

PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY
MARK O. HATFIELD SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT
DIVISION OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

PS 355

The Politics of Africa

Winter Quarter, 2014
Tuesday and Thursday, 2pm-3:50pm
Room: TBA

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Winter Quarter Office Hours: Thursdays 12-2, or by appointment

Course Description

Africa is usually defined in political science to comprise the 47 states of the sub-Saharan region. It is home to 910 million people and far more ethnic diversity than any other region. It also contains 38 of the 50 least-developed countries in the world. All of this has made Africa a rich region for the study of politics. State formation, civil society, democratization, political economy, and political parties are all deeply contoured by the socio-economic conditions of the region, yet are also affected by the deliberate choices of political leaders. This course will consider African countries as case studies of fundamental issues in political development. We begin with a consideration of the post-colonial period in Africa, followed by a thematic treatment of the contemporary politics of the region. At the end, we consider alternative visions for the future of politics in Africa, and how the politics of Africa reshapes our understanding of politics elsewhere. The aim of this course is to critically apply and appraise theories and models of politics in light of the African experience.

Course Textbooks

Two textbooks are required for this course, both available at the PSU Bookstore.

- 1) Goran Hyden (2013, 2nd edition), *African Politics in Comparative Perspective*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 2) Martin Meredith (2011, 2nd edition), *The Fate of Africa: A History of Fifty Years of Independence*, New York: Public Affairs.

Course Requirements

- Class Attendance: 10%
- Class Discussion Leader: 10%
- Map Quiz: 5%
- Two In-Class Tests: 25% each
- Final Paper: 25%

Final Paper

The final paper is an integrative essay that brings together the various themes of the course and that draws on the course readings. One or two essay questions will be provided to students.

Weekly Schedule

1. January 7 & 9: The Study of African Politics

Readings

Hyden: Ch. 1

Meredith: Chs. 1, 4, 5, 6

Thursday: Map Quiz

2. January 14 & 16: The Legacy of Nationalist Movements

Readings

Hyden: Ch. 2

Meredith: Introduction, chs. 7, 8, 9

3. January 21 & 23: The State

Readings

Hyden: Ch. 3

Meredith: chs. 11, 12, 13, 17

4. January 28 & 30: Big Man Rulers

Readings

Hyden: Ch. 5

Meredith: chs. 10, 14, 15

Tuesday, February 4th: Test #1

5. February 6 & 11: Economic Development

Readings

Hyden: chs. 6 & 7

Meredith: chs. 16, 19, 21, 22

6. February 13: The African Renaissance

Readings

Meredith: chs. 23, 24, 34

Staffan Lindberg, "The Surprising Significance of African Elections," *Journal of Democracy* (2006).

Bruce Gilley, "The End of the African Renaissance," *Washington Quarterly* (2010)

7. February 18 & 20: Ethnicity and Conflict

Readings

Hyden: ch. 9

Meredith: ch. 27, 28, 29, 30, 33

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

8. February 25 & 27: Regional and External Politics

Readings

Hyden: Ch. 10

Meredith: 26

William Reno, "Uganda's Politics of War and Debt Relief," *Review of International Political Economy* (2002).

9. Evaluations and Atelier

Tuesday, March 4th: Test #2

Thursday, March 6th: Final Papers Atelier

10. March 11: Lessons Learned

Readings

Hyden: Chs. 11 & 12

Meredith: ch. 35

Monday, March 17th: Final Papers Due by 4pm