- WATCH: Angelina Jolie’s Diary with Dr. Jeffrey Sachs: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_kv0VdBkkno

Week 7: Political Economy of Development, continued

Monday, May 5 – Policy choices

Wednesday, May 7 – Policy choices II

Friday, May 9 – What role for foreign aid?
Week 8: Civil War

Monday, May 12 – Economic approaches

Wednesday, May 14 – State capacity

Friday, May 16 – Ethnicity

Week 9: Civil War, continued

Monday, May 19 – Rebel groups I

Wednesday, May 21 – Rebel groups II
- Reno 2011, chapter 5.

Friday, May 23 – Looking forward

PAPERS DUE: Tuesday, May 27, 11:59pm

FINAL EXAM: Friday, May 30, 3:00 - 6:00 pm