

**CPO 3204: African Politics**  
**Fall Semester 2020**  
**MWF Period 2: 8:30-9:20 AM**  
**(Synchronous Instruction)**

Instructor: Nicholas Kerr, Ph.D.  
Office: 318 Anderson Hall  
Virtual Office Hours: 12:30-2:00 Monday & Wednesday  
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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.

*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)

*Instructional Requirements:*

- Students will be required to have access and use a personal computer with the access to the Internet.
- This course is facilitated 100% online through Canvas. You may access Canvas from UF's e-Learning webpage: <https://elearning.ufl.edu/>. Please contact the UF Help Desk, <https://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>, if you have any technical difficulties with Canvas.

*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 **Friday, Sep 25 @ 6A**. 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 **Friday, Nov 13 @ 6A**. 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 **Wednesday, Dec 9 @ 6A**. 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 online **Thursday Dec 17: 7:30-9:30A**. A review for the Final will be held online during the course period on **Wednesday, Dec 9**.

*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.

A student with an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19, as determined by the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/), can register with the Disability Resource Center to request a temporary course modification and/or academic accommodation. The student will need to provide medical documentation that identifies their diagnosis and their medical provider’s concerns related to possible COVID-19 exposure. Students should be mindful that remote course access is not always a feasible modification for every course. The DRC will work in partnership with the student’s instructor to determine a reasonable modification that meets the course requirements while considering the student’s

concerns for exposure. Students can begin the process to register with the DRC by completing the form located on the [DRC website](#). For questions, please contact the DRC at 352-392-8565 or [drc@ufsa.ufl.edu](mailto:drc@ufsa.ufl.edu)

### 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/>.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
Monday, August 31, 2020	Class Introduction	Introduction	
Wednesday, September 2, 2020	Introduction	Introduction	T 1
Friday, September 4, 2020	Representation	Misrepresenting Africa I	K&M 1-3
Monday, September 7, 2020	LABOR DAY: No Class		
Wednesday, September 9, 2020	Politics of Representation	Misrepresenting Africa II	K&M 5-6
Friday, September 11, 2020	Politics of Representation	Misrepresenting Africa III	K&M 5-6 K&M 8-
Monday, September 14, 2020	Politics of Representation	Misrepresenting Africa IV	10
Wednesday, September 16, 2020	Politics of Representation	Misrepresenting Africa V	K&M 8-10
Friday, September 18, 2020	Politics of Representation	Misrepresenting Africa VI	K&M 11-12
Monday, September 21, 2020	Politics of the State	Colonial State I	T 2
Wednesday, September 23, 2020	Politics of the State	Colonial State II	T 2
Friday, September 25, 2020	Politics of the State	Neopatrimonial State I	T 6
Monday, September 28, 2020	Politics of the State	Neopatrimonial State II	T 6
Wednesday, September 30, 2020	Politics of the State	Liberal/Weak State I	T 10
Friday, October 2, 2020	Politics of the State	Liberal/Weak State II	T 10
Monday, October 5, 2020	Politics of Development	Development/Underdevelopment I	T3
Wednesday, October 7, 2020	Politics of Development	SAPs I	T9
Friday, October 9, 2020	Politics of Development	SAPs II	T9
Monday, October 12, 2020	Politics of Development	Foreign Aid & Debt Relief	Canvas
Wednesday, October 14, 2020	Politics of Development	Foreign Aid & Debt Relief	Canvas
Friday, October 16, 2020	Development	Climate Change, COVID-19, Africa Rising	Canvas
Monday, October 19, 2020	Democracy & Political Reform	Political Regime I	T 7
Wednesday, October 21, 2020	Democracy & Political Reform	Political Regime II	T 11
Friday, October 23, 2020	Democracy & Political Reform	Elections I	T 11
Monday, October 26, 2020	Democracy & Political Reform	Elections II	Canvas
Wednesday, October 28, 2020	Democracy & Political Reform	Political Institutions I	Canvas
Friday, October 30, 2020	Democracy & Political Reform	Political Institutions II	Canvas
Monday, November 2, 2020	Democracy & Political Reform	Political Institutions III	Canvas
Wednesday, November 4, 2020	Democracy & Political Reform	Political Protests I	Canvas

Friday, November 6, 2020	Democracy & Political Reform	Political Protests II	Canvas
Monday, November 9, 2020	Politics of Identity	Ethnicity I	T4
Wednesday, November 11, 2020	VETERANS DAY	Ethnicity II	T4
Friday, November 13, 2020	Politics of Identity		
Monday, November 16, 2020	Politics of Identity	Religion	T4
Wednesday, November 18, 2020	Politics of Identity	Gender and Sexuality	Canvas
Friday, November 20, 2020	Politics of Identity	Class	T5
Monday, November 23, 2020	Politics of Conflict & Cooperation	Civil Wars I	Canvas
Wednesday, November 25, 2020	Thanksgiving		
Friday, November 27, 2020	Thanksgiving		
Monday, November 30, 2020	Politics of Conflict & Cooperation	Civil Wars II	Canvas
Wednesday, December 2, 2020	Politics of Conflict & Cooperation	Electoral Violence	Canvas
Friday, December 4, 2020	Politics of Conflict & Cooperation	Terrorism & Counter Terrorism	Canvas
Monday, December 7, 2020	Politics of Conflict & Cooperation	Conflict Prevention	Canvas
Wednesday, December 9, 2020	Final Exam Review		
Friday, December 11, 2020	Reading days		
Monday, December 14, 2020			
Wednesday, December 16, 2020	Final Paper Due		
Thursday, December 17, 2020	EXAM 7:30- 9:30AM		

\*Canvas indicates readings which will be posted on Canvas

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



Political Map of Africa 2011