

University of Rochester – IR 211  
Spring 2012  
Tuesday/Thursday – 3:25-4:40  
Dewey 2162

## **Political Economy of Africa**

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**Course description:** Political and economic developments in Africa since the end of the Cold War have both vindicated and belied Robert Kaplan's famous prediction of a "coming anarchy" in the region. Drawing on the rich social science literature on the political economy of contemporary Africa, the course will address a set of critical questions that will have important implications for the well-being of the people of the continent and the world in the twenty-first century. The central questions we will address are: What were the sources of the political and economic crisis that gripped Africa in the 1980s and 1990s? What has been the net impact of the massive international intervention in the continent that ensued in the wake of the crises? What explains the recent revival of democracy and growth in some parts of the continent? Will the revival of democracy and economic growth last?

**Textbook:**

Alex Thomson, *An Introduction to African Politics*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Routledge, 2010.

**Please note:** Copies of this textbook (henceforth *Thomson*) are available for purchase from the university bookstore. All other reading materials will be available electronically through Blackboard. I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus, but you will be notified of any changes well in advance.

The requirements for this course include two mid-semester examinations, one end-semester examination, and active and informed class participation based on thoughtful examination of the required readings prior to coming to class. You also have the option of writing an original essay of 8-10 pages applying the concepts learned in the course. If you do choose to write the essay, you must submit a draft proposal of 2-3 pages before the second mid-semester exam. The essay will be due the last day of class. **LATE ESSAYS WILL BE GIVEN A LOWER GRADE: one/third letter grade per day late.** Example: An "A" paper two days late will drop to a "B+". **Incompletes** are not allowed.

Please note, given the emphasis on class participation, regular attendance is expected. More than 2 unexcused absences might affect your class participation grade by half a letter grade. More than 5 accumulated absences will result in 0% for the class participation portion of your overall grade. **Excused absences** require documentation

**Ideology**

**January 31:**

Catherine Boone, “States and Ruling Classes in Post-Colonial Africa,” in *State Power and Social Forces*

## Sovereignty II

### March 28:

Read:

*Thomson*, Ch. 9

Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival*, Cambridge University Press, 1996, Ch.7.

### March 30:

Watch:

*Bamako*

Read:

Giulia Piccolino, "David against Goliath in Cote D'Ivoire? Lauren Gbagbo's War against Global Governance," *African Affairs*, 111 (442), 2011, 1-23.

## Authority I

### April 3:

Read:

*Thomson*, Ch. 10.

Alison Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda*, 1999, Introduction, <http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1999/rwanda/rwanda0399.htm>.

### April 5:

Read:

Alex de Waal, "Tragedy of Darfur: On Understanding and Ending the Horror," *Boston Review*, 2004, October/November. <http://www.bostonreview.net/BR29.5/dewaal.php>

Scott Straus, "Rwanda and Darfur: A Comparative Analysis," *Genocide Studies and Prevention*, 2006, 1(1), 41-56.

**April 19:**