



COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, THEOLOGY, HUMANITIES & EDUCATION

Leadership: POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA

END OF FIRST SEMESTER EXAMINATIONS

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2025

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DURATION: 3 HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS

1. This paper contains **TWO** sections (A and B).
 2. Section A is **COMPULSORY**.
 3. Answer **ANY TWO (2) questions** from Section B.
 4. Start each question on a new page in your booklet.
 5. Do not repeat material.
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SECTION A: COMPULSORY

Question 1

Political leadership in Africa today bears the unmistakable footprint of colonial legacies, both in its institutional architecture and its psychological orientation. The postcolonial state inherited political systems designed not for self-determination but for domination — centralized, hierarchical, and extractive in nature. Colonial administrations cultivated “native authorities” to serve imperial interests, normalizing governance through coercion and compliance rather than participation and accountability. Independence merely transferred these structures to African elites who, rather than dismantling them, rebranded them under nationalist slogans. The colonial state’s bureaucratic logic — privileging loyalty over competence, control over dialogue, and power over service — continues to shape how leadership is imagined and exercised across much of the continent. This continuity explains why many African governments, despite decades of self-rule, still reproduce the alienating and authoritarian tendencies of their colonial predecessors.

*Beyond structure, colonialism left deep psychic and epistemic scars on the African conception of leadership itself. The colonial encounter redefined authority through the lens of foreign superiority, eroding indigenous models of communal leadership that prized consensus, moral integrity, and relational accountability. In their place emerged the “big man” archetype — a leader modelled after the colonial governor, distant from the people yet monopolizing power in their name. This mindset perpetuates dependency on external validation, where African leaders often mimic Western styles of governance, diplomacy, and development priorities to gain legitimacy in global eyes. The tragedy, therefore, is not merely political but civilizational: leadership that governs Africa while thinking through Europe. True liberation will only begin when political leadership in Africa reclaims its indigenous moral compass — one rooted in ubuntu, reciprocity, and collective responsibility rather than inherited systems of domination – (extract from *Emerging Discourses of International Relations in Africa – Rusero, A.M. 2026*).*

Based on the above insights, prepare a policy brief set to be tabled before the African Union on the need to re-orient political leadership in Africa. Your brief should have title, context, problem, objectives, policy prescriptions and recommendations. **[40 marks]**

SECTION B

Question 2

Kneel Leadership is a fusion of two powerful ideas: “kneeling,” representing humility, reverence, and submission to a higher divine authority, and “leadership,” symbolizing a necessary transition from outdated, self-serving leadership models to transformative, people-centered, spiritually guided leadership. The term challenges the continent to shift from mere leadership positions to leadership postures—a posture of kneeling before purpose, people, and providence.

Explain how this kind of leadership may be feasible and applicable to Africa. **[30 Marks]**

Question 3

With reference to Zimbabwe and South Africa, explain the link between political leadership and development. **[30 marks]**

Question 4

Give an appraisal of the DRC conflict and its connection to political leadership. **[30 marks]**

Question 5

Explain the significance of Ubuntu philosophy as a framework for diplomacy and conflict resolution. **[30 marks]**

END OF PAPER