POLI120N: Contention and Conflict in Africa

Instructor: Professor Claire Adida
University of California San Diego
Winter Quarter 2015
Tue-Thurs: 2-3.20pm
WLH2207

Course description

This course introduces students to the systematic study of conflict in sub-Saharan Africa. It has two goals: to provide a theoretical and methodological overview of how to study conflict in Africa, and to offer a substantive introduction to the various forms of conflict the region encounters.

Course format

This course meets as a lecture twice a week for the ten weeks of the quarter. Students are expected to attend lecture having completed the readings for that day. Lecture slides are posted online on a weekly basis, at the end of each week. Lectures will not be podcast. If you miss a lecture, it is your responsibility to obtain the material from classmates. This class offers no study guide for exams. Part of your job is to figure out what is important information and what is not. However, because most of you do not know me or my expectations, I will assist you in two ways: (1) Every week before the midterm, I will post the lecture slides online as well as a list of the important terms you need to know from that week. Putting together that weekly list of terms will help you prepare for the midterm. I will no longer do this after the midterm (though posting lecture slides will continue); (2) There will be study sessions led by your TA, one before the midterm and one before the final.

Course requirements

Students will be graded based on a map quiz (20%), a midterm (30%), and a final exam (50%):

Map quiz (20%): Students are expected to be able to identify the 48 sub-Saharan African countries on a map, their current leader, and ex-colonial power(s). You will have 20 minutes to locate and identify that information for a random sample of sub-Saharan African countries. The map quiz will take place during the last 20 minutes of class on Tuesday, January 27. A study sheet will be provided. A good place to practice is: http://youdontknowafrica.com/.

Midterm (30%): The midterm will be held during class time on Thursday, February 5. This will be a closed-book, closed-note exam. It will include multiple-choice and identification questions. There will be a TA-led review session on Tuesday, February 3 during class time.
Final (50%): The final exam will be held on **Thursday, March 19 from 3-6pm**. This will be a closed-book, closed-note exam. It will be cumulative. It will include multiple-choice, identification, and essay questions. Depending on how well the class performs on the map quiz, it may include another map quiz. There will be a TA-led review session Thursday, March 12 during class time.

**Course policies**

The use of laptops, cell phones, tablets, or any other type of electronic device is prohibited during class time. Research shows that you learn more and distract others (including me) less if you stick to good old pen and paper: http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answersheet/wp/2014/09/25/why-a-leading-professor-of-new-media-just-banned-technology-use-in-class/.

If you have a disability that requires special accommodations, please come see me **as soon as possible** and present your certification to me and to Ariane Parkes (aparkes@ucsd.edu).

Make-up exams will be given only under extraordinary circumstances, and not without **proper written documentation** justifying your absence (i.e., a doctor's note) and **submitted to the instructor at least one week in advance**.

Please consult http://students.ucsd.edu/academics/academic-integrity/policy.html for UCSD’s Academic Integrity Policy. Students in this course are expected to comply with this policy. Any student in violation of UCSD’s policy will automatically fail this class.

If you seek a **re-grade**, you must email the TA **within 72 hours** of the assignment being returned to the class, and explain – in that email and in detail – why you believe you deserve reconsideration. The TA then has the ability to review the entire exam, and the authority to increase your grade, decrease your grade, or keep the grade unchanged.

**Teaching Assistant**

John Porten (jporten@ucsd.edu)  
SSB326  
O.H.: Tuesdays 3.30-5.30pm

**Readings**

All reading are available on the class website: [http://pscourses.ucsd.edu/poli120n/](http://pscourses.ucsd.edu/poli120n/)
BACKGROUND

January 6:  Introduction

January 8:  The Challenge for Africa’s Leaders

   *Granta* 92.


January 13:  The European Imprint on Africa


   Nunn, Nathan. 2010. “Shackled to the Past: The Causes and
   Consequences of Africa’s Slave Trade.” Jared Diamond and
   Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

January 15:  African Independence

   Meredith, Martin. 2005. *The Fate of Africa*: Chapters 8, 9 and
   13.

   11.
THEORIES OF VIOLENCE

January 20:  Ancient Hatreds versus Rational Origins


January 22:  Economic roots of conflict


January 27:  MAP QUIZ

Political roots of conflict


January 29:  Case Study: Liberia


February 3:  Midterm Review Session

February 5:  MIDTERM
**CONFLICTS IN AFRICA**

February 10: Genocide


Lemkin, Raphael. 1946. “Genocide” *American Scholar* 15(2)

February 12: Explaining the Rwandan Genocide


February 17: Electoral Violence


February 19: Solutions to Electoral Violence


Fisman, R. 2011. “A Picture of Democracy.” *Slate*

February 24: Secession


February 26: The Secessionist Origins of the Malian Crisis (John Porten)


March 3: Climate change & agricultural adaptation (Professor Burney, IRPS)

2010. “Adapting to Climate Change; Facing the Consequences.” The Economist

March 5: Climate Change and Conflict


March 10: Migration and Conflict


March 12: Conclusion and review session


**FINAL EXAM: THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 3-6pm**