

U.S. Foreign Policy and Sub-Saharan Africa
University of San Diego Fall 2022
Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m.-8:20 p.m. August 31-December 14, 2022
KIPJ 218
Ambassador (retired) Leslie Bassett
lbassett@sandiego.edu
407-335-8075
Office Hours: TBD
Zoom link: <https://sandiego.zoom.us/j/99968983863>

Course description:

The history and cultures of Sub-Saharan African nations are deeply intertwined in U.S. society, yet U.S. foreign policy has not prioritized effective relations with Africa. This class will examine the values, goals and interests of U.S. engagement with the many nations of Africa over time, as well as the foreign policy tools that have been applied. We will review the pervasive and enduring impacts of slavery and racism on policy formulation and implementation, including what one African-American diplomat called the “ghettoization” of Foreign Service assignments to Africa. We will examine as well as current African reactions to and expectations of the United States. The bulk of the course will focus on current challenges including the restoration of respect for African culture by returning cultural treasures; collaboration on security and counter-terrorism initiatives; pandemic and humanitarian cooperation; issues of income and tech inequality; Africa’s contributions to climate change solutions; governance; and trade including rare commodities. The class will include discussion of rival interests in Africa, including China, Russia and Europe. Because Africa is many nations with sovereign views, student teams will assess cross-cutting topics with relation to the countries of one sub-region.

This will be an in-person synchronous course that relies on continuous team assignments, collaboration and presentations. It is therefore extremely important that students plan to attend all class sessions. Of course, if you are ill, exposed to illness, or face an emergency I am happy to accommodate. It is vital that you reach out to me before class if you believe you will be absent.

All course directions, assignments, and updates will be posted on blackboard. Please check there regularly. If you have problems accessing blackboard, please contact the instructor.

Please offer constructive comments and suggestions at any time to make the experience better for you and your colleagues. I promise all suggestions will be carefully considered and adjustments made whenever possible. For that reason, the syllabus will likely change as we go through the course together, please be alert to notices in blackboard.

Office hours are here for you! You will need to meet with the instructor outside of class as part of the participation grade process but please feel free to reach out anytime. Zoom

meetings are available on almost any day of the week. In-person meetings can be scheduled during office hours or at a mutually convenient time.

You can reasonably expect me to facilitate learning, to answer questions appropriately, to be fair and objective in grading, to provide timely and useful feedback on assignments, to maintain adequate office hours, and to treat you as I would like to be treated in your place. Please reach out to me (anonymously or not) if you have feedback or concerns about how well I am living up to these expectations. I welcome the chance to improve.

This class is extremely demanding. The secret to success is to keep up with the workload and come to class prepared.

Learning objectives:

- **Critical Thinking:** Students will become familiar with the full range of foreign policy actors, influences and policy tools and critically assess their impact on U.S. foreign policy with the nations of Sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Operational Assessment:** Students will be able to identify current challenges related to U.S. foreign policy goals in Sub-Saharan Africa and be able to identify key issues that must be addressed and most appropriate tools to apply. They will also develop skills for effective team collaboration.
- **Social Responsibility:** Students will understand the roles non-governmental entities and/or individuals have played in influencing global events and outcomes, preparing themselves for a changemaking role in the future.
- **Personal Responsibility:** Students will form their own research agendas in foreign policy analysis; will participate in a constructive and respectful fashion in class; and will practice academic integrity in their assignments.
- **Communication:** Students will build their skills in effective communication to inform, engage, elicit information from and influence others to support positive change in global affairs.

Course Texts: All readings/reference materials will be available on-line or through the instructor.

Required readings/activities are listed for each class session and should be completed prior to the relevant session. Links are provided. It is essential that you come to class prepared by having completed all preparatory materials.

Please do keep up with the news as well, as current events will be discussed at every session and an understanding of current dynamics will be essential to your success in the course.

Grading and Assignments:

Course participants will be divided into four teams for the duration of the semester. Projects will be graded by team unless otherwise noted, but the professor will also offer individual evaluation and feedback. Any consistent failure to contribute to the team effort will be reflected in an adjusted grade for the relevant individual.

Late Assignment Policy: *Out of respect to those who meet deadlines, extensions will be granted only in case of emergency. Late submissions will lose 1/2 a letter grade per day, unless accompanied by a dean's excuse for incapacitating illness, the death of a family member or a comparable emergency.*

Cheating and Plagiarism: *Please familiarize yourself with the [University's policy on cheating, plagiarism and documentation](#). Any cases of suspected plagiarism will be reported directly to the appropriate dean.*

Participation: *Students are expected to have completed the preparatory assignments, attend every class, and actively contribute to class discussions and team presentations. Every student is expected to meet with the instructor at least once during (in person or virtual) office hours as part of the participation score. Completion of the end of year course evaluation will also contribute to your participation score. Participation will count for 5 percent of the final grade.*

Assignments (graded assignments are in red)

Map Quiz (5 percent): Each student will, without reference to computer or other aids, complete a blank map of Sub-Saharan Africa by identifying nations.

Op-ed (10 percent): Each student will prepare an op-ed following the [San Diego Union Tribune "commentary" guidelines](#) explaining the relevance (or lack thereof) of Africa to the U.S., enunciating U.S. goals in Africa policy; and proposing a path forward for U.S.-Africa relations as President Biden prepares to hold a summit with African leaders this December.

Diplomatic playbook presentation (10 percent): Each team will present to the class one category of diplomatic tools available to policymakers seeking to engage with Africa.

Team Summit paper initial draft (20 percent total): Each team will prepare a Summit paper with policy recommendations, (dis)invitees, events, and deliverables for the December 2022 U.S.-Africa Summit. Teams will complete the provided template (10 percent) and draft a four-paragraph statement defining the values, interests, goals and expected outcomes of the Summit (5 percent). *The October 5 class will be entirely dedicated to a team workshop focused on finishing the initial policy proposal.* Each team will then present its Summit proposal (October 12) to a hearing of the House Foreign Affairs Sub-Committee on Africa, respond to relevant questions regarding budgets, partners, risks and opportunities. The team goal is to persuade the committee to endorse the policy and agree to fund it (5 percent).

Sub-Committee Simulation (5 percent): Each team will role-play service on the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee by critically examining another team's proposed policy

towards Africa, asking relevant questions, and determining by committee vote whether or not to endorse and fund the proposed approach.

Foreign Policy Challenges: As noted in the syllabus, each team will participate in a total of three simulations situated in specific African nations which will allow it to test and perhaps modify its initial Summit proposal.

Foreign Policy Challenge One (10 percent): Each team will face a unique diplomatic crisis and be asked to formulate a response relying upon its Summit policy proposal. If the crisis requires a shift in priorities, funding, allies, principles or other key factors, the team should so note as it works through the simulation. During the after-action briefing to the class the team will highlight these required changes as well as lessons learned.

Foreign Policy Challenge Two (10 percent): Each team will face a unique diplomatic crisis and be asked to formulate a response relying upon its Summit policy proposal. If the crisis requires a shift in priorities, funding, allies, principles or other key factors, the team should so note as it works through the simulation. During the after-action briefing to the class the team will highlight these required changes as well as lessons learned.

Foreign Policy Challenge Three (10 percent): Each team will face a unique diplomatic crisis and be asked to formulate a response relying upon its Summit policy proposal. If the crisis requires a shift in priorities, funding, allies, principles or other key factors, the team should so note as it works through the simulation. During the after-action briefing to the class the team will highlight these required changes as well as lessons learned.

Policy Debates: These sessions are ungraded discussions designed to encourage critical assessment of based U.S. policy approaches to inform new approaches in the 21st century.

Final Summit policy paper (15 percent): At the final session students will present their final policy proposals after working through any changes developed through the policy simulations and policy debates. A template to track changes and adjustments will be provided and should be submitted to the instructor by the end of class.

Newsletters:

It is not easy to find consistent coverage of Africa in the U.S. press. Please consider following these sources in order to stay up-to-date (no subscriptions required):

[The Conversation: Africa](#)

[US Department of State Africa Bureau](#)

[Foreign Policy Africa Brief](#)

[Africa Times](#)

Class Sessions

Session One: August 31, 2022:

Slavery's Persistent Influence in U.S. Foreign Policy

We will review U.S. involvement in the slave trade and enslavement; the humanitarian, political and economic impacts of slavery on the U.S. and its role in the world; and how the continued civil rights struggle in the U.S. parallels engagement with Africa from our founding to today.

Assigned Materials: (these are generally very short!)

[“Being Black in a Lily-White State Department”](#), oral history interview of Ambassador Terence Todman conducted 1995-1998 (abridged version), Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, accessed August 4, 2022.

[“Statement by Ambassador Nichols on His Meeting with Zimbabwe Foreign Minister Zoyo”](#), posted by the U.S. Embassy in Zimbabwe on Twitter, June 20, 2020.

[U.S.-Africa Relations: An Opportunity Lost or Found?](#) by Ambassador Charles R. Stith, Foreign Policy Research Institute, November, 2021.

[“Is Diplomacy the Most Undervalued Tool of American Power?”](#), interview with U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Council on Foreign Relations.

[“Statement by President Biden on the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit”](#), The White House, July 20, 2022.

[U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa](#), The White House, August 2022. (please pay special attention to page 11 in the context of today’s lecture).

[“Should the U.S. Offer Reparations to Africa for the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade?”](#) by Rhoda E. Howard-Hassman, Society, 24 February 2022.

Session Two: September 7, 2022:

****Map Quiz**

Pan-Africanism

Over the course of decades several initiatives from different sponsors with opposing motives sought to persuade Black Americans to settle in Africa. On occasion these overlapped with the separate effort by those of African heritage to define common ground with Africans. We will discuss the moral, political and economic reasons behind these various efforts and their consequences on U.S. foreign policy today.

Assigned Reading:

[“Founding of Liberia, 1847,”](#) Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State, accessed August 5, 2022.

[“Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want,”](#) overview, African Union.

[“U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa”](#), The White House, August 2022. (please pay special attention to pages 12-13 in the context of today’s lecture).

[“Beyond the Year of Return: Africa and the Diaspora Must Form Closer Ties”](#), Benjamin Tetteh, Africa Renewal, September 2020.

[“The New U.S. Africa Strategy Breaks from the Status Quo – With Some Perplexing Stumbles,”](#) by Zainab Usman, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, August 11, 2022.

Map of Africa (blackboard)

(extra credit: identify the countries of the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, the Lakes Region and the six vital waterways of Africa)

Session Three: September 14, 2022

The Scramble for Africa: Colonialization and Consequences

In 1884-1885 thirteen European powers and the U.S. met in Berlin to essentially divide up Africa into colonies, driven primarily by their interest in the natural resources available there that could serve to fuel the Industrial Revolution. No Africans were represented. We will discuss U.S. values, goals and interests in Africa during the colonial period, the U.S. tendency to cede agency to colonial powers, and how the impacts and habits of colonialism influence U.S. policy today.

Guest speaker: [Dr. Janette Yarwood](#), Director for Africa and the Middle East, Office of International Affairs, Yale University

Assigned Reading:

[Fact Sheet: U.S. Strategy Towards Sub-Saharan Africa](#), The White House, August 8, 2022.

“NSC 5818: Statement of U.S. Policy to Africa South of the Sahara Prior to the Calendar Year 1960,” August 26, 1958. (blackboard)

[“The Scramble for Africa: A History of Independence,”](#) (video), Al Jazeera, 5 September 2010.

[“Africa Revives Push for Colonial-Era Reparations,”](#) by Issac Kaledzi, DW, August 8, 2022.

Session Four: September 21, 2022

**** Op-ed due**

1960: The Year of Africa

The UN declared 1960 the Year of Africa: reflecting the overwhelming surge towards independence which had some reflections in the U.S. civil rights movement. However, the Cold War struggle for domination against communism deeply influenced U.S. views of African nationalists and motivated greater alignment with the former colonial partners who

were now vital NATO allies. In the following years African nations assumed their place on global and regional stages in their own right. The U.S. worldview and pervasive bias left it poorly prepared to accurately assess risks and opportunities in 1960, and this may remain true today.

Guest speaker: [Felix Manzi](#), Adjunct Lecturer, University of Kigali.

Assigned Reading

[“Africans Welcome China’s Influence but Maintain Democratic Aspirations”](#), Josephine Sanny and Edem Selormey, Afrobarometer, November 2021.

“Blinken Follows Lavrov on Africa Tour,” by Nosmot Gbadamosi, Africa Brief, Foreign Policy, August 9, 2022. (blackboard)

“Major Power Rivalry in Africa”, by Michelle D. Gavin, Center for Preventative Action, Council on Foreign Relations, May 2021. (blackboard)

[“Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want”](#), overview, aspirations, African Union.

[“U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa”](#), The White House, August 2022.

Session Five: September 28, 2022

U.S.-Africa Policy Playbook

The Department of State created the Africa Bureau in 1958. Most of our policy and diplomatic tools developed after 1960; the military only created its Africa command (AFRICOM) in 2007. We will review the key policy tools available to decision makers working on Africa issues, as well as the key regional, international, and NGO partners for the U.S.

All students: [“Sub-Saharan Africa: Key Issues and U.S. Engagement,”](#) Congressional Research Service, February 2021.

[“Congressional Budget Justification Foreign Operations Appendix 2, Fiscal Year 2022”](#), pages 5-8 (acronyms); overall foreign operations budget (10-11), Africa program (13-16).

Presentations: Teams will meet for 30 minutes and prepare brief presentations (format provided by instructor) for the class on specific diplomatic tools for possible consideration in the development of Summit foreign policy proposals and deliverables due at the end of the October 5 class

Team A: (dis)Engagement (recognition, exchanges, summits, visits, others?)

Optional additional references:

“U.S. Embassies in Africa Are Chronically Short-Staffed,” by Robbie Gramer and Amy Mackinnon, Foreign Policy, July 12, 2022. (blackboard)

[AFSA Ambassadorial Tracker](#) (shows nine Africa embassies without ambassadors), accessed August 16, 2022

[“Review of the Effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the International Exchange Programs of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs,”](#) Office of the Inspector General, U.S. Department of State, May 2021. (executive summary)

Team B: Development and trade (assistance, loans, incentives, humanitarian relief, health, investment, others?)

Optional references

[Export-Import Bank in Africa; U.S. International Development Finance Corporation \(DFC\); Prosper Africa; African Growth and Opportunity Act \(AGOA expires in 2025\); Foreignassistance.gov; Millennium Challenge Corporation; Power Africa \(USAID\);](#)

[“U.S. Trade and Investment in Africa,”](#) by Landry Signe, The Brookings Institute, July 21, 2021.

[“U.S. Assistance to Sub-Saharan Africa: An Overview,”](#) Tomas F. Husted et al, Congressional Research Service, May 2020.

[“Foreign Assistance: An Introduction to U.S. Programs and Policies,”](#) by Emily M. Morgenstern, Congressional Research Service, January 2022.

[“U.S. Chamber and Corporate Council on Africa Partnering to Support Africa Business Forum as Part of Biden-Harris Administration’s Upcoming U.S.-Africa Leaders’ Summit,”](#) U.S. Chamber of Commerce; August 2, 2022.

Team C: Partnership (NGOs, health, climate, youth and human rights, global philanthropies, open societies)

Optional references:

[Regional Bodies; UN in Africa; African Union;](#)

Team D: Security (bases, training, exchanges, AFRICOM, military sales; security and justice training; sanctions and designations, peace-keeping contributions)

Optional references:

[AFRICOM, Department of Justice OPDAT; terrorist designations 2022;](#)

[“Africa’s Security Challenges: A view from Congress, the Pentagon and USAID,”](#) panel conducted by Judd Devermont, CSIS, September 29, 2021.

Session Six: October 5, 2022

****Team Workshop – finalize first draft of Summit policy presentation and related attachments and submit to instructor by the end of class**

Session Seven: October 12, 2022

****Congressional hearings on Summit policy proposals**

U.S. Goals and Objectives for the 2022 US-Africa Summit

Guest speaker: [Ambassador \(retired\) Robert Jackson](#)
(Former PDAS, AF and Ambassador to Cameroon and Ghana)

Session Eight: October 19, 2022

Policy Debate One: How Can the US Best Encourage Africa to Embrace US Values?

Guest speaker: (T) [Amb. \(retired\) Makila James](#)

Teams A and C: (Positive engagement and recommendations)

Teams B and D: (Punitive engagement and recommendations)

Assigned readings (both teams):

[“The United States and Africa: Building a 21st Century Partnership,”](#) speech by U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken, Nigeria, November 19, 2021.

[“US Foreign Policy in Africa: An African Citizen Perspective,”](#) Boadi, Signe and Sanny, Brookings Institute, October 23, 2020.

[“5 Key Takeaways from the 2022 African Youth Survey,”](#) Business Insider, June 14, 2022.

[“U.S. Congress Advances Bill to Sanction Those Fueling War in Ethiopia,”](#) by Salem Solomon, VOA News, February, 2022.

[“Sanctions Programs and Country Information,”](#) Department of the Treasury website, accessed August 28, 2022.

[“US Sanctions Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa,”](#) testimony by former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Princeton Lyman before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Africa and Global Health Policy, June 8, 2016.

Assigned readings:

Session Nine: October 26, 2022

****Policy Challenge One: Democracy or Stability?**

Simulation one: Each team will have 45 minutes to respond to a distinct scenario related to a crisis of democracy/human rights/autocracy in a specific African nation, relying on the tenets and guidance of its foreign policy framework (as defined in its 10/5/2022 policy paper and subsequent presentation). Teams will be provided scenario details as well as a template for defining their response and the opportunity to amend their Summit policy in light of new developments, if needed. Teams will present the crisis, their response and their related policy adaptations to the full class (15 minutes plus Q and A). A completed template must be provided to the instructor by the end of class.

Team A (Central Africa): *Turmoil in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*

Assigned readings

[“The United States-Democratic Republic of the Congo Relationship”](#) Fact Sheet, Office of the Spokesperson, U.S. Department of State, August 9, 2022.

[“Blinken, in Kinshasa, Expresses Concern over DRC’s Arrest of Opposition Leader”](#); Nike King, Voice of America, August 10, 2022.

[“My Dream is to Travel All Over China” Interview with Balumuene Nkuna F., Ambassador of the Democratic Republic of the Congo \(DRC\) to China,](#)” by Mao Li et al, Global Times, July 22, 2022.

(simulation scenario will be provided the day of class)

Team B (Southern Africa):

Assigned readings

[U.S. Relations with Zimbabwe: Bilateral Relations Fact Sheet,](#)” Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, January 22, 2022.

[“Zimbabwe Will Raise Taxes on Platinum, Lithium to Boost Revenue,”](#) By [Godfrey Marawanyika](#) and [Ray Ndlovu](#), Bloomberg Press, July 28, 2022.

[“Zimbabwe electoral appointments spark controversy ahead of 2023”](#), by Chris Muronzi, Al Jazeera, August 1, 2022.

(simulation scenario will be provided the day of class)

Team C (West Africa):

Assigned readings

Team D (Eastern Africa):

Assigned readings

Session 10: November 2, 2022

Policy Debate Two: Is Africa a Security Threat to the U.S.?

Guest speaker: (T)

Assigned Reading:

Teams A and B (Yes)

Teams C and D (No)

Session 11: November 9, 2022

****Policy Challenge Two: Conflicts and Counter-Terrorism**

Each team will have 45 minutes to respond to a distinct scenario related to a counter-terrorism or conflict-related challenge in a specific African nation, relying on the tenets and guidance of its foreign policy framework (as defined in its 10/5/2022 policy paper and subsequent presentation). Teams will be provided scenario details as well as a template for defining their response and the opportunity to amend its policy in light of new developments, if needed. A completed template must be provided to the instructor by the end of class.

Team A (Southern Africa):

Assigned readings

Team B (West Africa):

Assigned readings

Team C (East Africa):

Assigned readings

Team D (Central Africa):

Assigned readings:

Session 12: November 16, 2022

Policy Debate Three: Who Sets the Agenda: The AU or the US?

Guest speaker: (TBD)

Teams A and C: (US)

Assigned readings:

Teams B and D: (AU)

Assigned readings:

*****NOVEMBER 23 – NO CLASS, Happy Thanksgiving!*****

Session 13: November 30, 2022

****Policy Challenge Three: Managing Transnational Issues**

Migration

Health

Climate

Water

Each team will have 45 minutes to respond to a distinct scenario related to an assigned transnational challenge in a specific African nation, relying on the tenets and guidance of its foreign policy framework (as defined in its 10/5/2022 policy paper and subsequent presentation). Teams will be provided scenario details as well as a template for defining their response and the opportunity to amend their policy in light of new developments, if needed. A completed template must be provided to the instructor by the end of class.

Team A (West Africa):

Assigned readings

Team B (East Africa):

Assigned readings

Team C (Central Africa):

Assigned readings

Team D (Southern Africa):

Assigned readings

Session 14: December 7, 2022

****Teams will present their Summit policies and recommendations revised on the basis of the above challenges and debates and present their updated policy proposals to the class.**

Opportunities for U.S.-Africa Engagement

Guest speaker: (T)

FINAL: December 14, 2022

Instructor will provide guidance for the final