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 “Coup, Constitutional Coups, Conflict, and Constitutionalism.” 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. Ethiopia is more than a year into another brutal civil war, Cameroon is entering its fifth year, and in 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 and Mali – now face presidential domination and resurgence of military coups, respectively. 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 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,

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 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.

In this course, we’ll examine these divergent trends at the beginning of the 2020s: why are some countries (or border regions) facing increased violence, insecurity, and reduced room for politics 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?

Students will select or be assigned to a geographical research group at the beginning of the term. These will be as follows:
(1) North & East Africa
(2) West Africa
(3) Central Africa
(4) Southern Africa

You will work with your group on a joint Political & Conflict Trends Analysis project that will culminate in a presentation to the class and a short, written report submitted before reading break. Guidelines will be provided in Week 3. A mid-term will follow after reading break, and then we’ll focus more intently on the types and theories of war and conflict in Africa. Each student will select a research topic relevant to their geographical region and present a synopsis of their research at the end of the term. A final paper will then be due after classes end. Thus, please be aware that Poli 471 is a heavy reading, research, participation, and writing course. But you’ll also learn about Fela Kuti (d. 1997), the master Nigerian Afrobeat musician whose lyrics can teach more about African politics than many textbooks.

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, 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. Required readings are listed below.

Optional textbook: If you require a general refresher on African politics, the recently used Poli 371 textbook is widely available: Pierre Englebert & Kevin C. Dunn, Inside African Politics, 2nd ed. (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2019). The first edition (2013) would also suffice as a useful background resource.

COURSE COMPONENT WEIGHTS AND DUE DATES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPONENT</th>
<th>WEIGHTING</th>
<th>DUE DATES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation (including in-class discussions, exercises, map quizzes, Q&amp;A, etc.)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Throughout – expectation that students come to class prepared to discuss readings &amp; cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class mid-term 70 minutes</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Tuesday, Mar. 1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Political &amp; Conflict Trends Analysis</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Group work, written assignment, and presentation (guidelines provided in Week 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper (30%) plus presentation (5%)</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Short scheduled presentation during last 2 weeks / paper due (on D2L Dropbox) on Wed, April 20th (23:59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Note: Students must take the mid-term exam and submit both written assignments to be eligible to pass the course.

CLASS PARTICIPATION (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.
REGIONAL POLITICAL & CONFLICT TRENDS ANALYSIS (25%)
Each student will select or be assigned to one of four geographical research groups at the beginning of the term. Groups will work together to develop a comprehensive political and conflict trend analysis of their region and present their work to the class in Week 6. Each student will also submit a short, written report on their presentation day via D2L Dropbox. Guidelines will be provided and discussed in Week 3 and posted on D2L.

Late penalties of five percent (5%) will be applied to the written component for each 24 hours past the deadline, including weekends.

MID-TERM EXAMINATION (20%)
There will be one 70 minute, in-class 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, March 1st.

RESEARCH PAPER INCLUDING PRESENTATION (35%)
Within guidelines provided – and in some way related to your regional research group – you will select a final 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 Wednesday, April 20th (23:59) via D2L Dropbox, students will present some of their findings (6-8 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 will be provided.

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.

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.

GRADE SCALE: The following grading scale will be used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>91-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>63-66</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>55-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50-54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-49</td>
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LATE PENALTIES:
See above for the different late penalties assigned for the Regional Trends short report (5%/day) and final Research Paper (10%/day).
COURSE SCHEDULE & TOPICS: The schedule is tentative and may change as the need arises.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week # / Date</th>
<th>TOPICS &amp; THEMES</th>
<th>REQUIRED READINGS BEFORE CLASS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Week 1  
Jan 11 & 13 | **Course Introduction**  
Course expectations & structure  
Syllabus, D2L usage, & assignments  
Class background survey  
**Political & Conflict Trends Today**  
Additional online resources:  
[https://www.accord.org.za/](https://www.accord.org.za/)  
[http://democracyinafrica.org](http://democracyinafrica.org)  
| Week 2  
Jan 18 & 20 | **The Third Wave in Africa: Pushing back against autocracy and coups**  
Thursday, Jan 20th: Geographical research group assignments  
**UCGs! Coups and “Constitutional Coups”: incumbents fight back**  
Additional online resources:  
[https://www.v-dem.net/](https://www.v-dem.net/)  
[https://www.idea.int/](https://www.idea.int/)  
[www.constituteproject.org](http://www.constituteproject.org)  
[www.constitutionnet.org](http://www.constitutionnet.org)  
| Week 3  
Jan 25 & 27 | **UCGs! Coups and “Constitutional Coups”: incumbents fight back**  
Additional online resources:  
[https://www.v-dem.net/](https://www.v-dem.net/)  
[https://www.idea.int/](https://www.idea.int/)  
[www.constituteproject.org](http://www.constituteproject.org)  
[www.constitutionnet.org](http://www.constitutionnet.org)  

|        |          | Thursday: Group 3 – Central Africa / Group 4 - Southern Africa | Each regional group will coordinate a 25-minute presentation following guidelines provided in Week 3. Each member of the group will subsequently submit a short report (to D2L Dropbox on their presentation day) on their component as per the guidelines. |
| Week of | Feb 21-25 | Family Day & Reading Break | No classes |
| Week 7 | March 1 & 3 | Tuesday: Mid-Term | Toft, “How Civil Wars Start: Three factors come into play, and the United States demonstrates all of them,” *Foreign Policy* (18 Feb 2021): [https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/02/18/how-civil-wars-start](https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/02/18/how-civil-wars-start) |
|         | March 8 & 10 | | |
| Week 9  
| Week 10  
| Week 11  
March 30 & April 1 | Tuesday: Research Project Presentations: Group 4 - Southern Africa  
Thursday: Research Project Presentations: Group 3 – Central Africa | Students will make a short (6-8 minute) presentation to the class about their project and receive feedback from instructor and classmates. |
| Week 12  
April 5 & 7 | Tuesday: Research Project Presentations: Group 2 - West Africa  
Thursday: Research Project Presentations: Group 1 - North and East Africa | Students will make a short (6-8 minute) presentation to the class about their project and receive feedback from instructor and classmates. |
| Week 13  
April 12 | Any remaining presentations/wrap. | Paper Deadline: Wednesday, April 20th (11:59pm) on D2L Dropbox |

**INSTRUCTOR GUIDELINES**  
Students requiring assistance are encouraged to speak to the instructor during class or office hours. Should you wish to meet outside of office hours, please 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. **Always include the course name (POLI 471) in the subject header of your email.** If you cannot make it to office hours, please request a one-on-one meeting outside of these hours with the instructor. It is imperative that students regularly check their UCalgary email accounts and D2L for course related information and announcements. If you have sent the instructor an email but have not received a reply within 24 hours, please resend.

It is important to spend time reading and making notes before class rather than relying on quick scans of articles in class. The regional groups should be leveraged as “study groups” to share reading workload. It is highly suggested that students be prepared to participate at times without laptops and other electronics (i.e., there may be times when you’re asked to turn technology off.) No recording of lectures and discussions (audio and/or video) is permitted without prior approval of the instructor, with exceptions of course made in the case of approved accommodations. Please be considerate of others and switch off phones when you enter the classroom. Sending/receiving texts and browsing social media is extremely disruptive to others, especially in a small class environment, and your own performance will suffer.

**IMPORTANT POLICIES AND INFORMATION**

**Supporting Documentation and the Use of a Statutory Declaration**

As stated in the University Calendar:

Students may be asked to provide supporting documentation for an exemption/special request. This may include, but is not limited to, a prolonged absence from a course where participation is required, a missed course assessment, a deferred examination, or an appeal. Students are encouraged to submit documentation that will support their situation. Supporting documentation may be dependent on the reason noted in their personal statement/explanation provided to explain their situation. This could be medical certificate/documentation, references, police reports, invitation letter, third party letter of support or a statutory declaration etc. The decision to provide supporting documentation that best suits the situation is at the discretion of the student. Students cannot be required to provide specific supporting documentation, such as a medical note.

Students can make a Statutory Declaration as their supporting documentation (available at [ucalgary.ca/registrar](http://ucalgary.ca/registrar)). This requires students to make a declaration in the presence of a Commissioner for Oaths. It demonstrates the importance of honest and accurate information provided and is a legally binding declaration. Several registered Commissioners for Oaths are available to students at no charge, on campus. For a list of locations to access a Commissioners for Oaths, visit [ucalgary.ca/registrar](http://ucalgary.ca/registrar).

Falsification of any supporting documentation will be taken very seriously and may result in disciplinary action through the Academic Discipline regulations or the Student Non-Academic Misconduct policy.

This statement is accessible at: [https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html](https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html)
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. Any student who fails to do so forfeits the right to a makeup test.

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.

Reappraisals
The University Calendar states that for reappraisals of graded term work:

“A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (term paper, essay, test, etc.) has been unfairly graded, may have the work reappraised as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within ten business days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class. If not satisfied, the student shall take the matter to the head of the department offering the course within 2 business days of receiving the decision from the instructor, who will arrange for a reappraisal of the work within the next ten business days. The reappraisal will only be considered if the student provides a detailed rationale that outlines where and for what reason an error is suspected.” See https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-2.html

The University Calendar states that for reappraisal of academic assessments (final grades):

“A student may request a reappraisal of a final grade. The only element that will be considered is the final assessment(s) that makes up the final mark (e.g., final examination, final project, and final paper). The exception is when a grade for a piece of graded term work is made available to students after the last day of classes for the term in which the course is scheduled; that grade may also be considered in a reappraisal of the final grade.”

“A student seeking a reappraisal of a final grade should first attempt to review the final assessment with the department or faculty offering the course. After which the student shall obtain a Reappraisal of Final Grade form from ucalgary.ca/registrar (under Student Forms). The student must indicate exactly what error was made in marking the final assessment and/or in computing the final grade. The reappraisal will only be considered if the student
provides a detailed rationale that outlines where and for what reason an error is suspected.” More information is available at: https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-3.html

**University Regulations**
Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the University policies found in the Academic Regulations sections of the Calendar at www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-regs.html.

**Student 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. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/.

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 http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf.

**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.

**Required Access to Technology**
Please see the University’s resource page at https://ucalgary.service-ow.com/it?id=kb_article&sys_id=86e7438013753ac06f3afbb2e144b031

**Copyright Legislation**
As stated in the University of Calgary Calendar, Academic Regulations, “students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright and requirements of the copyright act to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.”

**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)**
FOIP legislation requires that instructors maintain the confidentiality of student information. In practice, this means that student assignment and tests cannot be left for collection in any public place without the consent of the student. It also means that grades cannot be distributed via email. Final exams are kept by instructors but can be viewed by contacting them or the main office in the Department of Political Science. Any uncollected assignments and tests meant to be returned will be destroyed after six months from the end of term; final examinations are destroyed after one year.

**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 [www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints](http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints) and note the assembly point nearest to your classroom.

**Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources**
For program planning and advice, visit the Arts Students’ Centre in Social Sciences 102, call 403-220-3580 or email artsads@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit arts.ucalgary.ca/advising for program assistance.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit their office in the MacKimmie Tower, MT 116.

**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/.