



African Studies Learning Goals

African Studies concentrators will gain a broad understanding of the political, social and economic dimensions of African affairs since the late 19th century. They will have a strong foundation in relevant social theories and key concepts in comparative politics, international relations and political economy. Students will understand the central overarching themes that apply across the continent of Africa (e.g. colonialism, economic development, governance, communal identity) as well as the diverse features of Africa's 54 states. They will attain familiarity with a number of country experiences, and will understand the dimensions of comparison within Africa and across global regions. Through travel, practical experience and classroom exercises, students will attain proficiency in analyzing and addressing key policy issues pertaining to the region and will obtain proficiency in a relevant language.

Learning Objectives:

1. Student will understand theories of comparative politics, international politics, and political economy, and their relevance to the study of Africa—including the contribution of African studies to broad theories in the social science;
2. Know the history of the African continent and its constituent countries, including the pre-colonial era, colonialism, the nationalist era, and the decades since independence;
3. Comprehend key dimensions of African politics including the nature of the state, regimes, authority structures, institutions, civic participation and processes of bargaining, contention and control;
4. Learn dynamics of democratization, including transitions to democracy, the institutional arrangement of electoral regimes, problems of democratic performance, variations in representation and competition, and hybrid systems of governance;
5. Examine the social foundations of politics in Africa, including class, ethnicity, religion and gender, the nature of identities and collective action, and forms of mobilization, participation and contention;
6. Show awareness of economic development, including the structural and historical foundations of African economies; issues of poverty, inequality, production, trade, and resource allocation; development strategies and economic policy choice; and African economic performance over time;
7. Analyze political economy, broadly reflecting the reciprocal interaction of political and economic domains, distribution, clientelism, policy orientations, and the interaction of interests, ideas, institutions in economic change;
8. Understand Africa in the world system, including foreign policy, economic relations, security affairs, organizational linkages, and key alliances and transactions;
9. Analyze conflict & conflict management, including the foundations, evolution and management of conflicts within states and between states; changing forms of conflict and warfare; and the evolving security architecture of the region; and
10. Understand US-Africa relations, including dynamics of the Cold War era, and key issues and developments in the decades since the end of the cold war. Strategic goals, international cooperation, bilateral relationships, and important transnational linkages are covered.