AGRARIAN POLITICS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA
Political Science, W3952
Columbia University, Spring 2008

Professor Kimuli Kasara
Office: IAB 717
Office Hours: Tuesday, 11-1
Time: Tuesday 9.00-10.50am
Location: IAB 711
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COURSE OVERVIEW

Africans have engaged their leaders and each other in their capacities as owners of land and livestock and as producers of agricultural goods. Drawing on the literature in political science, economics, anthropology and history this seminar examines the following questions: What impact did colonial agricultural and conservation policies have on African opposition to colonial rule? How have rural producers organized to further their economic interests and what are the political implications of their collective efforts? What institutions have post-colonial governments created in order to extract resources from and/or deliver services to rural producers? Finally, how are claims to land and other natural resources shaped by government policy, traditional institutions, community membership and violence?

REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

The requirements are as follows:

- **Class Participation and Weekly Submission of Discussion Questions** – 25% of the final grade
  You are expected to have done the required readings for the week before the class meets and to send me three discussion questions by 9pm on the day before class.

- **Research Paper Proposal** – due Friday, February 29th by 9am – 20%
  You will write a short memo describing your research paper in approximately 1500 words. You should describe your central question and outline your research strategy. I will discuss your memo with you in individual meetings on the 11th of March. The seminar will not meet on that day.

- **In-Class Presentation of Research Projects** – April 29th – 10%

- **Research Paper** – due Tuesday, May 13th by 9am – 50%
  Your research paper must contain a theoretical argument related to one of the themes of the course and must test that argument empirically. Research papers should be between 15 and 20 pages long. In a few cases students considering a senior thesis will be allowed to submit a detailed research proposal instead of a paper.

The penalty for late assignments will be one letter grade per hour after the deadline.
LOGISTICS

There is no course reader for this class. All readings are on reserve at Butler Library and many are available electronically through the class website on Courseworks https://courseworks.columbia.edu/

READINGS

Session 1 (1/22): Introduction

Session 2 (1/29): Colonial Policies and African Responses: Cash Crops


Session 3 (2/5): Colonial Policies and African Responses: Land and Conservation


Session 4 (2/12): Land Rights and Government Policy


Recommended


Session 5 (2/19): Identity, Status and Rights to Land


Recommended


Session 6 (2/26): Conflict over Land


Recommended


Session 7 (3/4): Agricultural Markets and the Post-Independence State


Recommended

Session 8 (3/11): No Meeting

Students will meet with Prof. Kasara to discuss their research proposals.

Session 9 (3/25): Organizing Farmers: Cooperatives


Session 10 (4/1): Organizing Farmers: The State


Session 11 (4/8): Reforming Agricultural Markets


Recommended


Session 12 (4/15): Drought and Famine


Recommended


Session 13 (4/22): The International Context


Session 14 (4/19): Presentation of Final Projects