

**CPO 3204: African Politics**  
**Spring Semester 2020**  
**T Period 8: 3-4:55 P; R Period 9: 4:05-4:55**  
**Turlington 2318**

Instructor: Nicholas Kerr, Ph.D.  
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Office Hours: 9:30-11:30 Tuesday and by appointment  
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*Course Description:*

This course introduces students to the politics of contemporary Africa. It challenges the dominant representations of the continent as conflict prone, economically underdeveloped, and political unstable. Instead, the course presents Africa as a dynamic region comprised of 54 independent states with diverse political and economic realities. Students will explore core themes such as the politics of the state, politics of identity, economic and political development, the politics of conflict and cooperation, and the role of Africa in global affairs. These themes are examined through a variety of learning materials and collaborative-learning methods that expose students to dominant theoretical approaches and political science methodologies. **It is important to note that this class is designated a “WR” (or Gordon Rules) which means “writing must be evaluated on the content, organization and coherence, effectiveness, style, grammar and punctuation.”**

*Student Learning Objectives*

At the end of the course, students should be able to

- identify common depictions of Africa in popular media
- apply dominant comparative politics theories and methodologies to the study of African politics
- assess the perspectives of leading scholars and policy experts on African affairs through essays and collaborative assignments
- conduct research on an important issue challenging Africa’s political, economic or social development and present findings in both oral and written form
- demonstrate higher-level critical thinking skills, such as analysis and synthesis
- demonstrate an ability to write coherent, logical and carefully written prose at a level expected of upper-division students.

*Required Texts:*

- Keim, Curtis and Carolyn Somerville. 2018. *Mistaking Africa: Curiosities and Inventions of the African Mind*. Westview Press. (Fourth Edition)
- Thomson, Alex. 2016. *An Introduction to African Politics*. Routledge. (Fourth Edition)

*Course Requirements and Assignments:*

- Class Participation (15%):
  - Attendance for this course is mandatory and an attendance record will be taken for every class. Students are expected to come to class having done the reading and ready

to contribute to class discussions. If students are routinely absent—or attend without doing the proper preparation—they will not receive full credit for participation. Students who miss more than three classes without a formal excuse may receive additional reductions to their overall grade.

- Your participation grade also includes class activities including Documentary Reviews, Map Quiz and Pop Quizzes.
- 3 Review Essays (20% each: 60% total): Students are required to write two (5-6 page double-spaced) review essays. The first essay is a review of a selected chapter from *Mistaking Africa* by Keim and is due on **Thursday, Jan 30 @ 2P**. The second essay is a review of *three* course readings selected from Section 4: Economic Development or Section 5: Democracy and Political Reform due on **Tuesday, March 24 @ 2P**. The third essay is a review of *three* course readings selected from Section 6: Politics of Identity or Section 7: Politics of Conflict and Cooperation due on **Tuesday, April 21 @ 2P**. Review essays require students to demonstrate higher-level critical-thinking skills through prose that is coherent, logically consistent and carefully edited. Detailed information about the review essay requirements will be provided. **Essays are to be submitted to TURNITIN on Canvas.**
- Final Exam (25%): The final will be held in class on **Tuesday, April 28: 12:30-2:30P**. A review for the Final will be held in class on **Tuesday, April 21**.

*Grading Scale:*

Each grade that you earn for assignments will be based on the weightings indicated above. Your final grade will be converted based on the following scale:

A: 93-100		A-: 90-92
B+: 87-89	B: 83-86	B-: 80-82
C+: 77-79	C: 73-76	C-: 70-72
D+: 67-69	D: 63-66	D-: 60-62
F: 59 and below		

*Policies on Course Readings, Attendance, Cell Phones & Computers*

- Attendance for this course is mandatory and an attendance record will be taken every class. Students are expected to come to class having done the reading and ready to contribute to class discussions. If students are routinely absent—or attend without doing the proper preparation—they will not receive full credit for participation. Students who miss more than **three** classes without a formal excuse may receive additional reductions to their overall grade.
- All readings should be completed by the assigned class period. The reading load varies throughout the semester, but you should expect to read at least one source for each class. For some class sessions, I have assigned multiple readings. Please do not be alarmed. I will provide instructions on how to prepare for these class sessions. **Importantly, I reserve the right to change the course readings or course structure during the semester as I see fit. Any changes will be updated on the syllabus and uploaded to Canvas.**
- Cell phones should be placed on silent during class sessions and activities such as browsing and texting should be kept to an absolute minimum.

- Students are allowed to use computers for course-related purposes, including taking notes, reviewing assigned readings, and completing class assignments.
- Canvas will serve as a repository for course materials, this includes:
  - Updated copies of the syllabus;
  - Assigned readings not contained in required texts;
  - Additional reading list;
  - Internet and electronic resources on Africa;
  - Review papers, and final exam review materials.

*Policies on Cheating and Plagiarism:*

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

*Policies on Late Assignments, Make-up Exams, & Contact*

- Assignment extensions will only be offered under extenuating circumstances. Late assignments submitted without a valid extension will be penalized as per my discretion.
- Make-up exams will only be arranged for *university-accepted excuses*.
- When contacting me by email please utilize standard grammar and punctuation. In most instances, I will do my best to respond to emails within 24 hours.

*Policies for Persons with Disabilities*

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

*Course Evaluations*

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION & POLITICS OF REPRESENTATION

### WEEK 1

#### Tuesday, Jan 7: Course Introduction

- No Reading !!!!
- Make sure to purchase *An Introduction to African Politics* by Thompson and *Mistaking Africa* by Keim and Somerville

#### Thursday, Jan 9: Introduction to African Politics

- Thompson: Chapter 1
- Subscribe to the following:
  - [This Week in Africa](#) by Jeffery Paller and Philip Dube
  - [Ufahamu Podcast](#) by Rachel Riedl and Kim Dionne
  - CSIS [Into Africa Podcast](#) by Judd Devermont
- Visit the following websites:
  - [Allafrica](#)
  - [AfricalsACountry](#)
  - [African Arguments](#)
  - [Democracy in Africa](#)

### WEEK 2

#### Tuesday, Jan 14: Misrepresenting Africa I

Keim and Somerville: Chapter 1 - 3

#### Thursday, Jan 16: Misrepresenting Africa II:

- Keim and Somerville: Chapter 5 - 6

### WEEK 3

#### Tuesday, Jan 21: Misrepresenting Africa III

- Keim and Somerville: Chapter 8 -10

#### Thursday, Jan 23: Misrepresenting Africa IV

- Keim and Somerville: Chapter 11 & 12

### Section 1: Optional Readings

Binyavanga Wainaina, [“How to Write about Africa”](#) in *Granta*, 19 January 2006.

Judd Devermont, “The US Intelligence Community’s Biases During the Nigerian Civil War” *African Affairs* 116 (2017), pp. 705-716.

Pierre Englebert and Kevin Dunn, “Why Study African Politics?” Chapter 1 in *Inside African Politics* (2013), pp. 1-15

Achille Mbembe, “Time on the Move” in *On the Postcolony* (2001), pp. 1-18.

Nic Cheeseman, Carl Death and Lindsay Whitfield, “Notes on Researching Africa” *African Affairs* (2017): 1-5.

## SECTION 2: POLITICS OF THE STATE

### WEEK 4

#### Tuesday, Jan 28: Colonial State, Independence & the Legacy of Colonialism I

- Thomson: Chapter 2
- Meredith, Martin. 2005. “Heart of Darkness” in *The Fate of Africa*. New York. Public Affairs. (Canvas)
- Young, Crawford. 2012. “The African Postcolonial State: Concluding Reflections” in *The Post-Colonial State in Africa : Fifty Years of Independence, 1960-2010*. Wisconsin. University of Wisconsin Press. (Canvas)

#### Thursday, Jan 30: Colonial State, Independence & the Legacy of Colonialism II

- **\*\*DUE DATE: Review Essay #1 on Keim**
- Documentary Review (In-Class)

### WEEK 5

#### Tuesday, Feb 4: Neopatrimonialism: Corruption, Clientelism, and Big Man Rule

- Thompson: Chapter 6

#### Thursday, Feb 6: Weak States/Failed States

- Thomson: Chapter 10
- Please visit the Fragile States Index (<https://fragilestatesindex.org/>)

### WEEK 6

## SECTION 3: POLITICS OF DEVELOPMENT

#### Tuesday, Feb 11: Development and Underdevelopment

- Thomson: Chapter 3

#### Thursday, Feb 13: Structural Adjustment Policies

- Thomson: Chapter 9
- Lopes, Carlos. 2013. “Structural Adjustment Policies and Africa- A reply to Shantayanan Devarajan.” *Think Africa Press*

- Devarajan, Shantayanan. 2013. "This is How Structural Adjustment Policies Worked in Africa — a Rejoinder to Carlos Lopes" *Think Africa Press*

## WEEK 7

### Tuesday, Feb 18: Foreign Aid, Debt Relief and Globalization

- Moss, Todd. 2011. "The International Aid System" in African Development. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Moyo, Dambisa. 2009. "Why Foreign Aid is Hurting Africa." *Wall Street Journal*, March 21. (Canvas)
- Sachs, Jeffrey. 2014. "The Case for Aid." *Foreign Policy* (Canvas)
- Kabwe, Zitto. 2013. "Foreign aid is not the only African story worth hearing" *The Guardian*.

### Thursday, Feb 20: Africa's Economic Prospects: Is Africa Rising?

- Radelet, Steven. 2010. "Success Stories from 'Emerging Africa'." *Journal of Democracy*, 21 (4): 87-101. (Canvas)
- Jerven, Morten. 2014. "Why saying 'seven out of ten fastest growing economies are in Africa' carries no real meaning" *African Arguments*. (Canvas)
- Nossiter, Adam. 2013. "Behind those Fast Growth Rates, Rising Inequality." *New York Times* (Canvas).
- Lewis, Peter. 2008. "Growth without prosperity in Africa." *Journal of Democracy* 19 (4): 95-109. (Canvas)
- "Africa Rising: A hopeful continent". *Economist*. March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2013 (Canvas)
- Logan and Dulani. 2013. "After a decade of growth in Africa, little change in poverty at the grassroots" *Afrobarometer* (Canvas)

## SECTION 4: DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL REFORM

## WEEK 8

### Tuesday, Feb 25: Africa's Diverse Political Regimes

- Harbeson and Rothchild: Chapter 5
- Gyimah-Boadi, E., 2015. Africa's Waning Democratic Commitment. *Journal of Democracy*, 26(1), pp.101-113.

### Thursday, Feb 27: Democratization & Autocratization, and Regime Change

- Thomson: Chapter 11
- Devermont, J & Temin, J. 2019. Africa's Democratic Moment: The Five Leaders Who Could Transform the Region. *Foreign Aff.*, 98, 131.
- Olewe, D. 2019. Is Africa going backwards on democracy?  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-46971250>

## WEEK 9

### SPRING BREAK MARCH 3/5 NO CLASS!!!!

## WEEK 10

### Tuesday, March 10: Free, Fair and Peaceful Elections

- Lindberg, Staffan. 2006. "The Surprising Significance of African Elections," *Journal of Democracy* 17 (1): 139-151. (Canvas)
- Bratton, Michael. 2013. "Where do elections lead?" in *Voting and Democratic Citizenship in Africa*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner. (Canvas)
- Bogaards, Matthijs. 2013. Reexamining African Elections. *Journal of Democracy*, 24(4), 151-160. (Canvas)
- Arriola, L.R. and Lyons, T., 2016. (Ethiopia) The 100% election. *Journal of Democracy*, 27(1), pp.76-88.
- Kora, S. and Darboe, M.N., 2017. The Gambia's Electoral Earthquake. *Journal of Democracy*, 28(2), pp.147-156.
- Cheeseman, N., Lynch, G. and Willis, J., 2017. Ghana: The Ebbing Power of Incumbency. *Journal of Democracy*, 28(2), pp.92-104.
- Menkhaus, K., 2017. Elections in the Hardest Places: The Case of Somalia. *Journal of Democracy*, 28(4), pp.132-146.

### Thursday, March 12: Political Institutions

- Posner, Daniel N. and Daniel J. Young. 2008. "The Institutionalization of Political Power in Africa," *Journal of Democracy*, 18(3): 126-140. (Canvas)
- Kwasi, Prempeh, H. 2008. "Presidents Untamed," *Journal of Democracy* 19(2): 109-123. (Canvas)
- Barkan, Joel D. 2008. "Legislatures on the Rise?" *Journal of Democracy*, 19(2): 124-137. (Canvas)
- VonDoepp, P. (2005). The problem of judicial control in Africa's neopatrimonial democracies: Malawi and Zambia. *Political Science Quarterly*, 120(2), 275-301. (Canvas)

## SECTION 3: POLITICS OF IDENTITY

## WEEK 11

### Tuesday, March 17: Politics of Identity

- Thomson: Chapter 4
- **Review Essay #2 Tutorial (In-class)**

### Thursday, March 19: Ethnic Identity

- Posner, Daniel. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi," *American Political Science Review*, 98 (4): 529-545. (Canvas)

## WEEK 12

### Tuesday, March 24: Religious Identity

- **\*\*\*DUE DATE: Review Essay #2 due**
- Documentary Review (In-Class)

### Thursday, March 27: Gender and Sexual Identity

- Izama, Melina. 2015. "The rise of morality politics in Africa: Talk is cheap and dangerous, but wins votes" *Washington Post: Monkey Cage*.
- Dionne, Kim, Boniface Dulani, Joseph Chunga. 2014. "Attitudes toward homosexuality in sub-Saharan Africa". *Working Paper*.
- Afrobarometer. 2014. "Support for Africans Women's Equality Rises." (Canvas)

## SECTION 6: POLITICS OF CONFLICT AND COOPERATION

## WEEK 13

### Tuesday, March 31: Civil Wars I

- Thompson Chapter 7

### Thursday, April 2: Civil Wars II

- Elbadawi, E., and N. Sambanis. 2000. "Why are there so many civil wars in Africa? Understanding and preventing violent conflict." *Journal of African Economies*. 9(3): 244-269. (Canvas)

## WEEK 14

### Tuesday, April 7: Electoral Violence I

- Dercon, S., Gutierrez-Romero, R., 2007. Triggers and characteristics of the 2007 Kenyan electoral violence. *World Development* 40(4), 13. (Canvas)

### Thursday, April 9: Electoral Violence II

- Fjelde, H. and Höglund, K., 2016. Electoral institutions and electoral violence in Sub-Saharan Africa. *British Journal of Political Science*, 46(2), pp.297-320. (Canvas)

## WEEK 15

### Tuesday, April 14: Terrorism, Counter-Terrorism

- Campbell, John. 2018. "Boko Haram and Nigeria State Weakness" in *Africa in World Politics*. Routledge.



Thursday, April 14: Regional and International Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention & Mitigation

- Manning, Carrie and Louis- Alexander Berg. 2018. “Bilateral vs. Multi-lateral Peacebuilding in Africa” in *Africa in World Politics*. Routledge.

**WEEK 16**

Tuesday, April 21: Final Exam Review & Course Conclusion

- **\*\*\*DUE DATE: Review Essay #3**

**WEEKS 17-18**

**Tuesday, April 28: \*\*\* FINAL EXAM 12:30 PM - 2:30 PM**

**GOOD LUCK ON YOUR EXAMS, FINAL PAPERS AND ENJOY THE SUMMER!!!**



Political Map of Africa 2011