African Success Stories
POLI 120P

University of California, San Diego
Summer Session I
Monday, Wednesday 2pm-5pm
HSS 2152

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 10am - Noon

Course Description

Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie warns us against the danger of a single story of Africa. In the media, and often even in the classroom, the stories that are told about Sub-Saharan Africa almost invariably portray it as chaotic and violent, or as noble but broken and in need of outside help. These characterizations may contain a grain of truth but, as Adichie says “the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete.” This course aims to provide a more optimistic corrective to the commonly grim view of Africa. In it we will explore some of the more successful cases of nation-building, democratization, and economic transformation on the continent. The course is set up as a complement to POLI 120P “Contention and Conflict in Africa.”

Part of the problem of attempting to understand “Africa” is that to do so can reinforce the idea of Africa as a monolith. It might strike us as somewhat strange to see a class on North American politics in the course schedule, does it really make sense to discuss Costa Rica and Canada in the same class? A class on African politics is similarly ambitious, Canada is about as comparable to Costa Rica as Senegal is to South Africa. Each of Africa’s 50 or so countries could warrant an introductory class of its own. That said, countries on the continent often do share a similar historical arc and confront many of the same political and economic challenges. As a result, it can be instructive to study African successes in the context of the continent at large.

Course Format

We will meet ten times over the period of five weeks, along with an extra final exam period on the fifth week. Because the summer schedule condenses classes into half their normal timeframe, you should expect to do twice as much work each week as you would during a normal quarter. I have tried to structure the class so that assignments are due on Mondays to give you a few extra days to work on them without having to think about prepping for the next class.
Course Requirements

- **Map Quiz (15%)**
  On the third day of class (Monday, July 10th) there will be an in-class quiz. You will be asked to name all the countries on the continent and put them in the right place geographically. You will also be asked to provide the capital, colonial history and year of independence for our six focus countries.

- **In Class Participation (10%)**
  You should come prepared to discuss the readings assigned each class. In addition to participation in class discussion and actives, we will occasionally have reading quizzes. Quiz grades will count towards your participation for that day.

- **Success Story Discussion (10%)**
  Each student will present an African success story to the rest of the class one time during the quarter. These should be a relatively recent news story about some positive social, economic or political development somewhere on the continent. I will distribute a list of suggestions, but you may choose your own (subject to approval). Your discussion should be no more than 5 minutes and should cover the basic facts of the case and your assessment of the explanation behind its success. These discussions can be relatively informal and do not require a slide presentation.

- **Final Paper (35%)**
  In the first few weeks of the class, we will highlight several case studies of success in democratization, democratic consolidation and nation-building. You will be asked to choose one country on the continent outside of our six focus countries and critically evaluate its success in these areas. To spread the This assignment will be broken down into three successive steps; case selection and brief narrative (1 page, 5% of the grade), preliminary analysis (3 pages, 10%) and final draft (7 pages, 20%). Further details will be given in class.

- **Final Exam (30%)**
  On Friday, August 3rd, there will be a final exam. The exam will cover all the material presented in class and in the required readings. The exam will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

Course Policies

**Late assignments:** Paper assignments are due to me in email by 10:00 AM on the date listed in the syllabus. Assignments turned in between 10 AM and the beginning of class (2 PM) will have their grade deducted by 10 points. Assignments turned in after the start of class will have an additional 20 points deducted. Each additional day the assignment is late will result in another 10 point penalty.

**Academic Integrity:** While you may certainly consult your classmates to help you better understand the material, all your work must be your own. You should not collaborate with anyone during in-class quizzes or the final, nor use anyone else’s work on your paper, which includes copying from a source without proper attribution. Anyone caught in violation of UCSD’s academic integrity policy will be
reported to UCSD’s academic integrity office. You can visit http://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/2 for details about UCSD’s Academic Integrity Policy.

Make-up tests: You should make doubly sure you can be in class for the map quiz and final exam. I will only allow make-up tests to be taken under extreme extenuating circumstances that are well documented.

Students with disabilities: If you need special accommodations in this class, please let me know as soon as possible. We will work with the Office for Students with Disabilities to accommodate your learning needs.

Extra Credit

Wikipedia is an amazing resource for many things and by some accounts it numbers among humanity’s greatest accomplishments. However, it is too often the case that Wikipedia’s African content is lacking. To do some small part to help addressing this shortcoming, and to hopefully encourage you to contribute to aggregating humanity’s collected knowledge outside of this class, I am offering extra credit for contributions to Wikipedia. Submit proof of a substantial edit to Wikipedia, including 3 or more sentences and two or more citations, for two points of extra credit on your final grade. I will give credit for the first three contributions you report to me. Additional contributions will not benefit your grade, but will still be a benefit to human knowledge. See the editing tutorial for a short introduction to becoming a Wikipedia editor before contributing https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Tutorial

Schedule in Brief

Section 1: Introduction
1. Monday, July 3rd – Introduction
2. Wednesday, July 5th – The African Context

Section 2: Nation Building
3. Monday, July 10th – Building National Identity (Tanzania)
   o Assignment: Map Quiz
4. Wednesday, July 12th – A “Country” from Scratch (Somaliland)

Section 3: Democracy
5. Monday, July 17th – Democratization (Benin)
   o Assignment: Case Selection & narrative (Due at 10 AM by email)
6. Wednesday, July 19th – Democratic Consolidation (Ghana)
7. Monday, July 24th – An African Election
   o Assignment: Preliminary analysis (Due at 10 AM by email)

Section 4: Economic Growth
8. Wednesday, July 26th – Generating Growth
9. Monday, July 31st – Managing Resources (Botswana)
   o Assignment: Final Draft (Due at 10 AM by email)
10. Wednesday, August 2nd – Building after Genocide (Rwanda)

Friday, August 4th – Final Exam
Readings

All required readings will be available on the course TED page. We will read a significant portion of *The Bright Continent: Breaking Rules and Making Change in Modern Africa* by Dayo Olopade. I will give you access to copies of the required portions of the book, but it may be worth picking it up in hard copy. The university bookstore has copies for sale.

I have also included a list of additional readings for each class. These are not required, and are not necessary to read to get an A in this class. Often, I will draw on these readings for my lecture materials, and I will sometimes explicitly summarize their arguments or findings in class. I have included them here on the syllabus as a resource if you want to go deeper into a topic than we are able to cover during lecture.

Class 1: Monday, July 3rd - Introduction

**No Required Readings**

**Additional Readings**
- Englebert and Dunn. 2013 *Inside African Politics*. Chapter 1
- Hyden. 2006. *African Politics in Comparative Perspective*. Chapter 1

Class 2: Wednesday, July 5th - African Successes in Historical Context

**Required Readings**
- Olopade. Chapter 1, “Orientation” (10 Pages)

**Additional Readings**
- Thomson. 2004. *Introduction to African Politics*. Chapters 8, 9 and 10
- Various Authors. 2008. Responses to “Is it Africa’s turn?” in *Boston Review’s New Democracy Forum*

Class 3: Monday, July 10th – Unifying a Nation – Focus: Tanzania

Assignment
- Map Quiz

Required Readings
- Olopade. Chapter 5, “The Family Map” (17 pages)
- Englebert and Dunn. 2013. Chapter 3 p. 63-92 (29 pages)

Additional Readings
- Herbst. 2000. States and Power in Africa. Chapter 4
  - Chapter 1: Barkan, “Divergence and Convergence in Kenya and Tanzania: Pressures for Reform”
  - Chapter 7: Cooksey Court and Makau, “Education for Self-Reliance and Harambee”
- Bandyopadhyay and Green. 2013. “Nation-Building and Conflict in Modern Africa.” World Development

Class 4: Wednesday July 12th – Building a Country – Focus: Somaliland

Required Readings
- Olopade. Chapter 3, “Fail States”, (12 pages)
Class 5: Monday, July 17th - Creating Democracy – Focus: Benin

Required Readings

Additional Readings
- Bratton and van de Walle. 1997. *Democratic Experiments in Africa*
- Cheeseman. 2015. *Democracy in Africa: Successes, Failures and the Struggle for Political Reform*
- Bratton and Chang. 2006. “State Building and Democratization in Sub-Saharan Africa.” *Comparative Political Studies*

Class 6: Wednesday, July 19th - Consolidating Democracy – Focus: Ghana

Required Readings

Additional Readings
- Abdulai and Crawford. 2009. “Consolidating democracy in Ghana progress and prospects.” *Democratization*
- Wahman. 2012 “Democratization and electoral turnovers in sub-Saharan Africa and beyond”
- Lindberg. 2006. *Democracy and Elections in Africa*  
- Moehler and Lindberg. 2009. “Narrowing the Legitimacy Gap: Turnovers as a Cause of Democratic Consolidation.” *Journal of Politics*  
- Abdulai and Crawford. 2009. “Consolidating democracy in Ghana progress and prospects.” *Democratization*  

**Class 7: Monday, July 24th**

**Assignment**
- Draft for in-class peer review

**No Required Readings**
- Documentary: An African Election (2011)

**Class 8: Wednesday, July 26th - Generating Wealth**

**Required Readings**
- Olopade. Chapter 7, “The Commercial Map” (25 pages)

**Additional Readings**
- Pinkovskiy and Sala-i-Martin. 2014. “Africa is on time.” *Journal of Economic Growth*  
- Acemoglu and Robinson. 2010. “Why is Africa Poor?” *Economic History of Developing Regions*  
- De la Escosura 2013 Human development in Africa: A long-run perspective  
Class 9: Monday, July 31st - Managing Resources – Focus: Botswana

Required Readings

Additional Readings
- Olopade. Chapter 8, “The Nature Map”
- Ross. 2015. “What Have We Learned about the Resource Curse?” *Annual Review of Political Science*
- Van der Ploeg. 2011. “Natural Resources: Curse or Blessing?” *Journal of Economic Literature*

Class 10: Wednesday, August 2nd - Rebuilding after Genocide – Focus: Rwanda

Required Readings
- Crisafulli and Redmond. 2012. *Rwanda Inc*. Introduction, Chapter 6 (21 Pages)
- Olopade: Chapter 10, “Two Publics” (14 pages)

Additional Readings
- Al Jazeera. 2016. “Rwanda: Africa’s success story or authoritarian state?” (Video) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FELiweMi4tA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FELiweMi4tA)