Polsci 355/AAS 356: Democracy and Development in Africa
Fall 2019
4 credits

Lecture: Mondays, Wednesdays 2:30 - 4 p.m.
GI68AH

Discussion Sections: Thursday 12-1 (2347 MH) or 1-2 (G437 MH)

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Description: Some countries in Africa have established fairly robust democracies over the last several decades, whereas others have endured relentless cycles of violence or been subject to the repressive policies of illiberal and corrupt autocrats. Relying on case studies as well as cross-national comparisons, the course explores the durability of authoritarian regimes, efforts to construct democratic institutions, the causes of electoral conflict, and the contemporary political economy of Africa. The course also analyzes the growth of the middle class, the drivers of urbanization, and trade between African countries or with foreign partners. Selected case studies will focus on South Africa, Angola, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, and other countries in order to illustrate the themes we have examined. Throughout the course, we shall consider historical continuities as well as the discontinuities brought by contemporary political, social, and economic changes.

Objectives and Course Format: The format of the course will be both lecture and discussion. The objectives of the lectures, discussions, and written work are to enable you to think comparatively and empirically about contemporary economic and political challenges facing African countries. The course will enhance your ability to analyze critically the different theories that have been applied to conflict, politics, economic development, and civil society in Africa and the empirical data on which those theories rest. Your ability to argue persuasively from a comparative or analytical perspective will be demonstrated in written work during the semester.

Discussion sections are meant to explore particular themes or articles in greater depth in order to enhance what we cover in class. You will have opportunities to present material to your section, to work together in groups discussing articles, and to debate the features of authoritarianism or democracy, party system volatility, or the extent of economic development in Africa. There may also be occasional quizzes and response papers required in your discussion section.
**Course Requirements:** The assessment for the course is based on: one map quiz (5%), one midterm (25%), one comparative, analytical paper (25%), a final, all essay exam (25%); attendance, participation, presentations, and occasional quizzes or response papers in discussion (10%) and class (10%). Note: all work is required.

To build on your understanding of African politics, there are several events on campus that might be of interest to you and that I will encourage you to attend during the semester. The website of the African Studies Center at the International Institute often lists talks and films, see [http://www.ii.umich.edu/asc/](http://www.ii.umich.edu/asc/).

**Method of Evaluation:** Individual grades are entered into a spreadsheet, weighted accordingly, and added together at the end of the semester to get the final grade. On each paper or exam, therefore, students will receive a letter grade and a corresponding numerical grade. The grading system is as follows: A+=96-100; A=93-95; A−=90-92; B+=86-89; B=83-85; B−=80-82; C+=76-79; C−=73-75; C=70-72; D+=66-69; D=63-65; D−=60-62; F=59 and below. The method of evaluation for written work looks at 3 main components: 1. The Analysis: This includes the presentation of the hypothesis or the argument, supporting evidence for the argument, and the presentation of evidence that might challenge the argument; 2. How the Paper or exam is written: This component examines the clarity of the writing, the use of grammar, the transitions between paragraphs, the introduction and the conclusion; 3. Citations and Bibliography (for papers only): This component evaluates the proper use of citations and the inclusion or exclusion of sources in the bibliography. Late papers will be penalized.

It goes without saying that on all assignments, you are expected to observe the highest standards of academic integrity and ethical conduct. If you are unclear about what constitutes plagiarism or academic misconduct, please do not hesitate to ask before the assignment is due. For the university’s understanding of, and policies on, academic integrity please see [http://www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity/examples.html](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity/examples.html).

**Students with Disabilities**
If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way the course is usually taught may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) to help us determine appropriate academic accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; [http://ssd.umich.edu](http://ssd.umich.edu)) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

**Classroom Conduct**
Laptops and tablets are not allowed during class as the opportunities they provide to engage in social networking can be a distraction to other students, the GSI and the professor. Cellphones should be switched off and out of sight unless you serve with the volunteer fire department or you have a family member who may need to get in touch with you. Please come to class and discussion prepared—even a little reading goes a long way! Express your
ideas thoughtfully and listen carefully to the ideas of others.

**Office Hours and Contacting the Instructors**
Office hours for the course are posted at the top of the syllabus. If you need to see us, please come at the stated times. Occasionally we have other commitments that overlap with office hours. If so, we will let you know if we have to cancel or delay office hours and we will make alternative arrangements to see you. If for some reason you cannot see us during the stated office hours and we agree on an alternative time to meet, please show up! Finally, if you contact us by email, please be aware that there may be delays in our responses owing to other commitments.

**Required Texts**
Additional Readings are available on Canvas and are marked with an asterisk (*). If you want to take a break from academic readings you might like this blog, *Africa is a Country*, ([https://africasacountry.com](https://africasacountry.com)) Run by a South African with contributors from all over the world, it covers politics on the African continent, but also culture, music, sports, and photography.

**Course Outline and Readings**
I. What is the Legacy of Colonialism?

   Recommended

   Please learn all the countries in contemporary Africa at [http://www.ilike2learn.com/ilike2learn/Continent%20Maps/Africa%20Political%20Large.gif](http://www.ilike2learn.com/ilike2learn/Continent%20Maps/Africa%20Political%20Large.gif)

II. Power, Politics and Social Fragmentation: Why did Authoritarian Regimes Emerge After Independence?
   --Cheeseman, *Democracy in Africa*, chapter 1
   --Bleck and van de Walle, chap. 2, pp. 30-41
III. From authoritarianism to electoral autocracies
--Bleck and van de Walle, chapter 2, 41-61

Recommended:

*****Map quiz on Wednesday, September 18****

IV. Understanding the Democratic Wave across Africa: Elections and Parties
--Bleck and van de Walle, chapters 3-4

Recommended

V. Mid-term Exam, Wednesday, October 9 Bring Blue Books

****Monday October 14 Fall Break No Class***

VI. The Democratic Wave: Candidates and Issues
--Bleck and van de Walle, chapters 5 and 6

Recommended:

VII-VIII. Was it a Democratic Wave or a Democratic Ripple? What the voters say
--Bleck and van de Walle, chapter 7
--Selected Afrobarometer surveys, www.Afrobarometer.com
IX. Elections and violence

Recommended

X. Distributive expectations and distributional consequences under democratic conditions

Recommended
**1500 word analytical paper due Monday, November 11**

XI. Africa's Urban explosion: Does Urban Development Benefit the Poor?

recommended

XII. The Middle Class in Africa: Who are they? Where are they? Are they democrats?

Recommended

XIII. The Political Economy of Natural Resources
Recommended

XIV. Cross-Border Trade and Investment in Africa
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5652847de4b0333f56d2bdc29/t/58fd32a5ff7c502a493d18ed/1492988584819/PB18_US+China+Africa.pdf
http://geographical.co.uk/opinion/item/894-the-hidden-cost-of-second-hand-clothing

Recommended

XV. Conclusion

******Final Exam, Friday December 20, 1:30-3:30 pm*****