POLS444: Comparative African Politics
Syllabus - Fall Semester 2014

MWF 2:00-2:50 pm, Room: B302 Chemistry Bldg.
3 Credit Course (47 Contact Hours)

Class: POLS 444 Fall 2014
Comparative African Politics

Instructor: Sabine Hirschauer, PhD
Office: Clark C330
Office Hours: M/W 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m., or by appointment
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Overview:
Still today, the concepts of democracy, institutionalization, political economy, war and peace remain a complex landscape for many African nations. The historical record has been by large – with a few exceptions – complex at best, yet often dismal and the human suffering immense. However, the ebb and flow of African politics against the background of 21st century globalization and a rapidly growing global interdependence may allow, some argue, for a renewed African Renaissance and a transformed political experience: an emphasis on sustainable development; competitive multi-party political systems; positive peace, coupled with creative, vibrant and inventive, 21st century economies. This comparative course examines the development of politics in contemporary Africa. Our overarching learning objectives will focus on core comparative questions: Why do some countries suffer from ineffective governments while others do not? What are the structural weaknesses that have inflicted so many African regimes, but merely touched others? How does ethnic make-up, culture and national identity – and its political manipulation - play into any of it? How and why have patrimony, autocracy, and the BIG MEN-syndrome flourished so rapidly in many countries - and democracy yet so sluggishly? Has, and if so, how has the legacy of colonialism tainted Africa’s fate so lastingly – and what are the political recovery and/or healing processes? And finally: Is there still a White Men’s – or/and a Black Men’s burden – and if so, what is its shelf-life?

Learning Outcomes - At the end of the course you will be able to:
1. Identify and critically evaluate (in written and oral presentations) how political action operates through key actors and issues in African Politics today. Means of Assessment: Newsreel, two exams, class participation, group project, analytical research paper.
2. Identify and critically evaluate (in written and oral presentations) structural, political markers intrinsically unique to African politics. Means of Assessment: Newsreel, two exams, class participation, group project, analytical research paper.
3. Develop (in written and oral presentations) a coherent and effective argument based on reason and evidence; utilize and interrogate complex knowledge and apply your analysis to a specific phenomenon within a political African context. Means of assessment: Newsreel, analytical research paper, group project, class participation.

Course Requirements
1. One Mandatory Office Visit
2. Weekly Newsreel
3. Country Group Project and Presentation
4. Two Exams
5. Analytical Research Paper (ca. 8-10 pages)
Course Grading:
- Participation including Newsreel and Mandatory Office Visit 10 %
- Country Group Project and Presentation: 20 %
- A Midterm and Final Exam: 20% each
- Research Paper: 30%

Participation:
Attendance is mandatory. Participation during our weekly Newsreel discussion is part of your final participation grade. The class is both, a lecture and a discussion course, and your active participation is expected. Therefore, it will be critical for you not to miss classes. There are no excused absences except for emergency circumstances.

CSU Grading Scale:
A+ (97-100), A (94-96), A- (90-93)
B+ (87-89), B (84-86), B- (80-83)
C+ (77-79), C (70-76)
D (60-69), F (0-59)

Course Text (Available at CSU Bookstore):


All other readings will be made available on RamCt.

Students must have an active CSU email address for course communications. Course emails will only be sent to CSU email addresses.

The Newsreel: Throughout the semester, each student will be required to give a short 5 minute presentation about a current political news event, involving an African country, or the African continent or an African context. Prior to the presentation – over the weekend - by Friday 5 p.m., the assigned student will have to email me the event (e.g. copy of the news article or web link) and I will then post it over the weekend online. Each Monday, starting Sept. 8 we will spend the first 10 minutes discussing the news event after the short presentation. Please come prepared. This exercise will help us as a class to understand the complexities of current issues pertaining to African Politics.

Mandatory Office Visit: One office visit will be mandatory and part of your participation grade. This will be an opportunity to get to know each other.

Country Project: The country project will focus on previous and/or current political issues relating to a specific African country and/or context. I will circulate a list of themes and topics and a total of 6
groups (2-4 people each) will select an African country or context. More detail will be discussed during the beginning of the semester including about the specific structure of the presentations. The assignment will help you to dissect, problem-solve, assess and present interactively with your classmates diverse arguments and information.

**Research Paper:** The course will require a research paper about an African political issue (country specific or not) of your choice. However, I have to approve your topic. Your deadline is **Monday, Sept. 29** to email me your topic.

**Two Exams:** Two exams will help you to monitor your learning progress about key concepts, terminologies and contextual frameworks about African politics.

**Attendance and Classroom Policies:** Students are expected to attend classes and are responsible for all material covered in class. Students who miss class will be responsible for getting the missed material from other students or other sources. While I am very happy to meet with students during my office hours to discuss any other course issues, it is my policy not to offer individualized make-up sessions for missed classes.

**Expectations for outside work:** Students should expect to do at least 2 hours of outside work (reading, studying, etc) for each class hour.

**Etiquette:** Repeated unauthorized disruptions may result in a letter-grade demotion or referral to the Office of Conflict Resolution and Student Conduct Services as violation of the CSU Student Code of Conduct, with a request for the student’s dismissal. Please see: http://www.conflictresolution.colostate.edu/conduct-code.

**Academic Integrity** This course adheres to the Academic Integrity Policy of the Colorado State University General Catalog and the Student Conduct Code. Colorado State University has long upheld values of academic and scholastic integrity. The General Catalog's "Policies and Guiding Principles" asserts that CSU "expects students to maintain standards of personal integrity that are in harmony with the educational goals of the institution" - citing "principles of academic honesty" as the first example. (1.6 Page 1). Pls. see: http://www.catalog.colostate.edu/FrontPDF/1.6POLICIES1112f.pdf

**Course Outline:**

**Introduction**

**Aug. 25** – Introduction; Roadmap of the Class  
**Aug. 27** – What is Comparative Politics? 'What is Africa'? Does Africa 'Matter'? Gordon & Gordon Chapter 1  
**Aug. 29** – What is Comparative Politics? 'What is Africa'? Does Africa 'Matter'? Chabal & Daloz Chapter xv; Start Reading: Hochschild King Leopold’s Ghost
The State

The State - Historical and Geographical Context
Sept. 1 – University Holiday
Sept. 3 – Gordon & Gordon chapters 2 & 3
Sept. 5 – Chabal & Daloz Chapter 1 W(h)ether the State?

The State – Colonialism, Independence and Nationalism
Sept. 8 – Gordon & Gordon Chapter 4 pp. 64-78
Sept. 10 – Thinking Comparatively: Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement; Peter P. Ekeh;
Sept. 12 – Thinking Comparatively: Mozambique’s Chartered Companies: the Rule of the Feeble, Leroy Vail; (By now, you should have read Hochschild 1st and 2nd Third)
Sept.15 – Thinking Comparatively: Top Down or Bottom Up? Nationalist Mobilization Reconsidered, with Special Reference to Guinea (French West Africa); Elizabeth Schmidt;
Sept. 19 – Thinking Comparatively DRC: Discussion of Hochschild’s King Leopold’s Ghost (Complete Reading);

The State – Political Regimes and Party Systems
Sept. 26 Thinking Comparatively: The elephant and the mice: election 2004 and the future of opposition politics in South Africa; James Hamill; Study Guide/Prep. (Your Q&A) for First Exam

The State – Nation Building, Citizenship and Political Change
Sept. 29 – Chabal & Daloz chapters 2 & 3; Start reading: Trefon’s Congo Masquerade.
Oct. 3 – First Exam

The ‘National’ and International Political Economy

‘National’ Political Economy
Oct. 6 – Gordon & Gordon chapters 5 & 8; Chabal & Daloz Chapter 7
Oct. 8 – Thinking Comparatively: Patronage and Political Stability in Africa; Leonardo R. Arriola;
Oct. 10 – Discussion of Trefon’s Congo Masquerade.

International Political Economy
Oct. 13 – Chabal & Daloz chapters 8 & 9; Gordon & Gordon Chapter 6 pp.183-186; Thinking Comparatively: Africa Back of the Future; Thomas M. Callaghy; Africa and the WTO Doha Round: An Overview; Michael Friis Jensen and Peter Gibbon;
Oct. 15 Thinking Comparatively: Liberian and Sierra Leonean Warlord Political Units War, Markets, and the Reconfiguration of West Africa’s Weak States, William Reno;
Oct. 17 – Thinking Comparatively: Country Presentation #1

Identity and Otherness

Urbanization and New Identities
Oct. 20 – Gordon & Gordon Chapter 7; Chabal & Daloz Chapter 4
Oct. 22 – Thinking Comparatively: Counter-Urbanization on the Zambian Copperbelt? Interpretations and Implications Deborah Potts; ‘Restoring Order’? Operation Murambatsvina and the Urban Crisis in Zimbabwe; Deborah Potts; ‘Our fellow Africans make our lives hell’: the lives of Congolese and Nigerians living in Johannesburg, Alan Morris;
Oct. 24 – Thinking Comparatively: Country Presentation #2

Ethnicity, Race and Tradition: The Old and New Struggles
Oct. 27 – Gordon & Gordon chapters 9 and 11; Chabal & Daloz Chapter 5
Oct. 31 – Thinking Comparatively: Country Presentation #3

The Politics of Gender
Nov. 3 – Gordon & Gordon Chapter 10;
Nov. 5 – Watch in Class: Chimamanda Adichie: The danger of a single story; http://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.html
Thinking Comparatively: Diminished Access, Diverted Exclusion: Women and Land Tenure in Sub-Saharan Africa Author(s): Leslie Gray and Michael Kevane;
Nov. 7 – Thinking Comparatively: No shortcuts to power: constraints on women’s political effectiveness in Uganda; Anne Marie Goetz;

Conflict and Violence: Matters of War and Peace
Nov. 10 – Gordon & Gordon Chapter 6; Chabal & Daloz Chapter 6
Nov. 12 – Thinking Comparatively: William Reno; The ‘basket case’ and the ‘poster child’: explaining the end of civil conflicts in Liberia and Mozambique, Mary H Moran & & M Anne Pitcher.
Nov. 14 – Thinking Comparatively: Country Presentation #4

Nov. 17 – Thinking Comparatively: Military Coups and Military Régimes in Africa by Samuel Decalo; Representing Violence and "Othering" Somalia: Catherine Besteman;
Nov. 19 – Thinking Comparatively: Sudan’s Prolonged Second Civil War and the Militarization of Nuer and Dinka Ethnic Identities, Jok Madut Jok and Sharon Elaine Hutchinson; Who Are The Darfurians? Arab and African Identities, Violence And External Engagement, Alex Dewaal;
Nov. 21 – Thinking Comparatively: Country Presentation #5

Nov. 24 Week – Fall Recess/Thanksgiving Break
Africa and The Future

The Long Walk to Another Freedom? Democracy and Other Challenges of the Future

Dec. 1 – Gordon & Gordon Chapter 13
Dec. 3 – Thinking Comparatively: Party Politics and Different Paths To Democratic Transitions; A Comparison of Benin and Senegal Lucy Creevey, Paul Ngomo and Richard Vengroff
Dec. 5 – Thinking Comparatively: Country Presentation #6 and Study Guide/Prep. (Your Q & A) for Final (2nd) Exam

The Long Walk to Another Freedom? Democracy and Other Challenges of the Future

Dec. 8 – Chabal & Daloz Chapter 10
Dec. 12 – Last Day of Class: Watch in class: Either “A Long Night’s Journey into Day” or “Facing the Truth” with Bill Moyers; Research Paper Due and Your Q & A for Final (2nd) Exam

Dec. 15 – Final Exam 4:10 p.m. - 6:10 pm (in our classroom);

Note: This schedule is tentative and might change during the semester according to how the course evolves and other events. The content is subject to change as well, depending on world events, student interests, and student progress.