**Conflict in Africa SIS-619.024 2016F**

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Fall 2016 Appointments: <http://bit.ly/qFe1IM>

Wednesdays, 2:30-5:20pm, Ward 205 (calendar is set to Eastern time)

**1. Course Description**

This course is a historical and analytical overview of conflict in Africa. The bulk of the course is concerned with an exploration of theories regarding the causes of conflict in Africa, across three broad categories of conflict – wars of *liberation* (i.e. polity formation), wars of *consolidation* (i.e. state and regime formation), and wars of *positioning* (i.e. regional order formation). Four exemplar states, whose conflicts are considered across each of these categories, are then used to focus our discussion of these theories: Algeria, Somalia, Uganda and Sierra Leone.

**2. Learning Objectives and Outcomes**

By the end of the course students will:

* Be broadly familiar with the range of historical and contemporary African conflicts
* Have knowledge of the range of main theories and key questions explaining conflict in Africa, and how they are related to each other
* Have researched two specific African conflicts in depth, and presented the results in a group and individual presentation format.
* Be able to apply and compare a number of theories with respect to one specific African conflict.
* Be able to theorize about the future of African conflict

**3. Attendance Policy**

Attendance at class meetings is mandatory, and missing class sessions will lower your participation grade for this course. However, two kinds of exception may be made, on a case-by-case basis and at my discretion:

* Medical or personal emergency, only if supported with official documentation from the Dean of Students’ office (<http://www.american.edu/ocl/dos/>)
* Professional or personal event (e.g., off-campus talk or academic conference), only if cleared in advance

**4. Course Grade Breakdown**

Class Participation 20% Assessed continuously

Briefing Paper 15% 23 October; 1000 words

Group Roundtable 20% 9-30 November

Individual Presentation 15% 19 December

Final Paper 30% 21 December; 5000 words

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Total 100%

**Grade Range & Grading Policies**

A = 100-95; A- = 94-90 B+ = 89-87; B = 86-84; B- = 83-80 C+ = 79-77; C = 76-74 C- = 73-70 D = 69-60 F = 59 and below

* Late assignments will receive a one letter grade penalty if handed in within 24 hours of the deadline, a two letter grade penalty if handed in between 24 and 48 hours after the deadline, and an F thereafter.
* You will receive a current grade total immediately following Fall Break; this total will also provide a high and low estimate of your final grade for the class to enable you to adjust your work output if necessary.
* For the purposes of this course, an “A” grade represents a student who has *exceeded* expectations rather than simply meeting them. Please calibrate your expectations, and level of work output, accordingly.

**5. Assignment Specifics**

**5a. The Dropbox Platform**

Dropbox is a powerful commercial equivalent to Blackboard. The two big advantages it has over AU’s existing systems is its seamless integration with your own laptop or desktop, and its free iPhone and Android apps which allow you to access the collaborative spaces (and thus our online resources) anywhere, any time.

To use Dropbox, you’ll either need to make a Dropbox account of your own, or link your existing Dropbox account to our course folder. For new users, you can go directly to <http://db.tt/VEwgEtC2>; for those of you who already have Dropbox installed, you can simply email me the email address associated with your Dropbox account.

**5b. Class Participation (20%):**

Your class participation grade will cover attendance, contribution to class exercises, asking intelligent questions in class, and exhibiting collegiality in all aspects of your engagement with this course.

Students who wish to achieve an A for class participation will not only have done all the required readings for class, but will also arrive in class prepared to probe, debate, and lead discussion on some specific aspects of the readings, using contemporary events sourced from the news and/or material being covered in other classes to do this.

**5c. Briefing Paper (15%):**

During this course, you will select one African country or region not already covered during weeks 8-12 of the class as the subject of your final paper (see 5d. and 5f., below). An A-grade briefing paper will serve to fully introduce an unfamiliar reader with the basic outlines of the conflict (who, where, why, when), will foreground those elements of the conflict which merit investigation, analysis, and explanation, and will demonstrate attention to the necessary perspective shift entailed when moving between theory and data, and between writer and reader.

**5d. Group Roundtable (20%):**

We will be using the conflicts in and around four exemplar polities as our analytic focus in this class: Algeria, Somalia, Uganda, and Sierra Leone. On 17 October, we will allocate three of these polities to three different student groups, leaving me the remaining polity. In each of the subsequent four meetings, we will then take turns (beginning with my polity) presenting one another with the core elements of and a basic reading list for understanding conflict in the chosen polity. Each group will also present the class with four discussion prompts to be used in class. An A-grade group roundtable will show evidence of careful curation of information in line with the theoretical tools used in the class, as well as evidence of solid teamwork and forward planning. Week 9 of this class (31 Oct – 4 Nov) will be made available for groups to consult with me regarding their plans for the seminar.

**5e. Individual Presentation (15%):**

In lieu of a final examination for this class, you will prepare a 20 minute presentation followed by a 10 minute Q&A on the conflict you are covering for your final paper. An A grade presentation will pick up where the briefing paper (see 5c., above) ends; in other words, you will be presenting your findings or conclusions relating to “those elements of the conflict which merit investigation, analysis, and explanation.”

**5f. Final Paper (30%):**

Your final paper will synthesize the theoretical perspectives covered in class with the work done in your Briefing Paper and Individual Presentation to provide a synthetic and complete treatment of the roots, course, and likely future of conflict in a specific African region or country. An A grade paper will maintain a productive analytic distance from the conflict so as to maximize explanatory power rather than falling into simple description; this will require you to use the conflict to identify causal elements also present in the theories presented in class, and vice versa.

**6. Course Readings and Structure**

You are required to ensure that you have access to the following books for the purposes of this class:

1. William Reno, *Warfare in Independent Africa*
2. Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa*
3. William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States*
4. Paul Richards, *Fighting For The Rain Forest*

In addition to these books, we will be drawing heavily on scanned material placed on Blackboard for our week-to-week discussions. A reading guide, as well as a rough course structure, is presented below. Please note that I expect to add additional readings on a week-by-week basis in order to cover emerging gaps in our discussions or to facilitate your thinking in directions which seem to be of interest to the class. Accordingly, **you should always plan to check in on Blackboard** a day or so before our class to see if any “late arriving” material has been added to what is listed in this document.

**Week 1:** *Introduction to the Course: The Empirics of African Conflict*

**Week 2:** *Theories of Conflict, Violence and War in Africa*

Reading assignments:

* Herbst, *States and Power in Africa*, Chapters 1-3
* Reno, *Warfare in Independent Africa*, Chapter 1
* Reid, Richard. 2012. *Warfare in African History* (Oxford University Press), Chapters 1-2
* Hough, Peter. 2015. ‘Security in Africa’, in Hough, Malik, Moran and Pilbeam (eds.), *International Security Studies: Theory and Practice* (Routledge), pp. 374-382

**Week 3:** *Wars of Liberation, Part 1*

Reading assignments:

* Reno, *Warfare in Independent Africa*, Chapter 2
* Reid, Chapter 5
* Cartey and Kilson. 1970. *The Africa Reader: Independent Africa* (Vintage Books), pp. 84-117, 381-401
* Nkrumah, Kwame. 1968. *Handbook of Revolutionary Warfare* (International Publishers), 1.2 and 2.2

**Week 4:** *Wars of Liberation, Part 2*

Reading assignments:

* Reno, *Warfare in Independent Africa*, Chapter 3
* Cartey and Kilson, pp. 126-255

**Week 5:** *Wars of Consolidation, Part 1*

Reading assignments:

* Herbst, *States and Power in Africa*, Chapters 4-5
* Tilly, Charles. *Regimes and Repertoires* (excerpts)
* William Reno, *Warfare in Independent Africa*, Chapter 3

**Week 6:** *Wars of Consolidation, Part 2*

Reading assignments:

* Reno, *Warfare in Independent Africa*, Chapters 5-6
* Herbst, *States and Power in Africa*, Chapters 6-7

**Week 7:** *Wars of Position, Part 1*

Reading assignments:

* Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States*, “Introduction” and Chapters 1, 2, and 7
* Foltz and Bienen (1985). *Arms and the African: Military Influences on Africa’s International Relations* (Yale University Press), Chapters 6-7

FALL BREAK

**Week 8:** *Wars of Position, Part 2*

Reading assignments:

* Herbst, *States and Power in Africa*, Chapter 8
* Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States*, Chapter 3
* Foltz and Bienen, Chapter 4

BRIEFING PAPER DUE

**Week 9:** *Roundtable 1 (Dr. Craig)*

Reading assignments: TBA

**Week 10:** *Roundtable Meetings*

There will be no class meeting this week. Instead, please coordinate amongst yourselves and book a 45-minute appointment with me using my Google Calendar at <http://bit.ly/qFe1IM> to run through your roundtable plan.

**Week 11:** *Roundtables 2*

Reading assignments: TBA

THANKSGIVING BREAK: NO CLASS

**Weeks 12-13:** *Roundtables 3 and 4*

Reading assignments: TBA

**Week 14:** *Course Conclusion*

Reading assignments: TBD

FINAL EXAM (19 December) and FINAL PAPER DUE (21 December)

**8. Academic Integrity**

Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the University’s Academic Integrity Code, which can be found in the University catalog. By registering, you have acknowledged your awareness of the Academic Integrity Code, and you are obliged to become familiar with your rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code. Violations of the Academic Integrity Code will not be treated lightly, and disciplinary actions will be taken should such violations occur. Please see me if you have any questions about the academic violations described in the Code in general or as they relate to particular requirements for this course. You can read the University’s full Academic Integrity Code here: http://www.american.edu/academics/integrity/code/htm

**9. Emergency Preparedness**

In the event of a declared pandemic (influenza or other communicable disease), American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. Faculty will communicate class-specific information to students via AU e-mail and Blackboard, while students must inform their faculty immediately of any absence due to illness. Students are responsible for checking their AU e-mail regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency, students should refer to the AU Web site (www.prepared.american.edu) and the AU information line at (202) 885-1100 for general university-wide information, as well as contact their faculty and/or respective dean’s office for course and school/ college-specific information. World Politics Fall 2015 Craig

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**10. Academic and Disability Support Services**

If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please don’t hesitate to consult with us. In addition to the resources of the department, a wide range of services is available to support you in your efforts to meet the course requirements.

* Academic Support Center (x3360, MGC 243) offers study skills workshops, individual instruction, tutor referrals, and services for students with learning disabilities. Writing support is available in the ASC Writing Lab or in the Writing Center, Battelle 228.
* Counseling Center (x3500, MGC 214) offers counseling and consultations regarding personal concerns, self-help information, and connections to off-campus mental health resources.
* Disability Support Services (x3315, MGC 206) offers technical and practical support and assistance with accommodations for students with physical, medical, or psychological disabilities.

Please note that your use of these resources will be confidential: I will not be notified.