

**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
BENUE STATE UNIVERSITY, MAKURDI
2025/2026 SESSION**

POL 102: Introduction to African Politics

Three Credit Units

Instructor:

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a. Course Objectives and Requirement:

This course is a three credit unit course. The main objective of the course is to introduce the students to the nature and character of African politics. At the end of the course, students are expected to have full understanding of the historical evolution and the nature of politics, economy, religion, inter- group relations and development in Africa. It will also help the students to understand the nature and character of pre- colonial African societies, the incorporation of Africa into the world capitalist system, the African colonial experience, state formation, ethnic/religious politics and developmental challenges in Africa. Students will also be exposed to the nature of post- colonial African politics alongside issues of military intervention in African politics, issues of class and class accumulation. Issues of democratization and development, issues of legitimacy and political transition in Africa.

b. Course Requirement:

(a)	Compulsory Class Attendance	-	10 Marks
(b)	Class Participation	-	10 Marks
(b)	Mid-Semester Assessment	-	20 Marks
(c)	End of Semester Examination	-	60 Marks

c. Course Contents

One: Background to African Politics

Defining Africa

Eurocentricism and Africa

Afrocentricism and Africa

Two: Pre-Colonial African Societies

Types and Patterns of Socio-Political Organization

Political Organizing Principles

Mode of Production

Power and Politics

Security and Defence

Succession and Balance of Power.

Three: Colonialism and Colonial Rule in Africa

Colonialism

The Scrambling for Africa and the Scampering of Africans

The Berlin Conference (1884-1885) and the Balkanization of Africa

Incorporation of Africa into the World Capitalist System

Colonial Rule in Africa – Characteristics

Impact of colonial Rule on Africa.

Four: Nationalism and Decolonization of Africa

Understanding Nationalism-Nation

Ideological shades of African Nationalism

Nature of African Nationalism

Nationalist Movement – Actors,

Nature and Strategies of African Nationalism

Decolonization of Africa.

Five: The Post-Colonial African States

Ideological Orientations

Independent African States and Social Contract;

Politics and Government

Party Systems

Nature of Power Struggles and Consolidation of Political Power

Governance and State Collapse

The Crisis of Accumulation

Negative Colonial Heritages

Six: Political Instability and Democratization

Military Intervention in African Politics

Reasons for Military Intervention

Nature of Military Rule

Legitimacy and Instability

Impact of Military Rule.

Seven: Democratization in Africa

Democracy in Africa

Nature of Democratization in Africa

Africa and Liberal Democracy

Political Participation in Africa

The Legitimacy Crisis in Africa.

Eight: Challenges of Politics, Governance and Development in Africa Underdevelopment and the Crisis of Development in Africa

Africa in World Politics

Africa and Neo-Colonialism

Africa and Globalization

Suggested Reading Text

Dipo, F (2022) *Africa is not a Continent: Breaking Stereotype of Modern Africa*. London: Harvill selker

Thomson, A (2010) *An Introduction to African Politics*. London: Routledge

Davidson, B. *Black Man's Burden*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books.

Jordan, R.S. (1978). *Government and Power in West Africa Ethiopia*. Benin: Publishing Corporation.

Joseph, R. (2006). *Misgovernance and "The African Predicament: Can the Code be Broken"* Faculty of the Social Science, Distinguished Lecture Series 1. The University of Ibadan.

Lipset, S.M. (1963). *The Political Man: The Social Basis of Policies*. New York: Anchor Books.

Mazrui, A. (1977). *Soldiers and Kinsmen in Uganda: The Making of a Military Ethnocracy*. Beverly Hills.

Ogundimu (1977). "Citizenship and Modernisation in the Third World." *The West African Journal of Sociology and Political Science* vol.2 No 122.

Sklar, L.R. (1963). *Nigerian Political Parties Power in an Emergent African Nation*. New York: Nok Publishers International.

John, R. (1998). *Africa A Biography of the Continent*. London: Penguin Books.

Almond, G. et al (nd). *Comparative Politics Today* Pearson Education. New Delhi. Huntington, S. (1968). *Political Order in Changing Societies*. London: Yale University Press.

Cornwell, R.D. (1974). *World History in the Twentieth Century*. London: Longman Group.

Smith, B. C. (2003). *Understanding Third World Politics*. New York

Tsuwa, J. T (2025). *Fragmenting Nationalism and Institutionalizing Conflict and Underdevelopment in Africa*. *International Journal of Peace and Conflict Resolution*. Vol. 10(1).1-12.
<https://journals.rcmss.com/index.php/ijpcs/issue/view/151>

Tsuwa, J. T (2023) *Killed by the Lines: Interrogating Bloody Conflicts between the Tiv of Central Nigeria and their Neighbours*, in *Peace Studies and Practice journal*. Vol. 1 (12) 81-93. www.spsp.org

Tsuwa, J. T. (2014). *Retragressing Africa: Failed State or Failed Leadership?* *Journal of the Society for Peace Studies and Practice*, 1(1)506-521.