



**GVPT 484 Government and Politics of Africa
Fall, 2023 semester.**

Instructor:

Dr. Conny Kazungu Sigel
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Class Meeting Location: Le Frak 2166
Class Meeting Times: Tu-Th 11:00a-12.15p
Office Hours: Zoom by appointment. Link is available here and on ELMS page.

Graduate Teaching Assistant:

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Office Hours : (from November 28th) on Zoom by appointment

Course Description:

This course explores major themes and issues around understanding the politics in Africa. African leaders had a vision for the continent, as we (in the United States) would perhaps view the founding fathers' vision of the United States. They had a dream and a vision for a post-colonial Africa. Did that vision come to fruition? If so, what does that look like in post-colonial Africa for their respective countries? For example, if we consider Kwame Nkrumah or Jomo Kenyatta's vision and philosophy, how did it impact a post-independent Ghana or Kenya? If the vision did not come to fruition, what happened?

By navigating the history of the continent, colonial and contemporary issues, my hope is that students will have a complete view of the continent, thereby understanding many of the challenges which persist to this day, possible solutions, and prospects.

During the semester, we will cover several themes, which involve different countries in the continent including those in North Africa, West Africa, Eastern Africa, and Southern Africa. We will work closely with political experts who live and work in the continent, articles and readings are inclusive of African voices, and teamwork will require partnership with experts in the continent. Therefore, students should expect to be well-versed with several African Affairs upon completion of this course.

This course should be attractive to students who wish to pursue a career with government agencies such as the State Department, Department of Defense, environmental groups, and think tanks. It should also be attractive to students who wish to pursue an advanced degree in the future.

The course will be divided into four main parts:

1. An historical perspective to help us understand African Civilizations, including the geography, politics, and economics of the continent before colonial rule.
2. Colonial Governments, and Politics, and how colonial policies shaped the landscape and economies in Africa.
3. Independence movements including pre- and post-colonial contexts, to better help us understand the trajectory of the continent.
4. Political Leadership in Modern Day Africa, including challenges faced. Current issues in Africa; specifically, security issues around Climate Change adaptation, and Rising Terrorism in the continent.

Textbooks

We will also use a variety of sources for our class readings, including research articles and policy reports from organizations, film studies and short films.

Grades:

In this class you will be assessed based on the following:

1. Participation (in-class lectures and discussions)	10%
2. Film Reflection Papers	10%
3. Teamwork	30%
4. Mid-term exam	30%
5. Final Report	20%

Total 100%

Grading Scale

Final grades will be assigned on the following scale:

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	59% or lower

1. Mid-term Exam

You will have a final exam which covers topics from the second half of the semester. The exam will be in-person on **Thursday, October 12th at 11a-12.15p.**

2. Teamwork

This is an interactive, project-based course with *significant* group work. You must be prepared to work in a team during the semester. You will have a total of *three* presentations during the semester. Each presentation will be based on teams, and you will be divided into your groups at the beginning of the semester.

Team Leaders.

Once you are divided into your teams for the semester, I will allow you time to meet, exchange contact information, and assign a team leader. The team leaders will contact me with any questions or concerns as you work on your projects. They will also be very useful in getting everyone together to work on the project. In addition, the team leader will gather feedback for each project/presentation (including how each team member contributed to be project). You may choose to have a different team lead for each project or maintain the same team leader for each project.

I. Team Project I: Focus on Africa - News Presentations

The purpose of this assignment is to be current, well-informed, and critically analyze ongoing political events across the continent.

At the beginning of the semester, students will be divided into teams of three. Each team will select a day over the semester to lead a *15-minute class discussion* about an ongoing political issue. The *news* articles must be from a *reputable* news source.

A separate assignment sheet with detailed guidelines, a list of recommended sources, and more details about the presentations is provided on ELMS.

II. Team Project II: Understanding African Political Thought

Over the semester, we will explore the African pre- and post-colonial contexts, to better help us understand the trajectory of the continent. The goal of this assignment is to first, understand, and second analyze and dissect the vision of key African leaders' during independence movements.

In other words, these African leaders had a vision for the continent, as we (in the United States) would perhaps view the founding fathers' vision of the United States. They had a dream and a vision for a post-colonial Africa. Did that vision come to fruition? If so, what does that look like in post-colonial Africa for their respective countries? For example, if we consider Jomo Kenyatta's vision and philosophy, how did it impact a post-independent Kenya? If the vision did not come to fruition, what happened?

As such, you will be required to read and watch a series of [short speeches](#) by the following leaders:

- President Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana
- President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, South Africa
- President Jomo Kenyatta, Kenya
- President Nnamdi Azikiwe, Nigeria
- President Patrice Lumumba, DRC
- President Léopold Sédar Senghor, Senegal
- President Julius Nyerere, Tanzania

Presentations will be on **Tuesday, October 17th, and Thursday, October 19th.** A detailed and separate assignment sheet is provided on ELMS.

III. Team Project III: Analyzing the Strategic Significance of Africa

The African political landscape is rapidly shifting with the rising influence of other emerging powers on the continent such as China, Russia, and the Ukraine. The purpose of this assignment is to comprehend, analyze, and dissect the strategic importance of Africa today, and initiatives to influence policy by specifically, the United States.

The United States Department of State (DoS) [Bureau of African Affairs](#) is clear on its policy on the African continent and focuses on three objectives: 1) Advancing trade and commercial ties with key African states to increase U.S. and African prosperity; 2) Protecting the United States from cross-border health and security threats; and 3) Supporting key African states' progress toward stability, citizen-responsive governance, and self-reliance (U.S. Department of State, 2023).

For this assignment, we will focus on the last two objectives i.e. i) **Protecting the United States from cross-border health and security threats, AND ii) supporting key African states' progress toward stability, citizen-responsive governance, and self-reliance.**

You will work closely alongside a Political Analyst who is based in Nairobi, Kenya. Our policy expert served the U.S. Embassy Nairobi, Kenya for 35 years, and is well-versed on U.S. -Africa relations. Together, you will explore, and understand the diplomatic relationship between the United States and the country you are assigned, including a detailed breakdown of the security threats presented, any current counterterrorism policies, and if these policies are indeed effective. As a team, you will be assigned one country to focus on from the following:

- Kenya
- Mozambique
- Mali
- Somalia
- Sudan

You will present your findings in a 20-minute presentation to Dr. Kazungu, our Africa expert, and an additional faculty member on **Tuesday, November 14th and Thursday, November 16th.**

After your presentations, you will receive feedback, which you will incorporate you will finalize your work in a 10-page report due at the end of the semester (**December 18th before 3.30p**) on ELMS.

*****Note that missed attendance without documentation during in-class presentations will result in a non-negotiable 10% impact on your final grade.***

3. FILM Study Reflection Papers.

Understanding historical and contemporary political issues in Africa using films and documentaries is an interactive and informative way students can process the complexity of African Government and Politics. As such, students will be required to watch three short films during the semester.

Film I: Queen Nzinga of Ndongo and Matamba.

This short film highlights the significant role of women in African politics prior to colonialism. It covers the Formidable Warrior Queen of Angola, Queen Nzinga of Ndongo and Matamba is depicted as a leading political figure in pre-colonial Africa.

Film II: Sarafina. Produced by Anant Singh.

Based in 1976 South Africa, Sarafina is a musical film based on Mbongeni Ngema's 1987 musical play that depicts South Africa at the peak of Apartheid rule, including the complex views surrounding the resistance movement.

Sarafina is an international co-production of the South Africa, United States, France, and the United Kingdom, the film premiered on 11 May 1992, at the Cannes Music Festival.

Film III: Winnie Produced by Pascale Lamche.

This 2018 film explores the overshadowed life of the late Winnie Mandela-famously known as the late Nelson Mandela's wife. The film Winnie explores her contributions to bring down apartheid from the inside. It brings to light an important question of the role of women in the movement towards independence, and in politics in Africa.

4. Course Policies:

a) Participation

I expect students to be engaged during each class session, meaning being attentive to lectures with ideas, comments, and questions so that you may actively participate in the discussions.

It also means respectfully responding to the ideas and perspectives of your classmates, even if you may disagree with them.

This course includes collaborative practices, such as teamwork on certain projects involving group engagement and preparation. *****Note that missed attendance without documentation during in-class presentations will result in a non-negotiable 10% impact on your final grade.***

b) Make-up Policy

This applies to presentations, reflection papers and exams. If a student has a [university-approved](#) excuse, you must notify me in **writing** prior. The allowance of such arrangements remains at the discretion of your instructor.

c) Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, cheating, and/or not citing another person's ideas or work will be subject to the university's policy on [academic integrity](#) to include but not limited to the following:

- **Cheating:** fraud, deceit, or dishonesty in any academic course or exercise in an attempt to gain an unfair advantage and/or using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic course or exercise.
- **Fabrication:** unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in any academic course or exercise.
- **Facilitating Academic Dishonesty:** knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of this Code.
- **Plagiarism:** representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic course or exercise. In all of your assignments, presentations, drafts of papers, you may use words or ideas written by someone else in publications, news sources, reports etc. but properly cite them. Always refer to [UMDs citation help tools](#) when in doubt.
- **Self-Plagiarism:** the reuse of substantial identical or nearly identical portions of one's own work in multiple courses without prior permission from the current instructor or from each of the instructors if the work is being submitted for multiple courses in the same semester.

d) Technology in the Classroom

Cell phones are prohibited in class. Students will be required to turn off their phones or put their phone on silent. Students who are caught texting, looking at their phones during class will be penalized against their attendance grade.

Note taking devices including laptops are allowed in class for in-class purposes. Students using laptops/iPads for browsing the web and non-class related purposes will be penalized against their attendance grade.

e) UMD Resources

For COVID related illnesses, please follow the guidelines stipulated by the university [here](#). For a comprehensive list of UMD resources including COVID-19 click [here](#).

f) UMD Access to Newspaper databases:

a) Access to older newspapers through the Historical Newspapers database: [Advanced Search - ProQuest](#)

b) Access to current, and national newspapers:

- [Basic Search - ProQuest](#)
- [Nexis Uni® Home \(umd.edu\)](#)

*Please note that Nexis Uni does not provide access to the Washington Post, Baltimore Sun, and the WSJ.

c) Access to databases by subject or type:

- <https://lib.guides.umd.edu/az.php>
- [Database Finder \(umd.edu\)](#)

g) Assignment Guidelines:

All written assignments should follow the following format:

- Calibri Body 10-pt font with 1-inch margins, double-spaced.
- 1" margins (NOTE: Microsoft defaults to 1.25" margins, so you will need to adjust them).
- Utilizes a minimum of 5 varied, scholarly sources, government reports, etc. If you are doubtful about whether a source is scholarly (i.e., "peer reviewed) review Cornell University Library's YouTube video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uDGJ2CYfY9A>
- Use of maps and/or images is encouraged, especially when used to help readers understand your subject matter. Remember to cite them (usually right next to the map/image, rather than in the bibliography).
- APA Citation and references (cite images, too).
- A bibliography
- **UMD Citation assistance available here** [Citation Tools | University Libraries \(umd.edu\)](#)

h) Alteration of the Syllabus

The instructor reserves the right to revise or amend this syllabus. Should any alterations be made, students will be notified via e-mail and in-class.

**All readings, and films are available on your ELMS.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic and Assignments Due.</u>
Tuesday, August 29 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Introduction. • Syllabus overview.
Thursday, August 31 st	<p><u>The African Origins of Civilization I</u> <u>Asynchronous Class.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch short video: The Formidable Warrior Queen of Angola Queen Nzinga of Ndongo and Matamba. Video is available here and on ELMS: https://youtu.be/KFQDpJAtnUI. • Complete reflection paper due on ELMS before midnight. <p><u>Read:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nyoni, Philani A. 2015. "What Africa Had Before Colonization." This Is Africa, Mar 26. https://thisafrica.me/african-identities/africa-colonisation/.
Tuesday, September 5 th	<p><u>The African Origins of Civilization II</u></p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marshall, A. (2020). This art was looted 123 years ago. will it ever be returned? • Bahr, S. (2021). Met museum announces return of two benin bronzes to nigeria. <p>In Class: *Map quiz *Teams released for the semester-long team project.</p>
Thursday, September 7 th	<p><u>What Does IR Theory Teach Us About Africa? African International Relations I</u></p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nkiwane, T. C. (2001). Africa and international relations: regional lessons for a global discourse. International Political Science Review / Revue Internationale De Science Politique, 22(3), 279–290. • Rodney, W., Babu, A. M., & Harding, V. (1981). How europe underdeveloped africa (Rev. pbk.). Howard University Press. Chapter Two. How Africa Developed Before the Coming of the Europeans up to the 15th Century.
Tuesday, September 12 th	<p><u>How Should We Engage with Africa?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wainaina, B. (2005). How to write about Africa." Granta, 92. https://granta.com/how-to-write-about-africa/. • Levy, Ariel. (2020). "A Missionary On Trial." New Yorker. April 6. A Missionary on Trial The New Yorker
Thursday, September 14 th	<p><u>Colonialism and Africa I</u></p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rodney, W., Babu, A. M., & Harding, V. (1981). How europe underdeveloped africa (Rev. pbk.). Howard University Press. Chapter Three. Africa's Contribution to European Capitalist Development • Rodney, W., Babu, A. M., & Harding, V. (1981). How Europe underdeveloped Africa (Rev. pbk.). Howard University Press. Chapter Five. Africa's Contribution to the Capitalist Development of Europe -- the Colonial Period
Tuesday, September 19 th	<p><u>Colonialism and Africa II</u></p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rodney, W., Babu, A. M., & Harding, V. (1981). How Europe underdeveloped Africa (Rev. pbk.). Howard University Press. Chapter 6. Colonialism as a System for Underdeveloping Africa. • Maiangwa, Benjamin. (2020). "How the colonial enterprise hard-wired violence into Nigeria's governance." Quartz Africa, Oct 21. The British colonial enterprise wired violence into Nigeria (qz.com) • Julia Cagé and Valeria Rueda. (2017). "The devil is in the detail: Christian missions' heterogeneous effects on development in sub-Saharan Africa." The devil is in the detail: Christian missions' heterogeneous effects on development in sub-Saharan Africa CEPR

Thursday, September 21 st	<u>Political Systems in Africa</u> Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rubin, L., & Weinstein, B. (1977). Introduction to African politics: a continental approach (2d ed.). Political Systems in Africa. Chapter 2.
Tuesday, September 26 th	<u>Pre-Colonial Political Systems in Africa.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rubin, L., & Weinstein, B. (1977). Introduction to African politics: a continental approach (2d ed.). Southern Africa. Chapter 6.
Thursday, September 28 th	<u>Independence Movements, Pan-Africanism, and Cooperation Among the Independent African States.</u> Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nyerere, J. K. (1963). A United States of Africa. <i>The Journal of Modern African Studies</i>, 1(1), 1–6. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022278X00000677 <u>How Kwame Nkrumah's midnight speech set a tradition for marking the moment of liberation (theconversation.com)</u>
Tuesday, October 3 rd	<u>Asynchronous Class</u> Watch Film: Sarafina <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Reflection Paper before midnight.
Thursday, October 5 th	<u>Asynchronous Class.</u> Women Political Leaders in Africa. Watch Film: Winnie <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Reflection Paper before midnight.
Tuesday, October 10 th	<u>Material Development and Nation Building in Independent Africa.</u> Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rubin, L., & Weinstein, B. (1977). Introduction to African politics: a continental approach (2d ed.). Chapter 8. Attempted Solutions. Rubin, L., & Weinstein, B. (1977). Introduction to African politics: a continental approach (2d ed.). Chapter 10. Cooperation Amongst the Independent African States. <p>*In Class Discussion <i>Sarafina</i> and, <i>Winnie</i></p>
Thursday, October 12 th	Mid-Term exam in -person.
Tuesday, October 17 th	Presentations I: Understanding African Political Thought
Thursday, October 19 th	Presentations II: Understanding African Political Thought
Tuesday, October 24 th	<u>Security in Africa: Focus on Terrorism, and U.S. Counterterrorism Policies in Africa</u> Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerson, S. A. (2008). The battle for Africa's hearts and minds. <i>World Policy Journal</i>, 25(4), 53-62. Emerson, S. (2014). Back to the Future: The Evolution of US Counterterrorism Policy in Africa. <i>Insight on Africa</i>, 6(1), 43–56. David Schneider: US Department of State: Kigali, Rwanda.
Thursday, October 26 th	<u>Africa in the World Context.</u> Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rubin, L., & Weinstein, B. (1977). Introduction to African politics: a continental approach (2d ed.). Chapter 11. Africa in the World Context.
Tuesday, October 31 st	<u>The New Scramble for Africa I:</u> Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economist. (2019). The new scramble for Africa. <i>The Economist</i>.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Banks, J., Ingram, G., Kimenyi, M., Rucker, S., Schneidman, W., Sun, Y., Warner, L.A., (2013) Top Five Reasons Why Africa Should Be a Priority for the United States (brookings.edu) April 3.
Thursday, November 2 nd	<p><u>US-Africa Relations:</u> Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minter, W. (2000). America and Africa: Beyond the double standard. <i>Current History</i>, 99(637), 200. The White House. (2021). <u>U.S.-Strategy-Toward-Sub-Saharan-Africa-FINAL.pdf (whitehouse.gov)</u>
Tuesday, November 7 th	<p><u>Changes in the World Order: The Rising Influence of China in Africa</u> Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Etzioni Amitai (2020). Is China the World's new colonial power? November 9. <u>Is China a New Colonial Power? – The Diplomat</u> Temin, Jon. (2021). "Africa Is Changing – and U.S. Strategy Is Not Keeping Up." <i>Foreign Affairs</i>, Oct 8. <u>Africa Is Changing—and U.S. Strategy Is Not Keeping Up Foreign Affairs</u>
Thursday, November 9 th	<p><u>Climate Change-The Crisis of Our time: Climate Change Adaptation Policies in Africa</u> Teams Read and Present in Class the following key issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giuliana Viglione. 2023. <u>In-depth: How climate change affects health in Africa - Carbon Brief</u>. June 22. Takudzwanashe Mundenga <u>Climate resilience gaps, opportunities in Africa (msn.com)</u>. June 22. Astrid R.N. Haas. 2023. <u>African cities and climate change: the real debate is who should pay to fix the problem (yahoo.com)</u>. June 20. Ralph Schoellhammer. 2023. <u>Climate Activism—Not Climate Change—Is the Real Racist Force. Africans Deserve Electricity Opinion (newsweek.com)</u>. June 13.
Tuesday, November 14 th	Presentations: Analyzing the Strategic Significance of Africa I.
Thursday, November 16 th	Presentations: Analyzing the Strategic Significance of Africa II.
Tuesday, November 21 st	<u>Asynchronous Class</u> : Analyzing the Strategic Significance of Africa Teams meet to get feedback on presentations from Mr. Katana.
Thursday, November 23 rd	Thanksgiving Break. No Class
Tuesday, November 28 th	<p><u>Democracy and Political Change in Africa</u> Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opalo, K. O. (2012). African elections: two divergent trends. <i>Journal of Democracy</i>, 23(3), 80–93. Hassan, M., & Kodouda, A. (2019). Sudan's uprising: the fall of a dictator. <i>Journal of Democracy</i>, 30(4), 89–103.
Thursday, November 30 th	<p><u>Democracy and Political Change in Africa</u> Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maggie Dwyer and Thomas Molony. 2019. "<u>Analysis across Africa Shows How Social Media is Changing Politics</u>." <i>The Conversation</i>. August 14.
Tuesday, December 5 th	<p><u>Identity Politics—Ethnicity</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deng, Francis. (1997). "Ethnicity: An African Predicament." Brookings Institution. <u>Ethnicity: An African Predicament Brookings</u>

Thursday, December 7 th	<p><u>The Future of Africa</u></p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Robinson, E. (2022, Dec 16). In a 'new scramble for Africa,' Africans must come first. https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/new-scramble-africa-africans-must-come-first/docview/2754659634/se-2
Monday, December 18 th	Final Reports on the Strategic Importance of Africa are due on ELMS before 3.30p