

**Political Science 3000**  
*Politics of Africa*

**Instructor:** Ian S. Spears  
*University of Guelph*  
Winter 2020

**Time:** Tuesday and Thursday, 4-5:20 pm

**Location:** TBA

**Exam:** TBA

**Office Hours:** TBA

**Teaching Assistant:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail:** [ispears@uoguelph.ca](mailto:ispears@uoguelph.ca)

**Office:** Mackinnon 535

**Phone:** (519) 824-4120 (ex. 52182)

**Welcome to *Politics of Africa*.** This course will provide students with an introduction to a number of major themes and ideas in contemporary African politics. The course begins with an introduction to key approaches or *paradigms* to African politics and development. Students will then consider perspectives on African history and identity. The course will consider the issue of personal rule, the nature of the African state, the prospects for democracy, and the legacy of white minority rule. The remaining three weeks will examine contemporary issues of state weakness, political economy, and resource exploitation. Each week students will also have an opportunity to read speeches or other views in a section called “The African Experience.”

**What and where are the course readings?** There is no textbook for this course. The course reading material will be available on e-reserve at McLaughlin Library. Go to the library website and click on course reserves. When away from the University, these materials can be accessed through off-campus login. Other materials may be made available on the CourseLink website. Students are expected to come to class having read and prepared to discuss the course materials for that day.

**What and when are the course assignments and tests?** Evaluation will be done across several components. **First**, students will have the opportunity to complete six quizzes and/or short assignments based on the current readings. Five of these quizzes will count toward your final grade. These quizzes will generally be written on a biweekly basis on a predetermined day usually in the first five minutes of class. They are referred to as “**Q**” **days** in the syllabus below. In lieu of a quiz, students may be required to submit a short assignment which will be handed out before quiz day. In each case, it is incumbent that the student be present in class in order to either write the quiz or to receive or submit the assignment. There are no make-up quizzes for missed days (though there is a final make-up quiz at the end of the course). **Second**, students will write a mid-term exam. **Third**, students will prepare and submit a formal essay. **Finally**, an exam will be written during the formal examination period. You are responsible for ensuring that you are present for midterms and final exams; do not schedule trip/holiday departures that conflict with these dates.

**How will I be evaluated?** Student work will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Bi-Weekly Quizzes (5 plus one make-up)	5%
Mid-term	25%
Term Paper	35%
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>35%</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**What is plagiarism?** Plagiarism involves using the work of others and misrepresenting that work as your own without giving the author credit. Students should be aware that plagiarism is taken seriously. *This course uses Turnitin anti-plagiarism software* (see below for more information). First time offenses will be referred to the Associate Dean for review. If you have further questions or concerns about plagiarism and what it is, see the instructor or visit:

[www.academicintegrity.uoguelph.ca](http://www.academicintegrity.uoguelph.ca)

**How difficult is this course?** This course is organized for third year students on the assumption that they have a background in development and/or comparative politics. In the quizzes, mid-term and final exam, students will be tested only on material which is in the course readings, discussed in class, and made available on the course website. One does not need to be an expert on Africa to take this course. The only request is that students have an interest in learning, and learning about Africa in particular. The expectations, however, are high. There is a demanding reading list that students are expected to complete prior to each week's classes. Students will be expected to know the names of authors and their arguments and to articulate them clearly. For their term papers, students will be expected to show an understanding of key concepts and to be able to express themselves in discussion that is well organized, coherent, and follows accepted rules of grammar, spelling, and punctuation. *Do not underestimate the quality of writing expected and the time and care necessary to prepare your essay.*

**What if I have questions about the course?** Students can direct questions or concerns either to the instructor or to the teaching assistants. I am happy to discuss matters of concern with you during my office hours or, briefly, before and after class. I may also be available at other times. Please feel free to knock on my door at any time. Since I teach more than one course, identify yourself and the course in the subject line or message section if you could like a response to email messages. Students may also direct questions to the teaching assistant. While I do not want to discourage anyone from communicating with me, please read this syllabus carefully and refer to it first when questions arise during the term.