

WOMEN AND POLITICS IN AFRICA

Semester: Fall 2023

SECTIONS: AFS 4330 - CPO 4000, WST 4930

Professor: Dr. Agnes Ngoma Leslie

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Office: 435 Grinter Hall; Office Hours: Tuesdays 2-4 PM

Classroom: TUR 2333 M:7 (1:55-2:45); W:7-8 (1:55-3:50)

Course Description

This course explores the roles of African women in politics from traditional societies to the present. We will explore the roles that women have played in the political sphere and how they interact with political structures and how they mobilize themselves to impact the society, state, and legal systems at local, national, regional and international levels. The course will also examine how different political and social environments impact the participation of women in the political sphere. Thus, we will study women's participation in the political arena, their challenges and struggles for their rights and their impact on their countries' laws and policies. We will also analyze the role of individual activism and women's movements in different African countries. We will also examine women's participation as voters, politicians, activists and policy makers, the challenges they face in running for political office and how they influence politics once in elected office. Lastly, we will analyze African women's participation in the African region and international sphere.

Class Philosophy

This class will be taught as a colloquium. Each student will make at least one presentation and lead a class discussion. All students will be expected to do the readings and participate in the discussions.

Grading

Students' grades will be based on attendance and participation in class discussions, quizzes, term paper, tests and class presentations based on the readings and videos as follows:

1) Attendance = 10 % (any absence will require a suitable explanation);

- 2) Class participation = 10 %
- 3) Leading one class discussion and synthesizing the readings = 20 % (4 pages, typewritten);
- 4) Two quizzes based on readings presentations and videos = 40 %; (20% each)
- 5) Term paper on one of the assigned topics = 20 %.

Grade Point Scale:

A = 93 or above, A- = 90-92, B+ = 87-89, B = 83-86, B- = 80-82, C+ = 77-79, C= 74-76, C- = 70-73, D+ = 67-69, D = 63-66, D- = 60-62, E= 59 or below

With the exception of the final paper, all writing assignments will be returned to students with comments before the final week of class. The professor reserves the right to make changes in order to meet the course objectives.

Assigned Readings

1. **Readings:** The Reading are in the Files on Canvas or in the assigned Texbook. "*Women and Politics in Africa*"
2. **Textbook:** Goetz, Anne Marie and Hassim, Shireen, *No Shortcuts to Power: African Women in Politics and Policy Making*. 2003. New York: Zed Books.

Suggested books:

1. Tripp, Aili Mari et. al. *African Women's Movements: Changing Political Landscapes*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
2. Tripp, Aili Mari. 2015. *Women and Power in Postconflict Africa*. New York: Cambridge University.

Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require classroom accommodation should first register with the Dean of Students Office who will provide them with the necessary documentation.

Weekly Readings

WEEK 1 – August 23. COURSE INTRODUCTION. Comparative Status of Women in Politics in Africa.

WEEK 2 – August 28 – CURRENT STATUS OF WOMEN IN AFRICA: <http://democracyinafrica.org/women-politics-africa-Links to an external site.> today/

What is African Feminism/s? How is it different from Western Feminism

Women's fight against patriarchy in various ways,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fmA9uwh7Tb0>Links to an external site.



August 30th – AFRICAN FEMINISMS, WOMANISM

Contemporary African feminists: Gwendolyn Mikell: Introduction (In Week 2)

"African Feminisms:" Amina Amama (Reading in Week 2)

Amina Amama – *Talking about Feminism in Africa:Online:*

African feminists on the Continent: Videos

"Africa Unpacified: From Freedom Fighters to Feminists"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2bYLgmtG1p4>

(Watch this video from 16 minutes)

WEEK 3

WOMEN'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES

September 4 - LABOR DAY - NO CLASS

WOMEN LEADERS IN TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES

September 6 - 1) Ifi Amadiume – *Women's Achievements in African Political Systems: Transforming Culture for 500 Years* (Readings)

2) Asante Queen Mothers: A Study in Female Authority

3) Yaa Asantewa of Asante: About 1840/60-1921

(Readings)

WEEK 4

SEPTEMBER 11 - 2). *Women Leaders in African History – Nzinga of Angola: About 1581 – 1663* (Readings).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=siCT-3l> GDELinks to an external site.



THE LOSS OF WOMEN'S POLITICAL POWER

September 11 - 1) "Swaziland - Labotsibeni/Gwamile Mdluli: The

Power Behind the Swazi Throne 1875-1925." Ginindza,Thoko. (Readings).

September 13 - Holly Hanson – *Queen Mothers and Good Government*

in Buganda: The Loss of Women's Political Power in

Nineteenth-Century EastAfrica.

(Readings) [/www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlf7M3UypNw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlf7M3UypNw)

WEEK 5: WOMEN IN NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLES

September 18 - 1) Rosemary Mpuku Nyaywa – *Mama 'Unip' Julia*

'Chikamoneka': *The Fearless 'Mad Africa Girl'* (Readings).

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Links to an external site.42Z3Ob07TygDismantle the Commonwealth: Queen Elizabeth's Death Prompts Reckoning with Colonial Past in](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Links%20to%20an%20external%20site.42Z3Ob07TygDismantle%20the%20Commonwealth%3A%20Queen%20Elizabeth's%20Death%20Prompts%20Reckoning%20with%20Colonial%20Past%20in)



[AfricaLinks to an external site.](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42Z3Ob07Tyg>

September 20 - 1) *Asserting Women's Liberation within National Liberation: The Case of the South African Women's Movement.* (Readings).

Video – "You have Struck A Rock," *Women in the Struggle Against Apartheid.*

<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/youhavestrukarock>

WEEK 6 - WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS AND ACTIVISM [Links to an external site.](#)



FIRST QUIZ - SEPTEMBER 25

September 27 - 1) Mari Tripp et al. – Historic Influences on Contemporary Women's Movements

September 27 – 1) *Women's Rights in Botswana* – Onnalena Doo Selolwane (Readings).

2) Wangari Maathai - Greenbelt Movement in Kenya – Maathai(Readings)

The Green Belt Movement: The Story of Wangari Maathai, Mia McDonald.

<https://www.yesmagazine.org/issue/media/2005/03/26/the-green-belt-movement-the-story-of-wangari-maathai>

2) *Women Building Peace: The Liberian Women's Movement (Readings):*

Liberia-PDF.pdf. (Readings in file) Film below.

Women's Peace Movement in Liberia – Pray the Devil Back to Hell: <https://vimeo.com/188872289> [Links to an external site.](#)

WEEK 7 – OCTOBER 2

WOMEN AND ELECTORAL SYSTEMS

OCTOBER 2 - 1) Sheila Meintjes and Mary Simons - *Why Electoral Systems Matter to Women*. (Readings).

4) "Quotas as a 'Fast Track' to Equal Representation for Women"
Dahlerup, Drude and Lenita Freidenvall. 2005. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 7:1.

WEEK 8 - WOMEN IN POST CONFLICT AFRICA

OCTOBER 9 - 1) Aili Mari Tripp: Introduction: Women and Power in Postconflict Africa

October 11 - 1) Women and Leadership in Postconflict Countries, Chapter 8

2) Women's Rights in Postconflict Constitutions Chapter 7,

Week 9 - WOMEN IN THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

OCTOBER 16 - 1) Women's Political Effectiveness: A Conceptual Framework, (Goetz. P. 29).

OCTOBER 18 1) Inonge Mbikusita Lewanika: "*Facing the Challenges of Politics*". (Readings)

Julie Ballington & Richard E. Matland - "Political Parties and Special

Measures: Enhancing Women's Participation in Electoral Processes"

[www.un.org.womenwatch/osagi/meetings/2004/EGMelectoral/EPS-Links to an external site.](http://www.un.org.womenwatch/osagi/meetings/2004/EGMelectoral/EPS-Links%20to%20an%20external%20site)

BallingtonMatland.pdf

WEEK 10 - WOMEN AS LEGISLATORS

OCTOBER 23 - 1) Hassim, Shireen. "Representation, Participation and Democratic Effectiveness: Feminist Challenges to Representative Democracy in South Africa", (Goetz p. 81=109)

OCTOBER 25 - 1) 'Parliament is another terrain of struggle': Women, men and Politics in South Africa, Gisela Geisler

The Politics of Engagement: Women Transforming the Policy Process

Domestic Violence Legislation in South Africa (Goetz, p. 140).

GUIDELINES ON WRITING THE TERM PAPER

WEEK 11 – DO NUMBERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

OCTOBER 30 - 1) Case Study: Rwanda. Rwanda: Women Hold Up Half the Parliament

<http://www.idea.int/publications/wip2/upload/Rwanda.pdf>Links to an external site.

NOVEMBER 1 - 1) Gender, numbers and substance: Women parliamentarians and the 'politics

of presence' in KwaZulu-Natal - Suzanne Francis;

muse.jhu.edu/journals/transformation/v070/70.francis.pdf

WEEK 12 – WOMEN'S EFFECTIVENESS

SECOND QUIZ - NOVEMBER 6

NOVEMBER 6 - 1) "The Effect of Increased Women's Representation in Parliament: The Case

Of Rwanda. Devlin, Claire and Robert Elgie:

<http://pa.oxfordjournals.org/content/61/2/237.full>Links to an external site.

NOVEMBER 8 -

Abstracts – one page due.

WEEK 13 – WOMEN AND ISLAM

1) NOVEMBER 13– Gender Parity:

1. <https://www.cmi.no/publications/file/6230-gender-parity-in-senegal-a-continuing-struggle.pdf> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/poverty-matters/2012/aug/16/senegal-headway-gender-equality> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.
3. <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2016/03/senegalese-women-message-world-160317105753105.html> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

NOVEMBER 15

WOMEN IN THE ARAB SPRING UPRISING

<https://carnegie-mec.org/2021/04/07/women-and-arab-uprisings-revolution-within-pub-84219>Links to an external site.

<https://www.e-ir.info/2013/09/04/the-arab-spring-and-womens-rights-in-tunisia/>

"The Arab Spring and Women's Rights in Tunisia" (In File 7)

1) Changing Politics from Below? Women Parliamentarians in Morocco:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13510340701398352#preview>Links to an external site.

WEEK 14 - WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

NOVEMBER 20 – Democratizing Local Government: Problems and Opportunities in the Advancement of Gender Equality in South Africa. Likhapha Mbatha,

NOVEMBER 22 2) Gender Equity and Local Democracy in Contemporary Uganda: Addressing the Challenge of Women's Political Effectiveness in Local Government Josephine Ahikire.

WEEK 15

NOVEMBER 27 - AFRICAN WOMEN IN THE INTERNATIONAL SPHERE.

Examples of Female African leaders: roles and impact

Student presentations

WEEK 16

DECEMBER 4 - PAPERS DUE AT 3:50. No class.

Please let me know ahead of time of any conflicts with your religious observation.