

POL 353

Political and Social Change in Southern Africa

Instructor: Alex Sikume

Credits: 4 credits

Purpose of the Course

This course presents an introduction to contemporary African politics. The course will explore political development in the independent states of Sub-Saharan Africa with particular emphasis on southern Africa. Different approaches to the study of African politics will be unpacked and analyzed. The course will also present an overview of the impacts of colonialism and apartheid on the political developments on the continent. Put differently, the course attempts to:

- Introduce and analyze the nature of post-colonial states, and the relationship between state and society in different countries.
- Present the recent history and contemporary politics of particular African countries.
- Introduce and analyze political leadership styles in selected African states.

After decades of colonization, repression, apartheid and racial discrimination, the era of white minority domination came to an end. Namibia (1990) and South Africa (1994) became politically independent. Constitutions were drawn up and implemented. The constitution of the Republic of Namibia will form the basis in examining constitutional democracy. The course will also make use of a comparative approach in order to highlight contrasts in the development of democracy and its consolidation between two countries, namely, Kenya and South Africa. The course also examines the politics of land in Namibia as well as Gender and politics.

Course Description

This course is an integrative seminar for the semester and examines the legacy of apartheid in Namibia with particular focus on the social and political movements that have evolved in the struggle for independence.

Required Readings

- Chazan, N., Lewis, P., Mortimer, R.A., Rothchild, D. and Stedman, S.J. *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa* (3rd edition). Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999.
- Le Pere, G. "International Actors and International Dimensions of Democratic Consolidation: The Cases of Kenya and South Africa." In R. Ajulu (ed), *Two Countries One Dream: The Challenges of Democratic Consolidation in Kenya and South Africa*. Rosebank. KMM Review Publishing, 2009.
- Nugent, P. *Africa since Independence: A Comparative History*. New York. Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- Randall, V. "Challenging Analytical Approaches to the Study of Politics in the Developing World." In Burnell, Randall and Rakner, *Politics in the Developing World*, 4th edition. Oxford University Press, 2014.

Overarching Goals and/or Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, you will be able to:

1. Examine the diversity of African Politics by analysing trends and approaches to the study of African politics in order to acquire an in-depth understanding of politics on the African continent.
2. Explore the political history of Africa and Namibia in particular in order to gain a better understanding of the legacies of colonialism.
3. Undertake a comparative exploration of the emergence and development of democracy, as well as its consolidation and challenges in Kenya and South Africa in order to identify the role played by various actors in the respective countries.
4. Explore the state of multi-party democracy and the political party system in Africa.
5. Delve into the constitutional history of Namibia to gain a better insight into the politics of constitutional making in the Namibian context.
6. Deepen your understanding of how socio-cultural practices influence the politics of gender and sexuality in Namibia.
7. Reflect upon your role as agents of change to impact on social, economic and justice through involvement at different educational, social and political levels.

Course Requirements (100%)

- **Class Participation (10%)** You are expected to regularly attend classes. Class attendance is the most important means to achieve the learning goals for this course. This aspect of the assessment will comprise of compulsory class attendance, active class participation by providing feedback on assigned readings. You will also be required to engage with other students as well as with class guests, therefore you will be encouraged to ask questions as often as possible. Moreover, it will be your responsibility as a student to notify the course instructor in advance if you are unable to attend a class session.
- **African Political Perspectives (20%):** This assessment will require you to compare political institutions and political processes in one sub-Saharan African state of your choice. You will need to provide an account of the country's transition to open, multiparty elections before and after the country's transition to political independence.
- **Democratization in Africa (15%)** This assessment requires you to contrast the emergence, development and the consolidation of democracy between the Republic of South Africa and Kenya. In your analysis, identify the main actor/actors that contributed to the emergence of democracy in both countries. Provide a description of the challenges that both countries face in strengthening democracy. Suggest possible solutions of how both countries can overcome their respective challenges.
- **Urban homestay synthesis (10%)** After the completion of the urban homestay, you will write one analytical essays (approx. 2-3 pages) reflecting on your experiences and exchanges with homestay families and other contacts on historical and political related issues. This is a joint History and Political Science paper and will be graded by either the History or Politics Instructor. If you are taking both courses, the grade you get from one instructor will apply for both courses.
- **Interdisciplinary Blog Assignment (5%):** All students will be responsible for preparing two blog entries complete with photos during the semester. During the first week of the semester there will be a sign-up sheet posted, along with information about probable course content for the rest of the semester so that you could choose themes that most interest you and times of the semester that

work best for you. The blogs will usually be written in groups of three (except a few groups of four). A week begins on Monday and ends on Sunday. **Length of Blog Entries:** Approximately one page one per group.

- **Rural homestay synthesis Rural Homestay Synthesis (10%)** After the completion of the rural homestay, you will write 1 analytical essays (approx. 2-3 pages) reflecting on your experiences and exchanges with homestay families and other contacts on historical and political related issues. This is a joint History and Political Science paper and will be graded by either the History or Politics Instructor. If you are taking both courses, the grade you get from one instructor will apply for both courses.
- **Integrative Project Final Integrative Projects (30%):** Final projects will address the Development Process, Religion, Political Science and History courses: This project can be done individually or in groups of up to three students. Projects should be creative (a play, a calendar, musical piece, etc), and should: 1) be rooted in critical analysis of issues important to Namibia and/or South Africa, 2) draw upon your own experiences, and 3) be a synthesis of your learning that can be used to educate others on key issues facing Namibia and/or South Africa. Although this is an integrative project, each instructor will grade the final projects separately.

Course Design

Weekly

| Unit | Topic |
|------|--|
| 1 | The Diversity of African Politics |
| 2 | The Colonial Legacy |
| 3 | Democratic Consolidation in Post-independent Africa |
| 4 | Multi-party democracy and the political party system in Africa |
| 5 | The Namibian Constitution |
| 6 | The Politics of Gender |
| 7 | The Politics of the Land Question |
| 8 | Wrap up session and Integrative Projects |

Teaching Methodology

The instructor will make use of student-centered methodologies and approaches and experiential participatory approaches. Teaching strategies include lectures by the course instructor; small and large group discussions of required readings; videos, PowerPoint presentations, classroom exercises; interviews; guest lectures by members of parliament, liberation struggle veterans, and local politicians.

Grading Policy

The grading policy will follow regular Augsburg policies, which do not allow for the Pass/No Credit option within the study abroad context. If you attend a school that does not have grades, please let us know.

Additional Comments

Explanation of Grades

Augsburg's grading system uses the following definitions:

| Grade | Grade Points | Description |
|-------|--------------|--------------|
| A | 4.00 | Excellent |
| A- | 3.67 | |
| B+ | 3.33 | |
| B | 3.00 | Good |
| B- | 2.67 | |
| C+ | 2.33 | |
| C | 2.00 | Satisfactory |
| C- | 1.67 | |
| D+ | 1.33 | |
| D | 1.00 | Poor |
| D- | 0.67 | |
| F | 0.00 | Failure |

A "Pass" grade is 2.0 or above.

Grading Policy and Late Assignments

You must submit assignments on time. If you need an extension, you must talk to us **in advance** to negotiate a new deadline. If you have not been given an extension in advance and you turn in a late assignment, you will be docked half a grade (from a 4.0 to a 3.5 or 3.5 to a 3.0, 3.0 to a 2.5, 2.5 to a 2.0, etc.) If you are more than one week late, you will be docked a full grade. No assignments will be accepted more than two weeks after the original deadline; a "0" will be given after that. Assignments due near the end of the semester will not be accepted after the last day of the semester.

Augsburg Honesty Policy

You are expected to follow the Augsburg Honesty Policy which is printed in the program manual. We assume that you have read the honesty policy, understand it, and are following it. Except when the assignment expressly encourages group work, it is assumed that all course work will be your own. You may not copy other students' work. The first occurrence of plagiarism will result in the failure of the assignment. A student who commits plagiarism a second time will fail the course.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities

Students with formally diagnosed learning or physical differences have legal rights to course modifications. Those who qualify should identify themselves to the instructor as soon as possible in order to obtain extra assistance.