Course Requirements

The Africans analysis (individual)

On the basis of the videotapes for Ali Mazrui's series and the additional reading assigned in Parts I & III of the syllabus for this course, submit a 5 page (typed, ds) critical report that:

(1) identifies two (2) principal insights you gained in each of the following areas: African history, African society, African politics, African health, the importance of religion for politics in Africa, African economy.

(2) analyzes three (3) important positions taken by Mazrui that you agree with (at least 2 should be drawn from videos 5 &/or 6)

(3) analyzes three (3) important positions taken by Mazrui that you disagree with (at least 2 should be drawn from videos 5 &/or 6)

(4) presents a conclusion that includes a persuasive assessment regarding the strengths and limitations of The Africans as an educational resource about Africa at the beginning of the new century

Country report (team)

Based on the assigned reading and your own research, present a 30-minute oral report to the class that (1) describes the current political system and key actors and (2) analyzes the principal contemporary political challenges and policy issues facing the selected country. Include visual aids/handouts whenever possible. Plan for a 15-20 minute Q&A session following your report. The report is due on the date scheduled on the syllabus for your country.

Aid project (individual)

Working with the same country selected for your class presentation, propose and defend a comprehensive approach to donor partnership that is designed to generate substantial improvements in material living conditions and quality of life for most rural and/or urban inhabitants by the end of the first decade of the 21st Century. Your proposal should address at least three of the following: (1) sustainable production, (2) earnings and employment, (3) health and sanitation, (4) education, (5) housing, (6) basic infrastructure, (7) environmental protection. Submit (no later than 28 April) a typed, ds paper of about 15 pages (10 pages if 25%), with supporting references, and present and defend your proposal in class (12 minute oral report with 5-7 minutes of Q&A).
Course Description & Objectives

The purpose of this course is to acquaint students with political systems in contemporary Sub-Saharan Africa, including their development from the interaction of African, Western, and indigenous social, political, and economic forces. We also will consider the efforts of leaders and citizens to bring about change. Students should gain deeper awareness of the impact of political/cultural heritage, contemporary socio-political conditions, and internal/external economic influences on the challenges currently confronting African states and societies. Course participants also should develop in-depth understanding of one contemporary African political system and critical skills in assessing appropriate approaches to foreign assistance in contemporary Africa.

We will focus on Sub-Saharan African states (Nigeria, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Senegal, Tanzania, South Africa) that are particularly important, exemplify major challenges, and reflect the diversity of approaches to political organization/change and economic development found on the continent. Special attention will be devoted to understanding health conditions and contributing factors in Africa—especially with regard to the HIV-AIDS crisis.

Required Texts

Fac Pack at UC Bookstore {FP}

Course Requirements

Class participation 10%  
Mid-term (optional) 15%  
*The Africans* report 25%  Due: 12 March
Country report (oral) 25%  Due: 31 March
Aid project 40%/25%  Due: no later than 2 May

Late papers will be penalized by the reduction of one-third of a letter grade (e.g., from B+ to B) and by an additional one-third for each scheduled class that passes without submission.
Course Outline and Assignments

27 January-14 Feb

I. Introduction to Africa, Selected Socio-political Issues

1. P. Lone, “An African’s Africa Meets Resistance” (FP)
2. S., pp. 1-12, 64-82, 87-111, 116-133, 137-161, 194-212
3. E., pp. 6-26, 47-64
4. Hackel, “African Tradition of Polygamy” (FP)
5. Conteh, “Circumcision and Secret Societies” (FP)

The Africans: Part I (31 Jan.); Part III (3 Feb.); Part II (5 Feb.);
Part VIII (12 Feb.); Part IV (14 Feb.); Part VII (19 Feb)

19 Feb-28 Feb

II. HIV/AIDS in Africa

A. Spranational, National, and Local Impact/Contributors

7. Lurie, “Socioeconomic Obstacles to HIV Prevention & Treatment” (FP)

Cost of Living VT11309 (24 min)

B. Proposed Approaches: Prevention/Treatment

2. Lom, “Senegal’s Recipe for Success” (FP)
4. Swarns, “Dissent on AIDS by South Africa’s President” (FP)
10. Rollnick, “Botswana’s High-stakes Assault on AIDS” (FP)
13. NCS on “Challenges of Health in a Borderless World” (FP)
C. Personal Ethical Dilemmas
What can one do if a partner will not agree to condoms? Should an HIV-positive woman conceive? Should an HIV-positive mother be advised to feed with formula or to breast-feed? Should employers/schools be told one is HIV positive? What can one do if one cannot afford drug treatments/bed nets? Should AIDS-orphaned children be allowed to function as household heads?

D. Conclusions: HIV/AIDS and Social Transformation in Africa

Student roles plays/minidramas

3-21 March

III. Introduction to African Politics & Economy
1. E., pp. 22-46, 65-145

The Africans: Part V (March); Part VI (7 March)

10 March

In-class preparation for country reports

12 March

Mid-term examination

14 March

IV. African Unity/Union
1. S., pp. 299-311
2. E., p. 215

31 March

The Africans report due

31 March, 2 April

V. Ethiopia

3. Medhane Tadesse & Young, “TPLF: Reform or Decline?” (FP)

4 April

VI. Eritrea


7 April

VII. Somalia


9 April

VIII. Tanzania


11 April

IX. Senegal


14-16 April

X. Nigeria

2. Ihonvbere, “Nigeria: Militarization & Perpetual Transition’(FP)

18 April

In-class preparation for aid projects

21 April

XI. South Africa


23-25 April

Other country reports
XII. Donor Assistance and Partnerships

28 April

A. Overview

2. E., pp. 209-225

30 April

B. Development Fund Model


2 May

C. Other Innovative Approaches

1. K&O, pp. 97-199
3. Harsch, "Dakar Summit...Basic Education for All" (2000) (FP)

2 May

Written Aid Project due

2-9 May, XIII. Aid Project Reports
12 May (10:10-12:10)