

**POL 544A: International Relations of Sub-Saharan Africa  
Fall 2016**

**Course Description**

This course is intended to be a survey of the literature addressing international politics in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Beginning with pre-colonial contexts and working through to present challenges facing African states and the international community more broadly, we will learn about a variety of topics concerning African politics. In particular, we will consider how factors such as the design of domestic political institutions, conflict, international influence, and human security concerns affect domestic outcomes and relations between African states and with other governments outside the region. Although the course does not regularly delve into specific countries or topics in considerable detail, students will have the opportunity to study a country and topic of interest when completing class assignments.

**Instructor Information**

Dr. Jessica Braithwaite  
School of Government and Public Policy, University of Arizona  
Office: 337 Social Sciences  
email: jbraith@email.arizona.edu

**Course Format and Teaching Methods**

This course is taught entirely online, with weekly lectures from the instructor as well as discussions amongst the students. The readings (save for the book you need to buy) and lectures for this course can be accessed through UofAonline, and will be posted at the start of each week. In addition to participating in the online discussion forum, you will be expected to write a set of short papers, culminating in a larger writing project at the end of the session.

**Course Objectives and Expected Learning Outcomes**

- Develop an extensive knowledge of politics, both within and between African countries, as well as with other actors and states beyond the region.
- Gain an increased awareness and understanding of current events in and policies towards Sub-Saharan African states.
- Nurture critical thinking skills by assessing applicability of general theories from international relations to specific cases in Africa.

### **Required/Recommended Knowledge**

While this course does not have any prerequisites, it would benefit students to have a basic background in general international relations theories as well as a passing familiarity with applied statistics in the social sciences.

### **Grading Policy**

University policy regarding grades and grading systems is available at:

<http://catalog.arizona.edu/2015-16/policies/grade.htm>

Requests for incompletes (I) and withdrawal (W) must be made in accordance with university policies which are available at

<http://catalog.arizona.edu/2015-16/policies/grade.htm#I> and

<http://catalog.arizona.edu/2015-16/policies/grade.htm#W> respectively.

A breakdown of final grade calculations is as follows:

Participation = 35%

Short Papers = 30%

Final Paper = 35%

The grading scale for this course is as follows:

A: 90-100

B: 80-89.9

C: 70-79.9

D: 60-69.9

E: 59.9 and below

### *Participation*

Your participation grade depends on the degree to which you engage in thoughtful conversation on the online discussion forum. "Thoughtful conversation" involves posting one original response to the discussion question of the week (minimum 300 words), as well as responding to at least one of your peers' original posts (minimum 100 words). You are also expected to respond to questions posed by your peers in response to your original post. To receive full points your response must engage (and properly cite) material from the week's readings. All contributions to the discussion forum are expected to be courteous and collegial in tone and content, and should address topics not previously raised by others – so you have an incentive to participate early! Participation in each discussion forum is worth 5 percent of your final grade (7 modules = 35 percent total). The forum closes to original posts & comments to a peer at 11:59 pm

Sundays, but you can reply to your peers' comments on your original post until Monday at 11:59 pm.

**Late submissions will not be accepted.**

Weekly participation points are determined in the following manner:

Original post and response to comments on it: 4 points

Response to another peer's post: 1 point

### *Short Papers*

You are expected to write two short (1000-1400 words, double-spaced) papers about a country in Sub-Saharan Africa that is of interest to you. Choose wisely, as this country will be the subject of all your writing assignments for this course. Good papers will engage relevant course readings and all references must be cited appropriately. Each short paper is worth 15 percent of your final grade. Papers must be turned in by 11:59 pm on Sunday MST. Late assignments will be accepted, but at a penalty of one letter grade for each day it is late – *even if it's only a few minutes late*. Paper assignments are explained in greater detail under the weekly modules, but an overview is as follows:

Paper #1: assess the domestic political institutions and the colonial experience of your chosen country. Situate this analysis in the context of colonial histories and institutional legacies of Sub-Saharan Africa more generally.

Due at the end of WEEK 3

Paper #2: discuss the nature of post-independence conflict(s) in your chosen country. Who were/are the domestic actors involved? Did other countries join in the fighting? What was/is the nature of international involvement, especially in terms of peacekeeping and post-conflict statebuilding?

Due in the middle of WEEK 6

### *Final Paper*

This exercise is aimed at encouraging you to think about your country of interest in the broader context of international politics in Sub-Saharan Africa. Provided you make a solid effort in writing the two short papers, the final paper should be an easy task to complete. This is a longer paper (2500-3000 words, double-spaced) and is worth 35 percent of your final grade. It involves applying general themes from the readings of the course to your country of interest. Good papers will identify general themes and findings from the literature concerning Sub-Saharan Africa more broadly, and will discuss these with respect to the country you chose. This paper should be particularly aimed at addressing ways in which

the international community, and the U.S. in particular, has and/or should engage with the country you chose to address issues of human security, political and economic development, etc.

This paper is DUE AT THE END OF WEEK 8 (Sunday at 11:59 pm MST), and is worth 35 percent of your final grade. A penalty of one letter grade will be assessed for each day that your paper is late – *even if it's only a few hours late*. Papers turned in one week or more after the due date will not be accepted.

### **Late Work Policy**

As a rule, work will not be accepted beyond the terms described in this syllabus, except in case of documented emergency or illness. You may petition the professor in writing for an exception if you feel you have a compelling reason for turning work in late. Again, the discussion forum closes 11:59 pm on Sundays and no submissions after that time will be accepted because an important part of this exercise is to engage *with each other* in addition to with the week's material.

### **"Classroom" Behavior**

To foster a positive learning environment, students must conduct themselves respectfully in online discussions. Any comments that are derogatory or threatening will not be tolerated, and appropriate action will be taken through University channels. The Arizona Board of Regents' Student Code of Conduct, ABOR Policy 5-308, prohibits threats of physical harm to any member of the University community, including to one's self.

See: <http://policy.arizona.edu/threatening-behavior-students>.

### **Student Code of Academic Integrity**

Students are encouraged to share intellectual views and discuss freely the principles and applications of course materials. However, graded work/exercises must be the product of independent effort unless otherwise instructed. Students are expected to adhere to the UA Code of Academic Integrity as described in the UA General Catalog.

See: <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/codeofacademicintegrity>.

The University Libraries have some excellent tips for avoiding plagiarism available at: <http://www.library.arizona.edu/help/tutorials/plagiarism/index.html>.

*Violations of academic integrity are not tolerated. The first such violation in this class will result in a failing grade for the assignment, and a subsequent violation*

*will lead to a failing grade for the course.* Even in your discussion posts, if you are drawing material verbatim from an outside source, that material must be properly presented and documented in the post.

*Selling class notes and/or other course materials to other students or to a third party for resale is not permitted without the instructor's express written consent.* Violations to this and other course rules are subject to the Code of Academic Integrity and may result in course sanctions. Additionally, students who use D2L or UA email to sell or buy these copyrighted materials are subject to Code of Conduct Violations for misuse of student email addresses. This conduct may also constitute copyright infringement.

### **Confidentiality of Student Records**

<http://www.registrar.arizona.edu/ferpa/default.htm>

### **Subject to Change Statement**

Information contained in the course syllabus may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

### **Additional Resources for Students**

UA Non-discrimination and Anti-harassment policy:

<http://policy.arizona.edu/human-resources/nondiscrimination-and-anti-harassment-policy>

UA Academic policies and procedures are available at:

<http://catalog.arizona.edu/2015-16/policies/aaindex.html>

Student Assistance and Advocacy information is available at:

<http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/student-assistance/students/student-assistance>

### **Course Materials**

All assigned articles and book chapters (aside from those in the required books) will be made available to students on the course website. It is expected that you will have read the assigned material by the start of class each week. Course lectures will incorporate ideas and findings from the assigned material, and your

participation grade will benefit greatly from being familiar with the material and being able to incorporate it directly into your discussion comments.

### **Required book**

Harbeson, John W. and Donald Rothchild, eds. 2013. *Africa in World Politics: Engaging a Changing Global Order*. **5th edition.**

### **Recommended books**

French, Howard W. 2005. *A Continent for the Taking: The Tragedy and Hope of Africa*

Hochschild, Adam. 1999. *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa*

Meredith, Martin. 2011. *The Fate of Africa: A History of the Continent Since Independence*

Prunier, Gerard. 2011. *Africa's World War: Congo, the Rwandan Genocide, and the Making of a Continental Catastrophe*

Reader, John. 1999. *Africa: A Biography of the Continent*

## **Course Schedule**

### **WEEK 1 (10/24-10/30): (PRE-)COLONIAL AFRICA**

Herbst, Jeffrey. 2000. "Power and Space in Precolonial Africa," in *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*.

Crowder, Michael. 1964. "Indirect Rule: French and British Style." *Africa* 34: 197-205.

Video: "Africa... States of Independence: The Scramble for Africa" (al Jazeera)

Lecture: "Africa before and during colonialism"

Discussion begins on Wednesday at noon and runs through Sunday at 11:59 pm MST. You must post an original response to the discussion question, a response to a post by a peer, and answer your peers if/when they comment on your post.

## **WEEK 2 (10/31-11/6): INDEPENDENCE AND INSTITUTIONS**

Bratton, Michael and Nicholas van de Walle. 1994. "Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa." *World Politics* 46(4): 453-489.

Englebert, Pierre. 2000. "Pre-Colonial Institutions, Post-Colonial States, and Economic Development in Tropical Africa." *Political Research Quarterly*, 53(1): 7-36.

Harbeson, John W. 2013. "Democracy, Autocracy, and the Sub-Saharan African State," in *Africa in World Politics: Engaging a Changing Global Order*. Chapter 5.

Lectures: "African struggles for independence" and "Comparative institutional design of African states"

Discussion begins on Wednesday at noon and runs through Sunday at 11:59 pm MST. You must post an original response to the discussion question, a response to a post by a peer, and answer your peers if/when they comment on your post.

## **WEEK 3 (11/7-11/13): CIVIL CONFLICT IN AFRICA**

*Short paper #1 (domestic institutions in the context of colonial history) due Sunday, November 13th by 11:59 pm MST.*

Collier, Paul and Anke Hoeffler. 2002. "On the Incidence of Civil War in Africa." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46(1): 13-28.

Gettleman, Jeffrey. 2010. "Africa's Forever Wars: Why the Continent's Conflicts Never End." *Foreign Policy*. March/April.

Reyntjens, Filip. 2013. "War in the Great Lakes Region," in *Africa in World Politics: Engaging a Changing Global Order*. Chapter 12.

Lecture: "Civil wars in Africa" and "Other forms of civil conflict in Africa"

Discussion begins on Wednesday at noon and runs through Sunday at 11:59 pm MST. You must post an original response to the discussion question, a response to a post by a peer, and answer your peers if/when they comment on your post.

#### **WEEK 4 (11/14-11/20): INTERNATIONAL DYNAMICS OF AFRICAN CONFLICT**

Manning, Carrie and Louis-Alexandre Berg. 2013. "Bilateral vs. Multilateral Peacebuilding in Africa," in *Africa in World Politics: Engaging a Changing Global Order*. Chapter 10.

Reno, William. 2013. "The International Factor in African Warfare," in *Africa in World Politics: Engaging a Changing Global Order*. Chapter 7.

Zartman, I. William. 2013. "The Diplomacy of African Boundaries," in *Africa in World Politics: Engaging a Changing Global Order*. Chapter 8.

Lecture: "Interstate wars in Africa" and "International involvement in conflicts"

Discussion begins on Wednesday at noon and runs through Sunday at 11:59 pm MST. You must post an original response to the discussion question, a response to a post by a peer, and answer your peers if/when they comment on your post.

#### **WEEK 5 (11/21-11/27): REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

Tieku, Thomas Kwasi. 2004. "Explaining the Clash and Accommodation of Interests of Major Actors in the Creation of the African Union." *African Affairs* 103: 249-267.

Murithi, Tim. 2012. "Briefing: The African Union at Ten: An Appraisal." *African Affairs* 111: 662-669.

Taylor, Ian. 2013. "The Growth of China in Africa," in *Africa in World Politics: Engaging a Changing Global Order*. Chapter 13.

Sachs, Jeffrey. 2014. "The Case for Aid." *Foreign Policy*, 21 January 2014.

Easterly, William. 2014. "Aid Amnesia." *Foreign Policy*, 23 January 2014.

Moyo, Dambisa. 2009. "Why Foreign Aid is Hurting Africa." *The Wall Street Journal*, 21 March 2009.

Lectures: "African regional organizations" and "International interests in Africa"

Discussion begins on Wednesday at noon and runs through Sunday at 11:59 pm MST. You must post an original response to the discussion question, a response to a post by a peer, and answer your peers if/when they comment on your post.

## **WEEK 6 (11/28-12/4): U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICA**

*Short paper #2 (post-independence conflicts) due Wednesday, November 30th by 11:59 pm MST.*

Buss, Terry et al. 2011. "The African Command: An Overview (Part 1)," in *African Security and the African Command: Viewpoints on the US Role in Africa*.

Banks, John P. et al. 2013. "Top Five Reasons Why Africa Should Be a Priority for the United States." *Brookings Africa Growth Initiative*.

Sy, Amadou and Andrew Westbury. 2015. "An Unfinished Agenda: The Progress of US-Backed Economic Development Goals in Africa." *Brookings Africa in Focus*, 20 July 2015.

Lecture: "US interests and involvement in Africa after the Cold War"

Video: "Foreign Policy Challenges and Opportunities in the U.S. - Africa Relations" (U.S. Department of State)

Discussion begins on Wednesday at noon and runs through Sunday at 11:59 pm MST. You must post an original response to the discussion question, a response to a post by a peer, and answer your peers if/when they comment on your post.

## **WEEK 7 (12/5-12/11): HUMAN SECURITY CONCERNS**

Poku, Nana K., Neil Renwick, and Jaoa Gomes Porto. 2007. "Human Security and Development in Africa." *International Affairs* 83(6): 1155-1170.

Jacobsen, Karen. 2002. "Can Refugees Benefit the State? Refugee Resources and African Statebuilding." *Journal of Modern African Studies*: 577-596.

UNEP. 2013. "Africa Environment Outlook 3: Summary for Policy Makers."

Lecture: "Human Security in Africa"

Discussion begins on Wednesday at noon and runs through Sunday at 11:59 pm MST. You must post an original response to the discussion question, a response to a post by a peer, and answer your peers if/when they comment on your post.

**WEEK 8 (12/12-12/18): WRITING WEEK**

*Final paper is due Sunday, December 18th at 11:59 pm MST.*