

POLI120P: Africa's Success Stories

Instructor: Professor Claire Adida
University of California San Diego
Spring Quarter 2016
Tue-Thurs: 3.30-4.50pm
PETER104

Course description

This course introduces students to the idea that Africa is not all conflict, famine and loss. It offers an overview of successful cases of political and economic development, and seeks to answer the following questions: Why and how have some countries successfully democratized, grown, recovered from conflict, or developed solutions to lower malaria, improve agricultural productivity, and reduce monetary transaction costs? According to what criteria can we deem these cases successful? How might we be able to scale up a successful intervention at the village level to the district, national, or even regional level?

Each success case will be analyzed according to five questions: (1) What is the problem and what does it look like in the broader African region? (2) How does this problem apply to the case at hand? (3) What does the intervention consist of? (4) How is success assessed? (5) What are the broader policy implications or take-aways?

We will cover a different issue area each week. After an introduction to the historical challenges and legacies African countries must face, we will spend a week on each of the following topics: democratization, public health, economic growth, foreign aid, agriculture, information technology, post-conflict reconstruction, and culture.

The course and its requirements are organized around the development of a final team paper (15-20 pp. long) that analyzes one intensive case study of success in sub-Saharan Africa. As such, beginning in week 2, Tuesday classes will be lectures while some Thursday classes will be teamwork sessions, during which you will (a) be expected to come to class and meet with your group, (b) be given questions and instructions to guide your research, (c) be given an opportunity to ask the TAs and professor for feedback or assistance.

Course format

This course meets twice a week for the ten weeks of the quarter. Students are expected to attend lecture having completed the readings for that day. Lectures will be podcast (details TBA). While you are never formally tested on the lecture material, your ability to integrate it should be reflected in your final project. Teams that do not demonstrate this will receive a lower grade.

Course requirements

Students will be graded based on assignments revolving around one intensive case study of success in sub-Saharan Africa. Students will be randomly assigned to a team at the end of week 2. Each student's final grade will be based on:

(1) Regular assignments throughout the quarter that are designed to help you make progress toward your final presentation. Specifically, each team will be expected to turn in:

- a/ a description of the case selection (due at the end of week 3)
- b/ an annotated bibliography (due at the end of week 6)
- c/ a detailed outline (due at the end of week 7)
- d/ a draft introduction (due at the end of week 8)

Together, these assignments account for 40% of your grade.

(2) A final paper: The final paper, due in class at the end of week 10, should address the five questions that structure our analytic approach in this class. These are enumerated in the Course Description above and reproduced below:

- a/ What is the problem and what does it look like in the broader African region?
- b/ How does this problem apply to the case at hand?
- c/ What does the intervention consist of?
- d/ How is success assessed?
- e/ What are the broader policy implications or take-aways?

Your final paper will count for 50% of your grade.

(3) Peer evaluation: Each student will be asked to fill out an evaluation form for each of his/her team member. Students will be graded on the quality of their evaluation form – that is – on how well the student provides **constructive** feedback. Additionally, these forms will provide students an opportunity to report on any free-riders or shirkers in their group. If there is a general sense, from these student evaluations, that one group member was not a team player, this will be taken into account in the final calculation of grades. Peer evaluation forms will not be shared directly with the students; instead, the feedback will be compiled anonymously and provided to each student for his/her benefit. This assignment will account for 10% of the student's final grade. Email your peer evaluations in a single pdf file to the TAs by 3pm on Monday, June 6.

Contact

Note below the following contact information and office hours:

Professor Adida
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OH: Tuesday 9-11am
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TA: Cameron Sells
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TA: Alex Verink
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Readings

All readings are available on the course website: <http://pscourses.ucsd.edu/poli120p/>

Policies

- The use of laptops, cell phones, tablets, or any other type of electronic device is prohibited during class time. Research shows that you learn more and distract others (including me) less if you stick to good old pen and paper: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2014/09/25/why-a-leading-professor-of-new-media-just-banned-technology-use-in-class/>.
- If you have a disability that requires special accommodations, please come see me **as soon as possible** and present your certification to me and to Ariane Parkes (aparkes@ucsd.edu).
- Since all assignments for this class are take-home, the late policy is that no late assignments are accepted. You know now every single due date that counts, so plan accordingly. Late assignments will receive an F.
- Please consult <http://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/2> for UCSD's Academic Integrity Policy. Students in this course are expected to comply with this policy. Any student in violation of UCSD's policy will automatically fail this class.
- If you seek a **re-grade**, you must email the TA **within 72 hours** of the assignment being returned to the class, and explain – in that email and in detail – why you believe you deserve reconsideration. The TA then has the ability to review the entire exam, and the authority to increase your grade, decrease your grade, or keep the grade unchanged.
- Sexual Misconduct/Title IX Statement: UC San Diego prohibits sexual violence and sexual harassment and will respond promptly to reports of misconduct. If you wish to speak confidentially about an incident of sexual misconduct, please contact CARE at the Sexual Assault Resources Center at (858) 534-5793. Students should be aware that faculty members are considered responsible employees and are not a confidential resource; as such, if you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to a faculty member, they have an obligation to report it to UC San Diego's Title IX office, the Office for the Prevention of Harassment & Discrimination (OPHD). To learn more about sexual misconduct, visit: <https://students.ucsd.edu/sponsor/sarc/index.html>. To report an incident to the University, please contact OPHD at ophd@ucsd.edu

Assignment instructions

- Case selection (due by email to TAs April 14, 3.30pm): 1-2pp., double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12pt. font, 1-inch margins. Set it up as a puzzle, e.g.: “We know that sub-Saharan Africa has struggled with malaria; how did country X reduce its prevalence rates from 57% to 25% in just one decade?” Specify for which issue-topic your case applies (public health, democratization, growth, etc...), and the types of explanations you will be considering. This need not be exhaustive, but it should demonstrate that you have done more than a superficial preliminary investigation. You will be graded on three criteria: (1) how compelling your puzzle set-up is; (2) how well your case fits with the topics in this course; (3) how comprehensively you have considered various explanations of your success story (the focus here is on breadth rather than depth, given how early this is in the quarter).
- Annotated bibliography (due by email to TAs May 5, 4.50pm): 5-10pp., double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12pt. font, 1-inch margins. List the sources you have consulted so far, and a 4-5 line description of each source. You will be graded on three criteria: (1) the breadth of data sources considered (in other words, if you rely solely on Wikipedia, you’re in trouble), (2) your effort to find primary sources (archives, newspapers, interviews), (3) your ability to extract the significance of each data source for your project (in other words, your 4-5 lines of description should tell us what this specific source brings to your research).
- Outline (due by email to TAs May 12, 4.50pm): 5-7pp., double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12pt. font, 1-inch margins. This should be a detailed outline of the paper. You will be graded on: (1) the extent to which you are able to show a clear organization and progression of thoughts and arguments to build your case, (2) the extent to which you demonstrate the hourglass framing of the paper (broad-narrow-broad), (3) the level of detail (as will be demonstrated in the cases we cover in class).
- Draft introduction (due by email to TAs May 19, 4.50pm): 5-6pp., double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12pt. font, 1-inch margins. The introduction is the most important part of the paper. It should present a compelling puzzle, introduce your argument, and present your strategy for making your case. It is a microcosm of the paper. You will be graded on: (1) How compelling the puzzle is, (2) How clear and thought-out your argument is, (3) How clearly you lay out your empirical strategy for making your case, and (4) How well you write.
- Final paper (due in print to TAs June 2, at the beginning of class): 15-20pp., double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12pt. font, 1-inch margins. You will be graded on: (1) How well you have integrated feedback from the individual assignments, (2) How well you have integrated arguments and insights from class lectures, (3) How well researched your paper is (type and breadth of resources), (4) How well written your paper is, and (5) How well your paper addresses the 5 questions that structure this class.

Week 1

March 29

Introduction

March 31

Africa's Challenges – an overview

- Miguel et al. 2008. "Is It Africa's Turn?" *New Democracy Forum*

Week 2

April 5

Democratization in Africa

- Kaunda, Kenneth. 2003. *Democratization in Africa*.
- Lynch and Crawford. 2011. "Democratization in Africa 1990-2010: an assessment." *Democratization* 18(2)

April 7

No class

Week 3

April 12

Ghana's successful democratic consolidation

Student teams assigned

- Aggrey-Darkoh, Evans. 2013. "The Consolidation of Democracy in Ghana: the 2012 General Elections in Perspective." *Social Science Research Council*
- Ayittey, George. 2012. "What Ghana can teach the rest of Africa about democracy." *CNN Opinion*

April 14

Fighting malaria (guest lecture: Professor Gordon McCord)

- Global Fund: Who we Are, What we Do. 2012.
- World Health Organization. 2009. "Malaria deaths decline by 66% in Zambia."
- Case selection due

Week 4

April 19

Africa's economic successes

- Sy, Amadou. 2014. "Five Questions Answered on Africa's Rising Economic Growth." *Brookings Institution*
- McKinsey&Co. 2010. "What's driving Africa's growth."
- Assignment: Two-page description of case selection due

April 21

Finding sources, doing good research (guest lecture: Annelise Sklaar)

Week 5

April 26

Foreign aid: a curse?

- Djankov, Simeon, Jose G. Montalvo, and Marta Reynal-Querol. 2008. "The curse of aid." *Journal of Economic Growth*
- Maren, Michael. 1997. The Road To Hell: The Ravaging Effects of Foreign Aid and International Charity: Introduction, Chaps 1 and 6.

April 28

Foreign aid: it works!

- Sachs, Jeffrey. 2014. "The Case for Aid". *Foreign Policy*

Week 6

May 3

Africa's Agricultural Quagmire; New yields, new energy

- Bates, Robert H. 2005. *Markets and States in Tropical Africa: Part I*
- Burney, Jennifer et al. 2010. "Solar powered drip irrigation enhances food security in the Sudano-Sahel" *PNAS*
- Denning et al. 2009. "Input subsidies to improve smallholder maize productivity in Malawi: toward an African Green Revolution" *PLOS Biology*

May 5

Team work on annotated bibliography, due

Week 7

May 10

Mobile money/ MPESA (guest lecture: Alex Verink)

- Aker, Jenny C. and Isaac Mbiti. 2010. "Mobile phones and economic development in Africa." *Center for Global Development Working Paper*
- Jack, William and Tavneet Suri. 2010. "The Economics of M-PESA" Working Paper
- Jackson, Tom. 2016. "M-PESA shows why mobile money is yet to realize its true potential in Africa."

May 12

Team work on outline, due

Week 8

May 17

Post-conflict reconstruction

- Girod, Desha. 2014. "Reducing postconflict coup risk: The low windfall coup-proofing hypothesis." *Conflict Management and Peace Science*

May 19

Team work on introduction draft, due

Week 9

May 24

Culture/Nollywood

May 26

How to write well (guest lecture: OASIS)

- Farrell, H. "Good writing in political science: an undergraduate student's short illustrated primer." *Themonkeycage.org*

Week 10

May 31

Screening: "This is Nollywood"

June 2

Conclusion/Final Team Papers due

Peer Evaluations due by email to the TAs by 3pm, Monday 6/6