

POLI 471 (L01) Africa: Contemporary Political Problems “Constitutionalism & Contention”

Pre/Co-Requisites: POLI 371 or African Studies 201

Instructor: Chris W. J. Roberts	Lecture Location: SB 105
Phone: (403) 870-9241	Lecture Days/Time: TR 14:00-15:15
Email: christopher.roberts@ucalgary.ca	Profile: https://profiles.ucalgary.ca/chris-w-j-roberts
Office: SS 702	Office Hours: Mon 3-4pm / Thur 1200-1pm or by appt.
D2L: https://d2l.ucalgary.ca/d2l/home	Please ensure to always put POLI 471 in the subject line or your email will not be answered. If you have not received a reply within 24 hours, please resend.
Instructor Email Policy:	

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course allows students who have taken Poli 371 or African Studies to delve more deeply into selected political challenges facing contemporary African states and societies. This term the overall theme is “Constitutionalism and Contention,” signalling the ongoing tension between formal political institutions that shape and structure political order and policy outputs, and broader struggles over power and influence that can sometimes result in armed conflict. Over the last decade, much of the continent has experienced escalating violent conflict and reduced space for democratic politics, a reversal of the hopes and trends of the 1990s and 2000s. Ethiopians experienced two years of civil war that has yet to be fully resolved, Cameroon is entering its sixth year of armed conflict, and in Central African Republic, Sudan, South Sudan, Libya, and Somalia extended conflicts make it difficult to find permanent pathways to peace and political institution-building. Countries that were once held up as beacons of democratic transitions on the continent – including Benin, Mali, and Burkina Faso – now face presidential domination or resurgence of military coups. In Togo, Gabon, and Chad, “constitutional coups” ensured that ruling families retain power. Many governments have implemented digital surveillance measures imported from outside the continent, while others shut down internet access entirely (or certain platforms, such as Twitter for a period in Nigeria) during elections or other apparent threats to incumbent elites. Across the Sahel, Central Africa, DR Congo, and northern Mozambique, insurgencies express affiliations with global jihadist movements while they take advantage of home-grown grievances and weak central governments. Across Nigeria, not just in the northeast that has faced a long insurgency by “Boko Haram” (which is no longer a single group), violence and insecurity have increased since the mid-2010s. Add in growing pressures from climate change, Covid-19, global economic shifts, and geopolitical rivalries, and the prospects for improving governance, security, and development in the near term appear bleak.

Of course, that picture of the continent is hardly complete. There are positive signals coming from a number of countries. Some African governments, leveraging public health infrastructure designed to counter other diseases, have shown themselves more effective at managing Covid-19 than governments elsewhere. Malawi and Zambia felt the positive political impact of independent judiciaries which nudged

POLI 471 (L01)

their once questioned democratic trajectories back on track. Mass protests in Sudan, eSwatini, Tunisia, and Burkina Faso highlight grassroots demands for democratic accountability, a sentiment confirmed by a November 2021 Afrobarometer survey that 69% of Africans say “democracy is preferable to any other kind of government.” Tanzania – while still a dominant party state – experienced a peaceful, constitutional transition of power after the incumbent president died in office, and now has its first woman president. Angola – again, still a dominant party state – and DR Congo have made sufficient strides under their new presidents that they were both invited to President Biden’s “Summit for Democracy” in December 2021, two of only 17 African states invited. However, when President Biden hosted his “US-Africa Summit” in December 2022, most African leaders were invited and attended: democracy took second place to geopolitical and commercial interests.

In this course, we’ll examine these divergent trends at the beginning of the 2020s: why are some countries (or border regions) facing increased contentious politics, violence, insecurity, and reduced room for peaceful political competition while others avoid violence, coups, and political instability? What are the prospects for conflict resolution, political accountability or constitutionalism, and better governance? How have some countries moved from autocracy or war to peaceful politics, while others have moved the other way? And what role do regional and international actors play in these processes?

COURSE OBJECTIVES & LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students will ...

- be able to employ core vocabulary, concepts, and theories in the study of African politics, particularly in relation to the study of democracy, political transitions, constitutions, contentious politics, unconstitutional changes of government, war, and other core concepts.
- differentiate, compare, and critique a wide variety of approaches that attempt to explain the role (or non-role) of formal political institutions in contemporary African politics, how they interact with informal institutions, and how political violence is constrained or enabled in that process.
- understand the evolution of formal and informal political institutions and warfare across Africa since the “third wave democratization” of the early 1990s.
- develop comprehensive competencies to find and evaluate relevant primary data and secondary research related to African politics, conflicts, and other topics, including both Western and non-Western sources.
- improve their verbal, reading-analytical, and writing skills relevant to (comparative) political science and the social sciences generally.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

There is no required textbook for this course. A list of required readings is given in the “Course Schedule & Reading List” below and will be available on D2L or online.

COURSE COMPONENT WEIGHTS AND DUE DATES

COMPONENT	WEIGHTING	DUE DATES
Participation (including in-class discussions, exercises, (map) quizzes, Q&A, etc.)	20%	Throughout – expectation that students come to class prepared to discuss readings & cases
Election Analysis Paper	25%	Monday, Feb. 13th (23:59 on D2L Dropbox)
In-class mid-term 75 minutes	20%	Tuesday, Feb 28th

POLI 471 (L01)

Research Paper (30%) plus presentation (5%)	35%	Short scheduled presentation during last 2 weeks / paper due (on D2L Dropbox) on Friday, April 14 th (23:59)
Total	100%	

If a student misses a required course component, please get in touch the instructor as soon as possible.

COURSE SCHEDULE & READING LIST

DATE	TOPICS & THEMES	READINGS
Week 1 Jan 10 & 12	<p>Course Introduction Course expectations & structure; syllabus, D2L usage, & assignments Class background survey</p> <p>Constitutionalism & Contention Trends in the 2020s</p> <p>[And do some Africa map refresher work at https://lizardpoint.com/geography/africa-quiz.php]</p>	<p>CSIS Africa Program (2022), “What to Watch in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2022,” (20 Jan 2022): https://www.csis.org/analysis/what-watch-sub-saharan-africa-2022 [When CSIS.org publishes their 2023 primer, we’ll take a look at that too.]</p> <p>Kasambala (2022), “Africa’s Role in Setting a Global Agenda for Democracy: A Q&A with Tiseke Kasambala,” Freedom House (14 December 2022): https://freedomhouse.org/article/africas-role-setting-global-agenda-democracy-qa-tiseke-kasambala</p> <p>ACLED: Africa Regional Overviews: https://acleddata.com/africa/regional-overviews/</p>
Week 2 Jan 17 & 19	<p>The Third Wave in Africa: Pushing back against autocracy and coups</p>	<p>Lynch & Crawford (2011), “Democratization in Africa 1990-2010: an assessment,” <i>Democratization</i> [D2L]</p> <p>Christensen & Latin (2019), “Democratization and the ‘Third Wave’,” Chapter 13 in <i>African States Since Independence</i> [D2L]</p>
Week 3 Jan 24 & 26	<p>UCGs! Coups and “Constitutional Coups”: incumbents fight back</p> <p>Thursday, Jan. 26: quick map quiz</p>	<p>Mbaku (2020), “Threats to the Rule of Law in Africa,” <i>Georgia Journal of International and Comparative Law</i> (48,2) [D2L]</p> <p>Felter (2021), “Africa’s ‘Leaders for Life,’” CFR (30 June 2021): https://www.cfr.org/background/africas-leaders-life</p> <p>Siegle and Cook (2021), “Circumvention of Term Limits Weakens Governance in Africa,” Africa Center for Strategic Studies (17 May 2021): https://africacenter.org/spotlight/circumvention-of-term-limits-weakens-governance-in-africa/</p>
Week 4 Jan 31 &	<p>The Power of Elections I: When (and how) do they</p>	<p>Cheeseman, Lynch, and Willis (2020), “Conclusion: The Electoral Fallacy Revisited,” final chapter in <i>The Moral</i></p>

POLI 471 (L01)

<p>Feb 2</p>	<p>work for citizens and democracy?</p>	<p><i>Economy of Elections in Africa</i> [D2L].</p> <p>Van Ham and Lindberg (2018), "Elections: The Power of Elections in Multiparty Africa," Chapter 9 in Cheeseman, ed., <i>Institutions and Democracy in Africa</i> [D2L]</p> <p>Klass (2018), "Electoral Rules: The Relationship between Political Exclusion and Conflict," Chapter 10 in Cheeseman, ed., <i>Institutions and Democracy in Africa</i> [D2L]</p>
<p>Week 5 Feb 7 & 9</p>	<p>The Power of Elections II: When and how do they work for autocrats?</p>	<p>Morse (2019), 'Electoral Authoritarian Competition in Africa's Former Single-Party Regimes,' Chapter 8 in <i>How Autocrats Compete: Parties, Patrons, and Unfair Elections in Africa</i> [D2L]</p> <p>Morse (2019), 'The Electoral Consequences of International Patronage,' Chapter 7 in <i>How Autocrats Compete: Parties, Patrons, and Unfair Elections in Africa</i> [D2L]</p>
<p>Week 6 Feb 14 & 16</p>	<p>Election Analysis Paper</p> <p>International Promotion of the Rule of Law and Elections: When helping isn't really helping</p>	<p>Monday, Feb. 13th (23:59, D2L Dropbox)</p> <p>Sesay (2021), "The Coloniality of the Rule of Law," Chapter 2 in <i>Domination through Law: The Internationalization of Legal Norms in Postcolonial Africa</i> [D2L]</p> <p>Cheeseman, Lynch, and Willis (2020), "The Eyes of the World Are upon Us: The Aspirations and Limitations of International Election Observation," Chapter 4 in <i>The Moral Economy of Elections in Africa</i> [D2L].</p>
<p>Week 7 Feb 20-24</p>	<p>READING BREAK (No classes)</p>	
<p>Week 8 Feb 28 & Mar 2</p>	<p>Tuesday, Feb 28th: Mid-term</p> <p>Can constitutional design reduce contention?</p>	<p>75 minutes, closed book exam</p> <p>Kuperman (2015), "Designing Constitutions to Reduce Domestic Conflict," Chapter 1 in Kuperman, ed., <i>Constitutions and Conflict Management in Africa</i> [D2L]</p>
<p>Week 9 Mar 7 & 9</p>	<p>Connections between land tenure regimes, political order, and contention</p>	<p>Boone (2014) Chapters 1 & 2 in <i>Property and Political Order in Africa: Land Rights and the Structure of Politics</i> [D2L]</p>
<p>Week 10 Mar 14 & 16</p>	<p>Connections between state capacity, political order, and violent</p>	<p>Albers, Jerven, & Marvin Suesse (2022), "The Fiscal State in Africa: Evidence from a Century of Growth," <i>International Organization</i> [D2L]</p>

POLI 471 (L01)

	contention	Cheeseman, Collard, and Reyntjens (2018), "War and democracy: the legacy of conflict in East Africa," <i>Journal of Modern African Studies</i> (56, 1) [D2L]
Week 11 Mar 21 & 23	Secession, civil wars and "internationalized internal conflicts"?	Twagiramungu et al., (2019), "Re-describing transnational conflict in Africa," <i>Journal of Modern African Studies</i> 57, 3: 377-391. Thomas & Falola (2020), "Introduction", in <i>Secession and Separatist Conflicts in Postcolonial Africa</i> (UCalgary Press): 1-22. Chiato (2019), "Self-determination and territorial integrity: Southern Cameroons and the Republic of Cameroun," <i>African Journal of International and Comparative Law</i> 27, 4: 629–653.
Week 12 Mar 28 & 30	Research Presentations	Students will make a short (8 minute) presentation to the class about their project and receive feedback from instructor and classmates.
Week 13 Apr 4 & 6	Research Presentations Apr 7th: Good Friday (No Classes)	Students will make a short (8 minute) presentation to the class about their project and receive feedback from instructor and classmates.
Week 14 Apr 11	Apr 10th: Easter Monday (No Classes) Tues, Apr 11 - Last Class Research Presentations	Students will make a short (8 minute) presentation to the class about their project and receive feedback from instructor and classmates.
Research Paper Due:		Friday, Apr. 14th on D2L Dropbox (11:59pm)

Please note that the above schedule is tentative and may change as the need arises.

CLASS PARTICIPATION & QUIZZES (20%)

This will be a relatively small class and active student participation will be expected in most classes. Discussions, contributions, and exercises will create opportunities for students to accumulate participation points during the term. Thus, it is expected you will arrive in class having already read the day's assigned required readings or otherwise prepared appropriately. Active questioning during student presentations will also be reflected in your participation grade. Quality of interventions that illustrate some familiarity with the required readings more important than quantity.

ELECTION ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT (25%)

Each student will be assigned a recent or upcoming (2019-2023) African election to study in-depth. Each student will submit a formal analysis of their election based on guidelines provided. This will be a short paper of approx. 6-8 double-spaced pages due on Monday, Feb. 14th at 11:59pm (D2L Dropbox). Detailed instructions will be discussed in class with the assignment details, rubric, worksheet, and parameters

POLI 471 (L01)

posted on D2L. Late penalties of five percent (5%) will be applied for each 24 hours past the deadline, including weekends.

MID-TERM EXAMINATION (20%)

There will be one 75 minute, in-class, closed-book mid-term exam after reading break. This will include a combination of multiple-choice/matching questions and short written answers, and will be done in class on Tuesday, Feb. 28th.

MAJOR RESEARCH PAPER & PRESENTATION (30% plus 5%)

Within guidelines provided and related directly to the themes of the course, you will select a topic and research question approved by the instructor. The final research paper will be 9-12 page, double-spaced (excluding cover page and reference list). Prior to final submission on Friday, April 15th (23:59) via D2L Dropbox, students will present some of their findings (8 minutes) and receive feedback from the instructor and classmates during the last two weeks of class. The presentation will be worth 5%, with the final paper worth 30%. A detailed rubric is below.

As the research paper is due after the end of classes, the late penalty will be ten percent (10%) for each 24 hours past the deadline, including weekends.

(1) Research Paper Presentation (5%) – To be scheduled during one of the presentation classes. You will prepare and deliver an 8 minute presentation of your research problem/puzzle, key literature and data, and your (tentative) findings as a work-in-progress to the class followed by a Q&A session.

(2) Major Research Paper (30%) – A 9-12 (plus title page, references, and appendices) formal research paper will be due, uploaded to D2L Dropbox (in PDF), by Friday, April 14th. The REST rubric will be applied as follows:

Research:	8 – Good mix of primary and secondary sources, properly cited
Execution:	5 – Covers style, spelling, grammar, punctuation, & attn to detail
Structure:	3 – Great title, great intro, logical structure
Thinking:	14 – Originality, quality, & clarity of analysis of topic, puzzle, implications, etc.
	30% of final grade

FINAL EXAMINATION

<i>Final Exam</i>	No
--------------------------	-----------

Note: Students must write the mid-term and submit both written assignments to be eligible to pass the course.

WRITING STATEMENT

Written assignments are often required in Political Science courses, and the quality of writing skills, including but not limited to such elements as grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, clarity, citation, and organization, will be taken into account in the determination of grades. Students are encouraged to make use of the services offered through Writing Support Services in the Student Success Centre by contacting them at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>.

GRADING SCALE: The following grading scale will be used:

POLI 471 (L01)

A+ (91-100)	B+ (77-79)	C+ (67-69)	D+ (55-59)
A (85-90)	B (73-76)	C (63-66)	D (50-54)
A- (80-84)	B- (70-72)	C- (60-62)	F (0-49)

LATE PENALTIES

There is a 5% per day penalty (including weekend days) for the election paper, and a 10% per day penalty (including weekend days) for the final paper.

INSTRUCTOR GUIDELINES

POLI 471 is a heavy reading, writing, and participation course. Students are advised that for the mid-term they will be examined on all readings, exercises, and class discussions done before reading break. Because this is a seminar class and students will be assessed on their class contributions and participation, students are advised that regular attendance is mandatory.

Students requiring assistance are encouraged to speak to the instructor during class or their office hours. Should you wish to meet outside of office hours, please telephone or email to make an appointment. It is to the student's advantage to keep such appointments.

Email is a common form of communication but it is not always the most effective way of answering student questions. If you cannot make office hours, please request a one-on-one meeting outside of these hours. Given the volume of emails received from various courses, **always put POLI 471 in the subject line or your email will not be answered.** If you do not receive a response within 24 hours, please resend. It is imperative that students regularly check their UCalgary email accounts and D2L for course related information and announcements.

Students are welcome to use laptops and other electronic note-taking devices in this course. Please be considerate of others and switch off all cell phones when you enter the classroom. Sending/receiving texts and browsing the Web is extremely disruptive to others and will not be tolerated. At times, students will be asked to close down their technology in class. Recording of lectures/discussions is permitted for accommodation purposes and should be discussed in the first week of class with the instructor. *Both the student and the instructor must sign the appropriate form(s) to facilitate recording lectures.* Any other use of recording constitutes Academic Misconduct and may result in suspension or expulsion.

IMPORTANT POLICIES AND INFORMATION

Absence From a Mid-term Examination

Students who are absent from a scheduled term test or quiz for legitimate reasons are responsible for contacting the instructor via email within 48 hours of the missed test to discuss alternative arrangements. A copy of this email may be requested as proof of the attempt to contact the instructor.

POLI 471 (L01)

Any student who fails to do so forfeits the right to a makeup test.

Deferred Term Work Form: Deferral of term work past the end of a term requires a form to be filled out by the student and submitted, along with any supporting documentation, to the instructor. The form is available at: https://live-ucalgary.ucalgary.ca/sites/default/files/teams/14/P22_deferral-of-term-work_lapseGrade.pdf

Once an extension date has been agreed between instructor and student, the instructor will email the form to the Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (ascarts@ucalgary.ca) for approval by the Associate Dean.

Deferral of a Final Examination

Deferral of a final examination can be granted for reasons of illness, domestic affliction, and unforeseen circumstances, as well as to those with three (3) final exams scheduled within a 24-hour period. Deferred final exams will not be granted to those who sit the exam, who have made travel arrangements that conflict with their exam, or who have misread the examination timetable. The decision to allow a deferred final exam rests not with the instructor but with Enrolment Services. Instructors should, however, be notified if you will be absent during the examination. The Application for Deferred Final Exam, deadlines, requirements and submission instructions can be found on the Enrolment Services website at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred-exams>.

Reappraisal of Grades:

For Reappraisal of Graded Term Work, see Calendar I.2

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-2.html>

For Reappraisal of Final Grade, see Calendar I.3

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-3.html>

Academic Misconduct:

Academic Misconduct refers to student behavior that compromises proper assessment of students' academic activities and includes: cheating; fabrication; falsification; plagiarism; unauthorized assistance; failure to comply with an instructor's expectations regarding conduct required of students completing academic assessments in their courses; and failure to comply with exam regulations applied by the Registrar.

For information on the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, Procedure and Academic Integrity, please visit: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-3.html>

Plagiarism And Other Forms Of Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct in any form (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) is a serious academic offence that can lead to disciplinary probation, suspension or expulsion from the University. Students are expected to be familiar with the standards surrounding academic honesty; these can be found in the University of Calgary calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>. Such offences will be taken seriously and reported immediately, as required by Faculty of Arts policy.

Recording of Lectures:

Recording of lectures is prohibited, except for audio recordings authorized as an accommodation by SAS or an audio recording for individual private study and only with the written permission of the instructor. Any unauthorized electronic or mechanical recording of lectures, their transcription, copying, or

POLI 471 (L01)

distribution, constitutes academic misconduct. See <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-6.html>.

Academic Accommodations:

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services. SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-accommodation-policy>

Research Ethics

Students are advised that any research with human subjects – including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation – must have the approval of the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board. In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subject research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required.

Instructor Intellectual Property

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act:

Personal information is collected in accordance with FOIP. Assignments can only be returned to the student and will be accessible only to authorized faculty and staff. For more information, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/access-information-privacy>

Copyright Legislation:

See the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-material-protected-copyright-policy> Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

Evacuation Assembly Points

In the event of an emergency evacuation from class, students are required to gather in designated assembly points. Please check the list found at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/risk/emergency-management/evac-drills-assembly-points/assembly-points> and note the assembly point nearest to your classroom.

POLI 471 (L01)

Important Dates:

Please check: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-schedule.html>.

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The Arts Students' Centre is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS102, call them at 403-220-3580, or email them at artsads@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate>, which has detailed information on common academic concerns, including program planning and advice.
- For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at 403-210-ROCK [7625] or visit them in the MacKimmie Tower.

Important Contact Information

Campus Security and Safewalk (24 hours a day/7 days a week/365 days a year)
Phone: 403-220-5333

Faculty of Arts Undergraduate Students' Union Representatives
Phone: 403-220-6551
Email: arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca,
arts4@su.ucalgary.ca
Students' Union URL: www.su.ucalgary.ca

Graduate Students' Association
Phone: 403-220-5997
Email: askgsa@ucalgary.ca
URL: www.ucalgary.ca/gsa

Student Ombudsman
Phone: 403-220-6420
Email: ombuds@ucalgary.ca

Campus Mental Health Resources

The University of Calgary recognizes the pivotal role that student mental health plays in physical health, social connectedness and academic success, and aspires to create a caring and supportive campus community where individuals can freely talk about mental health and receive supports when needed. We encourage you to explore the excellent mental health resources available throughout the university community, such as counselling, self-help resources, peer support or skills-building available through the following resources:

SU Wellness Centre: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/>

Student Wellness Services:
<https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/services/mental-health-services>

Campus Mental Health Strategy website: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/>.