POL 288E
Summer 2014
Andebrhan Welde Giorgis

The Politics and International Relations of Africa

Contact Details for Professor:
Tel: 02 6148170 GSM: 0475 65 26 26 (only in emergencies)
E-mail: Giorgis.Andebrhan.Welde@vub.ac.be

Classes:
TBA

Office hours:
TBA

1. Prerequisites
2. Course Description
3. Course Objectives
4. Course Materials
5. Teaching Method and Course Elements
6. Assignments and Assessment
7. Course Schedule
8. Literature and Session Instructions
1. PREREQUISITES

At least one political science or international affairs course is required: POL 212E recommended.

2. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course provides an in-depth analysis of the evolution of the contemporary African state and the politics and international relations of Africa in the wider historical context of Cold War and post-Cold War developments. It examines the emergence of major African powers, both within regional and global contexts, and presents comparative case studies of three African countries with special focus on the issues of the domestic political processes, economic and political governance and foreign policies. The course will also provide a historical perspective of the pan-Africanist project and the evolution of the African Union (AU), the African regional economic communities (RECs) and the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). In addition, it will provide an assessment of the role, opportunities and limitations of the African Union in addressing major contemporary African and Global issues, placing particular emphasis on the politics and challenges in the Horn of Africa.

3. COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course is designed to help students acquire substantive knowledge of the evolution of the nation state in contemporary Africa; the development and structures of state institutions, politics and the organisation of the public arena in Africa; political processes and political change in Africa; and the factors of fragility of the prototype African state. In addition, it would help students understand the diversity of African politics; the matrix of inter-African relations, sub-regional cooperation and the project and prospects of African Unity; and Africa’s political economy, international relations and role in world politics.

4. COURSE MATERIALS

4.1 The required readings are listed, in the course schedule. All required readings are at your disposition on PointCarré. Besides the required readings, the list below offers extensive additional reading material. This material can be consulted according to your own interest, and may certainly help you for finding readings for your term paper.

The required textbook for the Course is Naomi Chazan, Peter Lewis, Robert A. Mortimer, Donald Rothchild, and Stephen John Stedman, Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa, 3rd Edition, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999 (I am presently looking for a more current alternative textbook and the schedule of chapters to read would be adjusted accordingly).

4.2 Required reading to keep abreast of current affairs:

4.3 For scholarly research, refer to the following journals:

Review of African Political Economy (ROAPE)
Global Governance
European Journal of International Relations
International Affairs
5. TEACHING METHOD AND COURSE ELEMENTS

The course is divided into three parts: the first part deals with the development and structures of politics in Africa; the second, with political processes and political change in Africa; and the third, with the international relations of Africa and world politics.

The course will be taught in a four-hour block, TBD. The first 15 minutes of each session will provide students with the opportunity to display their knowledge and understanding of the previous day’s lecture and current reading material in the form of a brief review and, alternately, a multiple choice and/or precise written test (which will count towards their participation grade – see below). Next, the lecture provides an introduction and general overview of the key issues, arguments and relevance of the session’s topic. The second half of the session is devoted entirely to seminar-style student discussion. Here, students are encouraged to discuss and critically exchange their views on the main discourse, themes and arguments arising from the reading and the lecture.

Based on a combination of lectures and interactive seminar-based learning, the teaching method aims to encourage students to engage in thorough and creative textual analysis, independent research and critical discussions.

Students are required to attend class, to come well-prepared, finish their reading assignments and hand in their work on time. They are also encouraged to keep a reading-log to help structure their note-taking and deepen their understanding of the subject matter.

6. ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENTS

Students will be assessed on the basis of their research, writing and presentation skills as well as their grasp of the course content with the help of mid-term and final written exams. In addition to the two exams, there will be one research assignment:

6. 1 Research Essay on a specific African issue of international interest

Students are required to choose one African issue with global implications: peace and security (including militant political Islam and maritime piracy), food security, climate change and regional integration and provide analysis of its historical context, an assessment of the present state of play and recommendations on the way forward.

The essay should be around 4,000 words long.

- All papers should have a title page with (your name, the course module, indication of minor/major, and the paper title)
- Each page of the text should be numbered
- A bibliography
- Uniform referencing (author, title, year of publication, publisher, place of publication, and page numbers for articles and direct references)
Students are required to submit a research proposal for their Research Essay on a date specified in advance at the beginning of the course. The research proposal is the first step towards the final paper. It should include:

- A research question that is clear, simple and straightforward. It may be a theoretically inspired empirical or factual question. The research question may change and be adapted as your research progresses. Additional empirical/theoretical information may force you to reformulate or to fine-tune it in line with your findings. Irrespective of eventual changes, your initial research question should be as clear as possible.
- An outline that provides an indication of how the student will investigate the research question, explains the research methodology, and identifies the sources.
- A tentative lay-out, structure and headings of the research paper.
- A bibliography directly related to the research question or research topic.

There are electronic guides to finding periodicals and articles in them. The ADB catalogue on the VUBIS, for example, allows you to check tables of content of the most recent issues of about 14,500 periodicals. The CCB catalogue on the VUBIS provides locations of books in Belgian Libraries, and the possibility of obtaining books on Inter-Library Loan at the VUB. There is also the V-link, which allows you to find full texts from major online journals (if available) and links to related materials.

Students are required to hand in, on a date specified in advance at the beginning of the course, the hard copy of their Research Proposal in class and the electronic copy via e-mail to Giorgis.Andebrhan.Welde@vub.ac.be with “Research Proposal” in the Subject Header.

The Research Essay is due on a date specified in advance at the beginning of the course. Hand in a hard copy in class and an electronic copy to Giorgis.Andebrhan.Welde@vub.ac.be or awgiorgis.rai@gmail.com with “POL 288E Essay” in the Subject Header.

Failure to hand in and email the Essay on time will be considered as non-submission.

6.2 Assessment and Weighing of Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Participation</th>
<th>30 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Out of which:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Contributions in Class</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Tests</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Essay</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Exam:</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam:</td>
<td>30 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Letter grades are given as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Scale of 20</th>
<th>Scale of 100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>17.0-20.0</td>
<td>85-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>16.1-16.9</td>
<td>81-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>15.3-16.0</td>
<td>77-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>14.5-15.2</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>13.7-14.4</td>
<td>69-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>13.1-13.6</td>
<td>66-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>12.3-13.0</td>
<td>62-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>11.5-12.2</td>
<td>58-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>10.7-11.4</td>
<td>54-57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessment Criteria for the Research Paper are:

- Referencing, use of academic sources (academic journals, monographs).
- Language, style, clarity, organization of papers and work.
- Empirical precision: correct interpretation and reproduction of factual information.
- Capacity to synthesize arguments and to apply theory to empirical information.
- Capacity to analyze and to develop a critical assessment of both empirical as well as theoretical materials.
- Clear statements of guiding questions and subsequent conclusions.

Assessment Criteria for the Exams are:

- Capacity to grasp and convey factual, conceptual and theoretical knowledge.
- Capacity to synthesize and apply concepts and theory to concrete cases.
- Capacity to develop a systematic argument based on theory and practice.

7. COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part I: Development and Structures of Politics in Africa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1, day1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 1, day2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2, day1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2, day2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part II: Political Process and Political Change in Africa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 3, day1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3, day2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Week 4, day1 | XX June | Discussion of Mid-Term Exam |
| | | Deep Politics: Political Response, Protest, and Conflict |
| | XX June | Political Transitions and Patterns of Change |
8. LITERATURE AND SESSION INSTRUCTIONS

Week 1, Day 1

Introduction to the Course: Overview of Course Syllabus and Requirements.

The African Nation State as a Product of the Colonial Experience

Week 1, Day 2

1. The Diversity of African Politics: Trends and Approaches
2. State Institutions and the Organization of the Public Arena

Reading:


Week 2, Day 1

1. Social Groupings
2. Ethnicity, Class, and the State

Reading:
Week 2, Day 2

Factors of Fragility of the African State

Reading:

Chapter 11: The African State in Crisis, pp. 272-295, in Andebrhan Welde Giorgis, Eritrea at a Crossroads: A Narrative of Triumph, Betrayal and Hope [under publication]

Week 3, Day 1

1. Regimes in Independent Africa

Reading:


Week 3, Day 2

1. Revision
2. Mid-Term Exam

Week 4, Day 1

1. Discussion of Mid-Term Exam
2. Deep Politics: Political Response, Protest, and Conflict

Reading:


Week 4, Day 2

1. Political Transitions and Patterns of Change
2. The Dialectics of Reform: The Theory and Methodological Praxis of Reform
Reading:


Week 5, Day 1

1. Nigeria: The Possibilities and Limits of Transforming State and Society
2. South Africa: The Possibilities and Limits of Transforming State and Society

Reading:


Week 5, Day 2

1. Inter-African Relations
2. The African Union, Regional Economic Communities and African Peace and Security Architecture

Reading:


Week 6, Day 1

1. Africa in World Politics
2. Guest Lecture

Reading:


Week 6, Day 2

1. Africa in the 21st Century
2. Revision
Reading:

a) Chapter 14: Africa in the Twenty-First Century, pp. 491-498 in your Course Book
   Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999

b) Sophie Harman and William Brown, In from the Margins? The Changing Place of
   Africa in International Relations, International Affairs 89: 1, 2013, The Royal Institute
   of International Affairs.

Week 7 Final Exam