
The Encyclopedia is a collection of work by some of the best scholars working in Africa on a variety of issues within therubric of politics on the continent. It provides a comprehensive examination of the key issues and debates within the study of African politics.

Jimmy’s article is titled “East Africa: Regional Politics and Dynamics”. It is co-authored by Walter O. Oyugi, a retired Professor of Political Science and Public Administration at University of Nairobi. Focusing on Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, the authors point out that the three countries inherited similar political systems and all governance institutions at the sub territorial level operated in line with centrally determined guidelines.

They argue that the centralization of power has impacted on the evolution, character, and nature of the state in the region as well as on the governance of the individual states. Even with constitutional and legislative changes to check on the excess powers of the executive—which in all three cases means the President and his key allies—the state continues to seek means of controlling the processes of democratization and decentralization in a manner that defeats the logic of introducing checks and balances.

The encyclopedia’s current issue carries 85 chapters all published online as part of the Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics. Nic Cheeseman, a Professor of Democracy at Birmingham University in the United Kingdom is the editor-in-chief of the encyclopedia published by the Oxford University Press. He works in the fields of comparative politics, democratization and development with a focus on Sub-Saharan Africa.

In his studies, Jimmy specializes in development communication with a bias in politics and governance. He expects to graduate in September this year.

Pioneer Pharmacy students hold their first research concept note presentation

A research concept note presentation workshop was held in the School of Pharmacy and Health Science on June 28, 2019. A total of 51 participants including faculty, staff and fourth year Pharmacy students attended the workshop.

The workshop was organized in order to provide feedback to students on their planned research projects. During her opening speech, Prof. Njeri Wamae, Dean School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences congratulated the pioneer class of Pharmacy students for reaching this important level in their academic career.

Dr. Munyendo, the Chair of the Pharmacy department underlined the learning outcomes of the research project and advised the students to use the University’s resources to do their projects using innovative approaches. During the workshop, 32 fifth year Pharmacy students presented their research topics, backgrounds of their study and their research objectives, with the faculty giving constructive comments for each student.

Pharmacy students are required to carry out research in their final year of study as part of their course work requirements.
The effects of multilingualism on the cognitive system

By Dr. Dana Basnight-Brown and Brenda Odhiambo

Dana Basnight-Brown, PhD, Associate Professor of Psychology and Director of the Centre for Cognitive and Developmental Research at USIU-Africa, gave a colloquium titled, “The Effects of Multilingualism on the Cognitive System.” In this presentation, she discussed the importance of multiple language use in multilingual communities, and the effects of such use on core cognitive areas of perception, attention, memory, and decision-making. Of specific interest highlighted during the discussions were the implications of multiple language use on advertising/marketing, criminal justice, eyewitness testimony, psychotherapy, and decision-making (for example, medical and/or investment decisions).

One specific research project highlighted during the colloquium focused on the Bilingual Advantage Effect, which refers to whether knowing and using two languages results in increased cognitive ability and greater executive control. This area has been a focus of study within the cognitive domain for the last decade, with several studies reporting a cognitive advantage for those who are bilingual, while others have failed to find the effect, suggesting that publication bias is to blame. To date, very few studies have explored this effect in multilingual populations. Therefore, a current study with 162 highly proficient multilinguals from the USIU-Africa population (i.e., all of which had ages of acquisition of < 10 years old for their first 3 languages) participated in an experiment designed to examine executive control. Results revealed that when a nonverbal attention task was used and the number of languages that participants knew was more than in previous bilingual studies, there was only a weak relationship between language proficiency and attentional control, a finding that has important implications for previous theories surrounding cognitive control and multilingualism. Acknowledgments were given to USIU-Africa research assistants, Joyce Ngugi and Ruth Mwachiro, who assisted with data collection on this investigation.

USIU-Africa’s short film ‘Trauma’ open to public voting

By Ernest A. Mwanzi and Dr. Rachael Diang’a

USIU-Africa’s short film ‘Trauma’ had received six nominations by the end of the 7 Day Film Festival. From June 5 to 12, 2019, the 7 Day Film Festival challenged its participants to produce an original short film, music video and documentary within 7 days, given a surprise line phrase to add to their stories, theme and specified locations within Nakuru County. As a result, Trauma was nominated for Best Short film, Best Director, Best Cinematography, Best Male Actor, Best Inspiring short film and Best Student Short film.

Members of the USIU-Africa community are encouraging to search for ‘TRAUMA (SHORT FILM) BY KELVIN OSOO’ on YouTube and vote for the film by liking the posted video or directly by clicking on this link https://youtu.be/NSClojYBznw. The voting window closes on Thursday, July 11, 2019.
USIU-Africa student in running to become first ‘female President’ in Kenya

By Taigu Muchiri

Umulkher Harun Mohamed, APT Senior is one of the final five contestants of Ms. President reality show airing weekly on KTN television. The show premiered in January with a total of 71 participants from across the country and only 40 were chosen to compete at the academy. The all-female contestant show focusing on issues of leadership is creating a platform to portray the capacity and ability of women to lead effectively. Each week, the contestants are given problem-solving tasks that will determine if they are eliminated or continue to the next stage.

After a rigorous five-month period, Umi and four other contestants are in the final stages of the show that will see it crown one winner as the first Kenyan ‘female President’. Viewers are required to vote every week where one participant will be eliminated from the show. To vote for Umi, tune in to KTN every Wednesday from 8 p.m.

SHSS holds a 4-day seminar on Post-Colonialism

By Saada Mutasa and Diana Meso

Can the African mind be decolonized? Can Africa be understood without a hint of post-colonial theory? These questions lingered in the minds of participants during the “VII USIU Seminar on Decolonizing the Mind: Post-Colonialism in Theory and Practice” held at the Library Conference room from June 24 to June 27.

Organized by the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS), the seminar shed more light on post-colonialism, its theoretical background and its impact on politics, literature and cinema decades after colonization occurred in Africa.

The event saw various speakers take on different topics; Dr. Fatma Ali (Associate Professor of International Relations) gave an introduction to post-colonialism, Dr. Mikhail Gromov (Assistant Professor of Literature) enlightened participants on the different theories that have developed post-colonialism, Prof. Macharia Munene (Professor of History and International Relations) gave an insight to post-colonialism in African politics and Dr. Rachael Diang’a (Assistant Professor of Film) expounded on post-colonialism and cinema.

The discussions pointed out that it is evident that most Africans still feel inferior to the “white man” as they continue adopting and mimicking the “white man’s” language, dress code, political systems, education systems and standards and even cinema production. However, participants concluded that it is not advisable for Africans to go back to their traditional ways, neither is it okay for them to completely emulate the western culture, rather they should merge the two cultures and adopt what will impact them positively. Additionally, Africans need to decolonize their minds because their future lies entirely in their hands.
USIU–Africa crowned winners of Augmented Reality competition

By Ernest A. Mwanzi

On June 27, 2019 USIU-Africa team from the School of Science and Technology, beat 13 other teams to emerge winners of the inaugural Augmented Reality (AR) hosted by Konica Minolta National University Competition. The team was led by Varun Gupta and they were exploring a topic on AR in board gaming.

According to Reality Technologies, AR is a technology that entails an enhanced version of reality where live direct or indirect views of physical real-world environments are amplified with superimposed computer-generated images over a user’s view of the real-world, thus enhancing one’s current perception of reality.

The Konica Minolta National University competition was designed to use its genARate platform to create cases around the practical uses of AR in the future. The competition was held in three universities; United States International University – Africa, University of Nairobi, and Strathmore University, and saw a total of 14 teams signing up for the competition.

The event was held at Nyama Mama restaurant in Westlands, Nairobi, where winners walked away with laptops.

IR student bags National award

Ms. Linda Chepkwony, (International Relations Major) emerged the winner in the Exports Category during the annual 254 Youth Entrepreneurship Awards that took place at the Kenyatta International Conference Center (KICC) last weekend.

This award is given to young entrepreneurs under the age of 35 years who have immensely contributed towards the growth of the Kenyan economy by creating employment thereby playing a critical role in driving and achieving the Big Four agenda of the government.

Earlier this year, Ms. Chepkwony emerged the winner in the Business Category during the second edition of Zuri Awards 2019 held at the Villa Rosa Kempisnki Hotel, in recognition for her exceptional work in bringing change and making a difference in her community.

Ms. Chepkwony is the founder of Kenya Youth in Trade and Business which empowers youth, women and people living disability with the knowledge on exports by taking advantage of trade agreements that Kenya is part of. She is also the Founder and President of the Abraham Lincoln Youth Initiative, as well as the Chief Executive Officer, Kyle’s Pure Organic and Naturals, which manufactures homemade pure and organic peanut butter and also supplies other organic products.

The 254 Youth Entrepreneurship Awards is an annual event held to recognize outstanding young entrepreneur’s below the age of 35 years across the nation for their contribution towards the growth of the Kenyan Economy and the Big Four agenda of the government.

Zuri Awards was inaugurated in 2017 to recognize and celebrate outstanding women who are dedicated to creating positive change through work in their communities, inspire other women through exceptional displays of leadership, rise against all odds and be courageous in the face of adversity and change lives of their communities in the various segments of the market.
Sport Updates

By Ernest Mwanzi

Soccer
In the Universities and Colleges Football League (UCFL), the ladies team lost to Zetech University by four goals, while the men’s team lost to Utalii College by one goal. All matches were played at NYS-NHU ground, on Saturday, June 29.

Rugby
During the Kenya Universities Sports Association (KUSA) Rugby 7’s – 2019/2019 season, USIU-Africa Rugby Martials lost to University of Eldoret 7-5, Kabarak University 21 -7, Jomo Kenyatta University of Science and Technology 14 -12 and Technical University of Kenya 14 -12. All the matches were played between June 29 and 30 at Moi University, Eldoret.

Kick - Boxing
USIU-Africa team were crowned champions of the Open Kick-Boxing Championship held at the USIU-Africa Auditorium, on June 30. Menengai Nakuru and Njoro took the Second and third position respectively.

American Football
On Saturday, June 29 the USIU-Africa American football team took position three with 28 points, during the American Football league matches played at the USIU-Africa Rugby pitch.

Media Mentions

Compiled by Diana Meso

July 4: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Kenya Sevens stars named in Elgon Cup team.”

July 2: USIU-Africa was mentioned by the Daily Nation in an article titled “Blades continue chase for top 3 finish.”
https://www.usiu.ac.ke/1251/daily-nation-blades-continue-chase-for-top-3-finish

July 2: The New Vision mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Swimmers look to improve times at Seals Invitational.”

June 29: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Peer review: New book analyses how Ngugi influenced world of literature.”
https://www.usiu.ac.ke/1248/university-world-news-one-stop-shop-develop-african-research-leadership

June 29: USIU-Africa was mentioned by University World News in an article titled “A one-stop shop to develop African research, leadership.”
https://www.usiu.ac.ke/1248/university-world-news-one-stop-shop-develop-african-research-leadership

June 28: The East African mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Women writers sprout and fertilise the beloved continent.”
https://www.usiu.ac.ke/1247/east-african-women-writers-sprout-fertilise-beloved-continent

June 28: USIU-Africa was mentioned by the Daily Nation in an article titled “Blades out to slice through Umoja, Emyba in league ties.”

Upcoming events

Fundraising workshop | July 10