Learning Outcomes
 Identify core themes and ongoing debates in African politics, and situate them within comparative studies
 Prepare students for advanced political research through the use of scholarly resources
 Effectively apply theories and concepts from the course to practical problems facing Africa
 Learn how to identify and interpret emerging issues

Course Description and Objectives
This course explores the economic, social, and political challenges facing sub-Saharan Africa today, placing them in historical and political contexts. Key themes include democratization, conflict, economic development, and the nature of the state. The course balances regional knowledge with comparative theory in order to address questions about African exceptionalism, democracy, path dependency, and the effects of political institutions on governance.

The first unit on colonialism discusses colonial rule, including how it affected traditional bases of authority and transformed the structure of economic life. We examine the lasting impacts of nationalism and decolonization, and analyze the politics of the post-independence era including the rise of one-party states, increased political centralization, and economic experiments in socialism. The second unit explores the causes and consequences of instability. For one of those classes, students will divide into several teams and prepare policy memoranda in preparation for a role playing scenario related to the future of the African state. The third unit focuses on puzzles of African development: Why are so many countries rich in resources but poor in per capita terms? Have external actors helped or hurt post-colonial development? We also evaluate the impact of economic liberalization and foreign aid. The last unit looks at the causes of recent democratization, weighing structural, cultural, and historical factors. It also considers clientelism and other problems related to distribution and development.

REQUIRED MATERIALS
These books are available at the bookstore on campus and on reserve in the library:


Required readings posted on Blackboard are marked with an *asterisk below; other required readings noted below are available via the Internet link provided in the syllabus. Additional required materials may be distributed in class or via Blackboard.
ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Your grade will be calculated based on the following distribution:

- In-class test on September 23 (20%)
- Policy memo/group project due on Friday, October 22 via Blackboard (20%)
- Analytical essay discussing Part 4 of the course, due on Friday, November 12 (20%)
- Final take home essay due on Thursday, December 9, via Blackboard (25%).
- Class participation (15%), including posting to Blackboard blog on Darfur.

Early papers are always welcome. Late papers will be penalized. Use one-inch margins, 12-point type, and double-spacing. All papers must follow a standard formatting style such as Chicago, APSA or MLA. The AU library has examples posted at: http://subjectguides.library.american.edu/citation/. If you use in-text (Author year, page) citations, you still must include a bibliography. Please consult the style guide on my website, where I have also posted tips, suggestions, and resources: http://carllevan.com/teaching/student-resources/. Papers will not be accepted by email without prior permission. AU’s Academic Integrity Code will be strictly enforced. For information see: www.american.edu/provost/Registrar/regulations/reg80.cfm.

UNIT 1: COLONIALISM, NATIONALISM, POST-IMPERIALISM

(1) The Pre-Colonial Polity (August 26)
Start reading Herbst.

(2) State Building in Africa (September 2)
Finish reading Herbst.

(3) Colonial Rule (September 9)

→ In-class video: “The Wind of Change” DVD 4034

(4) Nationalism and Decolonization (September 16)

(5) Mobilizing for Development (September 23)
Hyden, Chapter 4, “The Economy of Affection” and Chapter 6, “The Policy Deficit”

→ IN-CLASS TEST

Some recommended readings for Unit 1:
Hyden, Goran. Chapter 1, “The Study of Politics and Africa”
Also take a look at: http://congoresources.tumblr.com/

UNIT 2: AUTHORITARIANISM, SECURITY, AND SOVEREIGNTY

(6) Dictatorship and Personal Rule (September 30)
Hyden, Chapter 5, “Big Man Rule”
* Al Jazeera interview with Rwandan President Paul Kagame, August 14, 2010.

(7) Darfur (October 7)

→ At least one online blog posting due by today

(8) Secession, Stability, and Security (October 14)
Start reading Englebert, Africa: Unity, Sovereignty and Sorrow.

(9) Compliance, Capacity, and Sovereignty (October 21)
Finish reading Englebert, Africa: Unity, Sovereignty and Sorrow.

→ Policy memo due on Friday, October 22 via Blackboard assignments
Some recommended readings for Unit 2:

### UNIT 3: DEVELOPMENT PARADOXES AND PARADIGMS

**(10)** A “Growth Tragedy”? (October 28)


**(11)** Transforming African Economies (November 4)

**NOTE:** Class will meet for dinner at 4201 Cathedral Avenue NW. Details to follow.

Hyden, Chapter 7, “The Agrarian Question”


**(12)** Debt, Trade, and Aid (November 11)

**GUEST LECTURE:** Lora Shimp, Senior Technical Advisor, John Snow Inc.

Hyden, Chapter 10, “The External Dimension”


→ Hardcopy of the short essay due on Friday, November 12
Some recommended readings for Unit 3:

UNIT 4: DEMOCRACY AND DISTRIBUTION IN AFRICA

(13) Democratization (November 18)

→ Thanksgiving holiday November 25, No Class

(14) Ethnicity, Patronage, and Public Goods (December 2)

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

In the event of a declared pandemic (influenza or other communicable disease), American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. Faculty will communicate class-specific information to students via AU e-mail and Blackboard, while students must inform their faculty immediately of any absence due to illness. Students are responsible for checking their AU e-mail regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency, students should refer to the AU Web site (www.prepared.american.edu) and the AU information line at (202) 885-1100 for general university-wide information, as well as contact their faculty and/or respective dean’s office for course and school/college-specific information.