

PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY
MARK O. HATFIELD SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT
DIVISION OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

PS 354
INTRODUCTION TO ASIAN POLITICS

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Course Description

East Asia, comprising the 14 major countries of Northeast and Southeast Asia, has a total population of 2.2 billion people (62% of it in China) and covers a diverse array of languages, cultures, geographies, and histories. Despite its diversity, the idea of an “East Asian” model of political and economic organization is widely discussed. This course will consider the comparative politics of East Asia. Comparing East Asian politics requires two types of comparisons: (1) Comparing what is different and what is similar among the 14 countries themselves; (2) Comparing any common features of East Asian politics to the common features of politics in other regions (Africa, the Middle East, the West, South Asia, Latin America, and Russia/Central Asia). We will thus be engaged in an ongoing discussion about what if anything makes East Asian politics distinctive. This course will offer regional and global perspectives on one of the most diverse, dynamic, and interesting regions in the world.

Course Aims

This course, like all social science courses, has two aims, one substantive and the other methodological. Substantively, the aim is to give students a deeper understanding and appreciation of the East Asian region and its politics. Methodologically, the aim is to strengthen faculties of critical thinking and develop skills in social science research. Like other university courses, this course is also intended to help students assess their performance relative to their peers and to introduce students to traditions of inquiry, argument, writing, communication, and collaboration.

Course Readings

There is one required textbook: Bruce Gilley, *The Nature of Asian Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2014). We will also watch some documentary films in order to gain broader insights into Asian politics and policy.

Course Expectations

Attendance and participation in all classes is mandatory for this course. Students are expected to have completed the readings and be ready to discuss them. Students should check their D2L emails regularly or have them forwarded to the email account they normally use.

Course Requirements: All

- 10% -- Class Attendance
- 5% -- Class Participation
- 60% -- Take-home exams (20% each)
- 5% -- Map Quiz
- 20% -- Summative Paper

Course Schedule by Week

Week 1: Introduction (March 31 & April 2)

Gilley, Ch. 1

Film: *Melaka & Georgetown: UNESCO World Heritage Cities* (2013)

Week 2: State and Society (April 7 & 9)

Gilley, Ch. 2

Film: *The Tank Man* (2006)

Week 3: Development I (April 14)

Gilley, Ch. 3, pp.53-72

Film: *Vietnam: Assessing the Millennium Development Goals* (2011)

Week 3: Guest Lecture (April 16)

PSU Doctoral Student Dang Nguyen on Economic Restructuring and Growth in Vietnam

Week 3: Take-Home Exam #1 (April 16)

Due April 20 by 10am on D2L

Week 4: Development II (April 21 & 23)

Gilley, Ch. 3, pp. 72-88
Film: *Power to the People: Philippine Co-ops* (2001)

Week 5: Democracy I (April 28)

Gilley, Ch. 4, pp. 89-117
Film: (Thailand)

Week 5: Guest Lecture (April 30)

PSU Doctoral Student Sirisak Laochankham on Failure of Democracy in Thailand

Week 6: Democracy II (May 5 & 7)

Gilley, Ch. 4, pp. 117-141
Film: *Burma (Myanmar) : A New Dawn* (2014)

Week 6: Take-Home Exam #2 (May 7)

Due May 11 by 10am on D2L

Week 7: Governance I (May 12 & 14)

Gilley, Ch. 5, pp. 142-165
Film: *Singapore: Doing It My Way* (1993)

Week 8: Governance II (May 19 & 21)

Gilley, Ch. 5, pp. 165-185
Film: (Japan)

Week 9: Public Policy I (May 26 & 28)

Gilley, Ch. 6, pp. 186-202
Film: (South Korea)

Week 10: Public Policy II (June 2 & 4)

Gilley, Ch. 6, pp. 202-212
Film: (Taiwan)

Week 10: Take-Home Exam #3 (June 4)

Due June 8 by 10am on D2L

Finals Week: Summative Paper

Due June 12 by 10am on D2L