ST. LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY
KENYA SEMESTER PROGRAM
COURSE OUTLINE

Critical Issues in Socio-Economic Development in Kenya
(AFS 326/GOV 326/SOC 326)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduction
The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the critical issues that underpin Kenya’s socio-political and economic development. The course seeks to enable the students understand Kenya’s current social-economic and political developments from a historical perspective.

General Approach
This is an interactive class hence full participation of each student is expected. We will take a student centered approach thus student’s personal opinions and views are as important as any other course reading. Students are, therefore, encouraged to voice their views and expressions on the various weekly discussions freely. It is, nevertheless, expected that each student will read the week’s readings to facilitate a more meaningful discussion. Class discussions will form a major element of each class session. Depending on the size of the class/ student enrolled, we will divide the class into groups. Discussions and assignments will be done in these groups.

Class discussions and group work will be based on pre-identified and agreed upon topics. Students will be allowed to choose topics of their choice in consultation with the lecturer. Assignments will be graded as outlined in the course assessment section.

Learning Objectives
The course has three broad objectives:

1. To familiarise the students with Kenya’s socio-economic and political formation through an in-depth study of selected critical issues in her political, economic and social development.

2. To supplement the students’ understanding of Kenya through their experience and observation while in the country.

3. To prepare the student for future comprehensive study and interest in African studies.
Course Assessment
Course assessment will constitute the following: participation in class (20%), group work (30%) and a term paper/essay (50%).

Class participation (20%): students are expected to be actively involved in class discussions and to express their views freely so long as they are supported by facts. The lecturer will pay attention to the quality of participation. All sessions are expected to be as interactive as possible.

Group work (30%): Each group will be free to settle on a topic of choice for group work in consultation with the lecture to ensure groups handle different topics. The topics will be expected to correspond to thematic areas covered in the course outline. Each group give a class presentation of about 30 minutes followed a general discussion lasting for about 30-40 minutes. The following factors will be considered in assessing group work: a) content, in-depth understanding and the articulation of the relevant issues b) how well the presentation is made (i.e. clarity, audibility etc.) c) the level of participation of each team member. Each team member will be allocated similar marks.

Term paper/essay (50%): The paper is expected to be analytical, factual and relevant to the course. Students are expected to come up with their own essay topics in consultation with the lecturer. The paper must include the following: a title, an abstract or an executive summary outlining the central argument in the paper and key issues under focus, an introduction or background information, a problem statement or study motivation followed by the main body which presents data and arguments, and lastly, conclusion and recommendations. Students are encouraged to articulate their personal opinions supported with facts, presenting their own arguments as well as recommending solutions to the problems identified. The paper is expected to be comparative in nature drawing examples/experiences from both ‘worlds’ (i.e. Kenya and the United States of America) while at the same time not losing sight on their social-cultural, political and economic technological differences.

Breakdown of Lectures

Lectures will cover the following three broad areas
- Kenyan State, Ideology, Politics and Development
- Social Service Provision in Kenya
- Governance and Development Challenges in Kenya

Kenyan State, Ideology, Politics and Development

Week 1: Introduction
1.1 The General Concept of Development in the Kenyan Context
1.2 Poverty and Inequality in Kenya
1.3 Development Actors in Kenya (i.e. State and Non State Actors)
Week 2: The Nature of the Kenyan State and Public Policy Making
2.2. Kenya’s Institutional Framework for Public Policy Making
2.3. The Kenyan Constitution (2010) and Devolution

Week 3: Kenyan Politics
3.1. The Politics of Independence in Kenya (Pre-Independence Nationalism)
3.2. Party Politics in the Post-Independence Period (Ethnicity and Party Politics)
3.3. Key Actors in Kenya’s Politics (Key Individuals, CSO/FBOs, Private Sector and the International Community)

Social Service Provision in Kenya

Week 4: Education and Development
4.1 Education and National Development
4.2 Education Systems and Provision in Kenya: A Historical Perspective
4.3 Challenges of Education Provision in Kenya and Implication for National Development

Week 5: Health and Development
5.1 Health Care Systems in Kenya
5.2 Challenges of Health Care Provision in Kenya
5.3 Global Health Initiatives and their Effects on Local Health Care Systems

Governance and Development Challenges in Kenya

Week 6: Some Critical Governance and Development Challenges in Kenya
6.1 Ethnicity and Citizenship in Kenya
6.2 Conflict and Security Challenges in Kenya
6.3 Corruption and Public Service Provision in Kenya

Week 7: Revision and Submission of the Term Paper/Essay

Readings
There is no required book for this class. However, the following reading materials can provide the students with a fairly good understanding of the course content. Since many of these books (and other similar ones) are available in area libraries it is not advisable to buy them. The course facilitator will be providing additional readings from other sources such as opinion pieces on topical issues published in daily newspapers.

Readings


