Course Objectives

This is a course on the International Relations of Africa. Africa has often been ignored by the international relations (IR) subfield of political science, while political science mostly analyzes Africa from a comparative politics lens. Yet Africa, the second largest continent, has more states than any other continent on the globe, and there is much we can learn about IR from studying Africa. This course will give a tour of African IR, grounded in pre-colonial, and especially colonial and post-colonial history. Colonialism is rarely studied or understood as an IR phenomenon, yet it has been critical to Africa’s political trajectory, and has defined Africa’s relationship to the Western powers and the rest of the world in ways that still echo today. In this class, we shall trace colonialism’s evolution from the Berlin Conference through the Cold War, until its demise in 1994, when South Africa transitioned to democracy. We will also examine the modes of overt and covert violence that characterized colonialism, and the various anti-colonial resistance movements that emerged across Africa. We will further explore concepts and processes such as international political economy, post-colonial warfare, gender, Islamist militancy, the War on Terror, China’s growing role on the continent, and human security. Please note that because North Africa and the Maghreb are adequately covered in other courses at McGill, this course will focus only on sub-Saharan Africa.
Assignments and Grading:

(1) Midterm Exam (in class, 25 February): 25%
- Format TBA
- Will test your knowledge and understanding of BOTH lectures and readings

(2) Research Essay (due in class, 27 March): 35%
- Suggested topics and writing guidelines will be posted on MyCourses before reading week
- You can also choose your own topic if you wish; in that case, you must get it approved by your TA
- 10-12 pages, plus bibliography and citations (double-spaced; 12-point font)

(3) Final Exam (to be scheduled by the University during the exam period): 30%
- Format TBA

(4) TA Conference Attendance and Participation: 10%
- Show up and participate; unjustified absence in 3 or more conferences will cause you to lose the entire 10%.

Requirements

- **Come to class prepared:** Do all the assigned readings before class. This is important so you can follow the lectures, which will build on (rather than just review) the readings, and for participation in your conferences.
- **Attend class and take notes:** The lectures will not be recorded, and they will go far beyond the material in the textbook, so you will need to absorb and retain the lecture contents in order to succeed.
- **Check the course website regularly:** I will post assignments, announcements, and other key features of the course on our website. I will remind you about this in class, but it is your responsibility to keep up with any and all online aspects of the course.
- **Keep up with the news:** One of the most useful things about political science is that it helps us to understand current events. You’ll get more out of this class if you read the news about Africa regularly. Good news sources include allafrica.com, Mail and Guardian online (South Africa), Africa Confidential, New York Times, BBC World, Al-Jazeera, and the Economist, among others.

Email: Your TA is your first point of contact for the course and you should direct questions to them first. However, I am also available. I will endeavour to respond to emails within 48 hours during weekdays (I’m often offline on weekends). If you have a lengthy question, please come to my office hours instead of emailing. Note that I will not be available via email to summarize readings or tell you what you missed if you were absent. Please also bear in mind that even if you feel your situation is urgent, I may not reply right away.

Required Text: The coursepack, for purchase at the bookstore. Most readings will be made available online via MyCourses. Recommended readings are not mandatory; they are intended to give you further perspective, and to serve as possible sources for your research essay.

PLEASE NOTE: Late work submitted without a doctor’s note will be accepted with a penalty of 10%
per day late. Excuses without a doctor’s note will not be accepted. **Make-up assignments will be offered only if a student misses an exam for a valid medical reason backed up by a doctor’s note.**

**Students with disabilities** should register with the Office for Students with Disabilities and follow its procedures for obtaining assistance. If you need any assistance or modifications relating to disabilities, please come see me as early as possible in the semester and I will work with you and the Office for Students with Disabilities to accommodate your needs appropriately and fairly. The OSD can be reached at 514-398-6009 (http://www.mcgill.ca/osd/). However, please remember that the OSD has no authority to approve changes to course assignment due dates or exam dates, to devise alternative assignments or waive course requirements. If you should have any reason to miss a substantial part of the course, or if you are unable to complete any course assignments or requirements for any reason, it is your responsibility to inform the Course Professor (and not just OSD or your TA) of your situation as soon as possible.

**Fair Warnings:** Lateness is disruptive. Please do not arrive to class late. You may take notes on a laptop computer, but be sure to **switch off your ringer** and put away all cell phones and other electronics before the start of class. **Texting and using social media in the classroom is incredibly disruptive** for student and teacher alike; I ask you all to refrain from electronically distracting yourselves, and in return, I pledge to make our class as riveting as I possibly can.

**Language of Submission:**
In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.

**Academic Integrity:**
McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures” (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

**SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND READINGS**

**Week 1) 7 & 9 January: Situating Africa in the International State System**


**Recommended:**

Week 2) 14 & 16 January: The Impacts of European Colonization

Week 3) 21 & 23 January: African Independence and the Congo Crisis
Film: Patrice Lumumba: Assassination Colonial Style
Recommended:
Williams, Susan. 2011. Who Killed Hammarskjold? The UN, the Cold War, and White Supremacy in Africa (London: Hurst Publishers)

Week 4) 28 & 30 January: Colonial Dirty Wars


Film: Death in Geneva: The Poisoning of Felix Moumè

**Recommended:**


Week 5) 4 & 6 February: Armed Struggles Against Colonialism


**Recommended:**


Week 6) 11 & 13 February: Proxy Wars and the Internal Security Dilemma


**Recommended:**

Week 7) 18 & 20 February: Apartheid and the Cold War in Southern Africa


**Recommended:**

**Week 8) 25 & 27 February: Midterm Exam and African IPE**

**25 February: Midterm Exam – IN CLASS – Exam covers all material including Week 7**

**27 February: Africa on the Periphery of the International Political Economy**


**Recommended:**


Rodney, Ch.5, “Africa’s Contribution to the Capitalist Development of Europe- The Colonial Period”, pp.162-222


**Week 9: NO CLASS – Mid-semester Break - Enjoy!**

**Week 10) 11 & 13 March: Genocide and Spillover- Rwanda and D.R. Congo**


**Recommended:**


- Video Clip on Rape as an Instrument of War in DR Congo


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**Week 11) Dimensions of (In)Security:**

**18 March: State Weakness and Violence**


**20 March: Sexual Violence**


**Recommended:**


**Csete, Joanne, and Juliane Kippenberg. 2002.** “The War Within the War: Sexual Violence against Women and Girls in Eastern Congo” (Human Rights Watch Report)

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**Week 12) 25 and 27 March: The Challenge of Islamist Radicalism**


2008. “Not on Parade” *Africa Confidential* Vol.49 No.5 (29 February)


**Recommended:**

Week 13) 1 & 3 April: African Multilateralism and Peacekeeping

Recommended:

Week 14) 8 & 10 April: Role of China and Human Security

8 April: China’s Rising Influence

Recommended:


10 April: Human Security


Recommended:

***Final Exam to be scheduled by the University***

Scholarly journals and news sources with good coverage of sub-Saharan Africa include:

- Journal of Southern African Studies
- Journal of Modern African Studies
- Journal of East African Studies
- African Affairs
- African Security Review
- Review of African Political Economy
- Politikon
- Canadian Journal of African Studies
- Journal of African Economies
- Third World Quarterly
- Comparative Politics
- World Politics
- Afrobarometer.org
- Africa Today
- African Journal of Political Science and International Relations
SYLLABUS ADDENDUM: STUDENT RESOURCES

Equity Advisors in the Department of Political Science

In the context of ongoing efforts to promote strong and sustainable departmental responses to the issues of harassment and sexual misconduct, the Department of Political Science has appointed two professors to the position of equity advisor. The aim of this position is to work in cooperation with the chair and other members of the department to promote strengthened norms and practices in the department regarding preventing and addressing harassment and sexual misconduct.

The equity advisors are available, individually or in tandem, to meet with colleagues and students to discuss questions relating to harassment, sexual misconduct, and related equity concerns, and will refer students and colleagues to the relevant specialized services and offices at McGill. They will promote awareness and application of policies and guidelines related to these issues in the department, including the Department of Political Science Guidelines on Relationships between Instructors and Students. The role will evolve according to Departmental needs.

Our current equity officers are Professor Kelly Gordon (kelly.gordon2@mcgill.ca) and Professor Hudson Meadwell (hudson.meadwell@mcgill.ca). Please feel free to reach out to either Professor Gordon or Professor Meadwell with any concerns in relation to this issue.

Political Science Students’ Association (PSSA)

The PSSA represents the students enrolled in major, minor, honours, and joint-honours undergraduate degrees in the department of political science at McGill University. They advocate for students’ needs and concerns with the aim of helping to promote students’ experience and overall wellbeing. The team offers many involvement opportunities, coordinates academic and social events and services, provides advising and student support, and enhances the relationship between students, staff, and administration as student liaisons.

Office: Leacock 420
Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/McGill.PSSA/
Website: https://www.mcgillpssa.ca

Assessment and Re-Read Policy Department of Political Science

Liaison Librarian for Political Science

Need help doing research for a paper? Our very own library liaison, Sandy Hervieux, is dedicated to helping you find the sources you need as well as providing you access to software and resources to help organize and simplify the process.

sandy.hervieux@mcgill.ca
514-398-1087
McLennan Library Building

Additional Support: AUS Essay Centre
Further Student Support Resources

Student Services

Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)

Sexual Assault Centre of the McGill Students’ Society (SACOMSS)

Office for Sexual Violence Response, Support, and Education (OSVRSE)

Peer Support Centre

SSMU Walksafe / Drivesafe

McGill Students’ Nightline

On-Campus Resources / Off-Campus Resources

- emotional support and psychological services
- medical services
- safety and security services (shelters)