Instructor: Yesola Kweon (yesola.kweon@usu.edu)
Time and Location: As indicated in “Important Dates”
Virtual Office Hours: by appointment

Overview

This course will explore post-colonial politics in Asia. Particular focus will be placed on the nation-building process, democratization, and economic development in the region. The course opens by critically approaching the concept of Asian values. We will entertain various approaches to the definition of “Asia,” ranging from geography, culture, demographics, and political economy. For the first third of the semester, we will survey the political terrain in three Northeast Asian countries: Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. Starting with the unprecedented economic growth in the region since the 1950s and extending to democratization in the 1980s, we will examine the relationship between political regimes and economic development, and the linkages between global and domestic politics.

The second third of the semester will be devoted to understanding politics in Southeast Asia which will be illustrated through the examples of Singapore, Indonesia, and Vietnam. Different colonial and Cold War experiences have shaped the political and development trajectories of this region in ways that are distinct from Northeast Asia. Here, we will focus on the themes of illiberal democracy, ethnic inequality and political corruption. The final third of the course is led by student-led class discussions on the core themes in the field of political science that directly relate to the politics of Asian countries. Students are asked to consider the relationship between regime types and economic growth, culturalism, corruption, and the role of the state in economy.

Course Objectives

1. Gaining Factual Knowledge (IDEA #1)

2. Developing Knowledge and understanding of diverse perspectives, global awareness, or other cultures (IDEA #2)

3. Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view (IDEA #11)
Important Dates

Since we won’t be able to meet in person, all the important announcements will be made via Canvas or email. Please keep your eyes on these notifications. It is your responsibility to pay close attention to these email updates and instructions. The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the schedule. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of these changes. Any change will be announced in advance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Assignments/Activities and Submission Places</th>
<th>Grade Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every Sunday</td>
<td>Weekly News Post (Canvas Discussions)</td>
<td>total 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/30</td>
<td>Zoom Class Meeting: Course Introduction &amp; Lecture on Rethinking Asian Values</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/19</td>
<td>Movie Review #1</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/20</td>
<td>Zoom Group Presentation Meeting #1</td>
<td>2%(participation) / 20%(presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/04</td>
<td>Zoom Group Presentation Meeting #2</td>
<td>2%(participation) / 20%(presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/11</td>
<td>Zoom Mid-term Exam Review Online Meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/18</td>
<td>Mid-term Exam Submission Due by 11:59pm (Canvas Assignments — Midterm exam)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>Zoom Group Presentation Meeting #3</td>
<td>2%(participation) / 20%(presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/31</td>
<td>Movie Review #2</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/08</td>
<td>Zoom Group Presentation Meeting #4</td>
<td>2%(participation) / 20%(presentation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/29</td>
<td>Zoom Group Presentation Meeting #5</td>
<td>2%(participation) / 20%(presentation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/05</td>
<td>Short Book Review (Canvas Assignments — Short Book Review)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/06</td>
<td>Final Exam Review Online Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/13</td>
<td>Final Exam Submission Due by 11:59pm (Canvas Assignments — Final exam)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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*Note: All online meetings will be done from 1:30pm to 2:45pm via Zoom on the dates indicated in the table above.

Zoom Link: Click Here
Passcode: aggies
Requirements

- **Online Lectures**: All lectures, except the first lecture, will be recorded and uploaded on Canvas Media Gallery. The first lecture on Asian values will be offered through a zoom meeting on 08/30 at 1:30pm. Students are required to watch the designated lectures before the exams. These lectures are the most important materials for the midterm and final exams.

- **News Posts (15%) (IDEA #1 & #11)**: Every week, students are required to post one news article or column on Asian politics with a short reflection piece (NOT summary) (100 to 150 words) in the Discussion page on Canvas ([https://usu.instructure.com/courses/557543/discussion_topics](https://usu.instructure.com/courses/557543/discussion_topics)). Students are also required to make a comment on at least two posts by their classmates each week. Weekly news posts (and comments) are due 11:59pm every Sunday (except Thanksgiving and final weeks).

English-language sources for current events in Asia include, but not limited to:
- The Economist
- The New York Times
- The Washington Post
- BBC
- The Guardian
- The Asian Wall Street Journal
- The Straits Times (Singapore)
- The Chosun Ilbo (S. Korea)
- Hankyoreh (S. Korea)
- Korea Exposé (S. Korea)
- South Morning China Post (Hong Kong)
- The Japan News (by Yomiuri. Japan)
- The Asahi Shimbun (Japan)
- The Japan Times (Japan)
- Nippon.com (Japan)
- Taipei Times (Taiwan)
- China Times (Taiwan)
- The Star (Malaysia)
- New Strait Times (Malaysia)
- The Jakarta Post (Indonesia)

- **Movie Reviews (2.5% each) (IDEA #2&#3)**: Students will watch two movies and write a one to two page review. The review should not be a mere summary of the film, but it should provide students’ critical analysis and reflection on the film. Each review should be submitted via Canvas by 11:59pm on the dates indicated below.

  - 09/19: The Apology (Available online through USU DocuSeek *Search ”The Apology” in the USU library, you should be able to access the film online)*
• **Group Policy Analysis Presentation (20%) (IDEA #18#11):** At the start of the term, students will be placed into groups and asked to present their policy analysis on a chosen issue in one of Asian countries covered in class and facilitate in-class discussion. The entire presentation and discussion should be about 50 minutes. The first 30 minutes should be devoted to the presentation of the groups analysis and the remaining 15 minutes for class discussion. The class will have a meeting via zoom during a class time (1:30pm) on the dates indicated below.

- Group Presentation 1: 09/20
- Group Presentation 2: 10/04
- Group Presentation 3: 10/25
- Group Presentation 4: 11/08
- Group Presentation 5: 11/29

Zoom link: Click Here  
Passcode: aggies

Examples of issues that presenters can address include, but are not limited to, inequality, environment, ethnic/religious conflict, aging population, or gender conflict. Topics should not be too broad (e.g. economy/culture), and do not have to be limited to ones covered in class.

A good presentation will: 1) clearly identify key problems and issues that are related to a chosen topic in the context of a chosen country; 2) identify causes and effects of those problems as well as political actors with diverse interests involved in the issue; 3) explain how the government has attempted to addressed these issues and evaluate whether the current measures are effective; 4) provide policy suggestions to help resolve the problems under consideration and to overcome any limitations present in the existing policy; 5) prepare three to five discussion questions for classmates and facilitate in-class discussion.

Evaluation will be implemented by both the instructor (10 points) and students in audience (10 points). For students’ evaluation, I will distribute a marking rubric and take an average across students.

Teamwork is important for this group project, if there is any member who does not participate in preparing for the presentation, other group members should notify the instructor in advance, and if need be, a grade will not be given to that member.

• **Group Presentation Meeting Participation (2% each):** Participation in all five group presentation meetings is mandatory. Students are expected to show up in a zoom meeting and actively participate in discussions led by a presentation group. The participation will be recorded through the completion of a presentation evaluation poll at the end of the meeting.
• **Short Book Review (10%)**: Students will be assigned selected chapters from a novel, *Human Acts* by Han Kang, and are asked to write a review of these sections (2-3 pages, 12pt, Times New Roman, double spaced). The novel depicts the 1980 Gwangju Uprising in South Korea from the perspectives of ordinary citizens who directly and indirectly engaged in democratic movements against a military dictatorship. The assigned chapters describe experience of the military dictatorship and democratic movements from perspectives of various actors — e.g. a female laborer, a male college student activist, and a middle school student. Students will compare and analyze what their experiences are like, what factors — at both macro- and individual-level — made each actor’s experience distinct from others, and what their distinct political experiences imply about state-society relations. The review should **NOT** be a mere overview of the book. The summary of the story should not exceed one paragraph. This assignment should be submitted by 11:59pm via Canvas in *December 5th*.

• **Midterm & Final Essay Exams (20% each) (IDEA #1, #2, #11)**: There are two at-home essay exams in this class. For each exam, students will write one essay on a given topic. The exam will cover reading materials and any contents covered in class. The exam question will be posted at 9:00am on an exam date on Canvas, and students have to submit the exam electronically on Canvas by **11:59pm on the same day**.

  It is an open-book exam. However, the exam will require you to critically think about issues discussed in class and present your own argument with strong support. Also, importantly, no plagiarism is allowed. If students are using texts from other sources, they should be properly cited. *Any plagiarism, if caught, will be given F.*

  Essay evaluation criteria:

  – Demonstration of clear understanding of a topic in the context of selected countries
  – Clear and logical development of argument/evaluation of a given issue
  – Substantive examples from selected country cases
  – Proper citations of assigned readings, demonstrating understanding of the texts
  – Any plagiarized essay will be given no point
Readings

All readings for the class will be provided. You can download them from Canvas. Only readings with an asterisk are mandatory.

Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>60-66</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59 and below</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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Other Course and University Policies

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, cheating or academic misconduct in any manner will not be tolerated and will result in an F for the course. All written assignments and exams will be thoroughly checked for plagiarism and cheating. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and observe Utah State Universitys policies against cheating and plagiarism. The Universitys Code of Student Conduct in relation to academic integrity violation is available at https://studentconduct.usu.edu/aiv.

Students with Disabilities

USU is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for eligible students with disabilities, including students who have learning disabilities, health impairments, psychiatric disabilities, and/or other disabilities. If you believe you have a disability which requires accommodation, please the Disability Resource Center as early in the semester as possible (University Inn 101, 435-797-2444, drc@usu.edu) so that the necessary arrangements can be made. More information is available at http://www.usu.edu/drc/.

Late Assignments and Missed Exams

All assignments (e.g., news posts, book review) should be turned in on time. However, given the unprecedented circumstance, unexpected emergencies can occur (e.g. illness, child care emergency). In such a case, students should notify the instructor at the earliest convenience. If necessary, I will permit the rescheduling of assignment deadlines and exam dates.
Civility and Courteous Behavior

Civility in the (virtual) classroom and respect for the opinions of others is very important in an academic environment. It is likely you may not agree with everything which is said or discussed in the classroom. However, classroom discussion is meant to allow us to hear a variety of viewpoints, and this can only happen if we respect each other and our differences. Any discrimination against and disrespectfulness of others, whether in verbal or non-verbal form, targeting an individual or group based on age, color, religion, disability, race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation will not be tolerated in our classroom.
Course Schedule

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the schedule and reading assignments. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of these changes. Any change will be announced in advance during class.

*** How to Define “Asia”? ***

00. Rethinking Asian Values (*** via Zoom meeting ***)

- McDougall. 2007. Asia Pacific in World Politics. Intro.

***Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan***

1. A Brief Overview of the Three Countries Part I: Japan


2. A Brief Overview of the Three Countries Part II: South Korea

3. A Brief Overview of the Three Countries Part III: Taiwan


4. The East Asian Economic Success


5. Crony Capitalism

6. The Developmental Welfare State


7. Democratization in East Asia Part I


8. Democratization in East Asia Part II


9. The 1998 Asian Financial Crisis


10. The Transformation of the East Asian Economies


• Movie: Japan’s Demographic Time Bomb

11. Gender Politics in East Asia


• Movie: South Korea’s Gender Wars

*** Indonesia ***

12. A Brief Overview of Indonesia (**Book Review Due**)

• Bertrand. 2013. Political Change in Southeast Asia. Ch2. (only pp.41-64)*


13. The Politics of Corruption


14. From Democratic Transition to Consolidation


*** Malaysia ***

15. A Brief Overview of Malaysia


20. The Politics of Ethnicity/Religion


*** Singapore ***

17. Autocratic Regime Stability in Singapore


*** Vietnam ***

18. The Adaptation of the Communist State in Vietnam


