

PLS 449: Southeast Asian Government and Politics

Remote Version Remix

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Course Description:

This course is designed to expose students to a deeper understanding of concepts in Political Science through the experience of states in Southeast Asia (SEA). We will differentiate between the theoretical construction and empirical manifestation of concepts across the region. SEA is a vast region encompassing eleven states. It is a big task to cover the history & development of a single region in one course. We will use certain themes as a lens for some states, but there is more to be said about each of them. By the end of this course, I hope that you have a better context for contemporary issues in SEA. Aside from content, this course will also help students develop a wide range of skills that are applicable for coursework both inside and outside of the discipline as well as beyond the classroom. There will be a focus on developing critical thinking, logical argumentation, written and oral communication, interpersonal communication, and time management.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, students should be able to...

1. Analyze the extent to which a given Southeast Asian state's colonial history affects its contemporary development
2. Compare/contrast the salience of external powers on the development of individual states & the region of SEA as a whole
3. Differentiate between theoretical expectations in the field of Political Science and empirical observations in Southeast Asian states
4. Construct a cause and effect argument using evidence from lecture/readings as support
5. Classify states in Southeast Asia across a range of characteristics concerning regime type, electoral system, and political climate

Participation Policy:

All assignments are part of the participation grade, unless otherwise specified in the Grade Components table. Synchronous meetings are *optional* and do *not* directly affect your grade.

Respect Policy:

Students are to remain respectful of the instructor & one another at all times (even if your screen is off or you're typing). It is unlikely that everyone will agree on all issues. Disrespectful comments will not be tolerated, especially those that are ad hominem in nature.

Grade Components:

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| Assignments ¹ | 20% |
| Portfolios | 60% |
| Midterm | 20% |

Readings:

You do not need to purchase a textbook for this course since all relevant readings will be up on Blackboard. Aside from articles, I will be assigning chapters from two textbooks that are on Blackboard in Course Documents:

1. D.R. SarDesai, *Southeast Asia Past & Present* 4th Ed.
2. Milton Osborne, *Exploring Southeast Asia: A Traveller's History of the Region*

The material in lecture provides a theoretical context for the reading, often linking to broad themes. The assigned readings will provide greater detail on cases or time periods. An optional reading guide and “how to” video for these readings will be included.

Assignments:

A homework assignment will be due every Sunday by midnight on Blackboard. This will usually be a worksheet focused on lecture and the readings. Worksheets will provide instructions for a Blackboard discussion or additional task whenever relevant.

The Portfolios will consist of a series of short research pieces due every couple weeks. Additional instructions for the formatting and content for each piece will be provided separately. The Portfolio makes up 30% of your final grade, but each research piece contributes to that overall total.

Synchronous Meetings (Optional):

Occasionally, I will send an email about a Zoom meeting. These are *optional*. You will not gain or lose points if you attend or miss them, respectively. During these meetings, I will structure various discussions or activities to reinforce material. But I will not cover anything new.

Weekly Schedule:

1. Watch the lecture videos that are uploaded every Tuesday (50-70 min.)
2. Complete the reading(s) for the week (60-90 min.)
3. Attend the optional Zoom meeting, when emailed (30-60 min.)
4. Submit the week's assignment by Sunday (30-60 min.)

Semester Schedule: Guided around University [Holidays](#)

TBD means “to be determined” aka “I’m still working on it but will finalize soon”

| Week | Topic | Readings | Assignments |
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¹ Any required Blackboard activity related to worksheets are included in this category. Completion of Portfolio items is not part of this.

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| Part 1: Setting the Stage | | | |
| 0 | Course Logistics Introductions | Watch the intro video along with the syllabus | Nothing due because it's Week 0 & that's not cool |
| 1 | What is Southeast Asia? | Donald Emmerson, "What is 'Southeast Asia'?" *Skim for main idea on what SEA is, don't worry about memorizing all details* | Worksheet Due Sunday |
| 2 | Kingdoms | SarDesai Ch 2-4 (pages 3-62) *Skim these for main ideas, don't worry about memorizing all details* | Nothing due because I made syllabus changes & want you to have time to readjust expectations |
| 3 | Colonialism | SarDesai Ch 5 7 Ch 11 (pages 133-139) Diana Kim, excerpt from <i>Empires of Vice</i> | Midterm Questions Due Sunday |
| 4 | States & Nations WWII & Independence | SarDesai Ch 13 & Ch 14 Jared Diamond, "What Makes Countries Rich or Poor?" Optional: "Nationalism without States" by Montserrat Guibernau in <i>The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism</i> *I highly recommend you read this if you have not taken PLS 202* | Research Piece Due 9/20 Sunday: "How did your state become independent?" See additional file for instructions |
| Part 2: Post-Colonial Southeast Asia: Domestic | | | |
| 5 | State Capacity in Southeast Asia | SarDesai Ch 23 James Scott, excerpt from <i>The Art of Not Being Governed</i> Fareed Zakaria and Lee Kuan Yew, "Culture Is Destiny: A Conversation with Lee Kuan Yew" | Midterm Questions due Sunday |
| 6 | Pathways of Democratization | SarDesai Ch 22 Deasy Simandjuntak, "The | Research Piece Due 10/4 Sunday: "How has your state handled the |

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| | n | State of Democracy in Southeast Asia” | COVID-19 pandemic?” See additional file for instructions |
| 7 | Intercommunal Violence | TBD (TW: violence) Wa Lone, Kyaw Soe Oo, Simon Lewis, and Antoni Slodkowski, “How Myanmar forces burned, looted and killed in a remote village”, in <i>Reuters News</i> | Midterm Exam Due 10/11 Sunday |
| 8 | Authoritarian Durability: Monarchies | SarDesai Ch 21 | Research Piece Due 10/18 Sunday: “How are marginalized groups faring in your state?” OR “How have protests been handled in your state?” See additional file for instructions |
| 9 | Political Parties/Elections: Democratic or Authoritarian | Lee Morgenbesser & Thomas Pepinsky, "Elections as Causes of Democratization: Southeast Asia in Comparative Perspective" (pgs 1-11, 21-27) Katrín Travouillon (With Chanroeun Pa), "Going Forward, Looking Back: Observations On The 2018 Cambodian Election" | Worksheet Due Sunday |
| 10 | Authoritarian Durability: Militaries | SarDesai Ch 20 & Ch 21 Sheina Chestnut Greitens, "The Philippines," in <i>Dictators and Their Secret Police</i> | Research Piece Due 11/1 Sunday: “What kind of regime is your state & will that change?” See additional file for instructions |
| 11 | Self-Care & Mental Health Break | Veteran’s Day 11/11 | Do at least ONE thing for yourself that is not related to school or work. Reply all to my email asking everyone what they did |
| Part 3: Post-Colonial Southeast Asia & the International Community | | | |

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| 12 | Intervention in The Vietnam War | SarDesai Ch 17 & Ch 24 Julian Assange, excerpt from <i>Wikileaks</i> Optional: Excerpt from the play <i>Vietgone</i> | Nothing due because next week's research piece is longer |
| 13 | Aftermath of the Vietnam War | TBD | Research Piece Due 11/22 Sunday: "What happened in your state during the Vietnam War? How was your state impacted after it was over?" See additional file for instructions |
| 14 | Self-Care & Mental Health Break | Thanksgiving 11/25-26 | Nothing due because you deserve time off! |
| 15 | ASEAN | TBD | Research Piece Due 12/6 Sunday: "When did your state join ASEAN & what is it like now?" See additional file for instructions |
| 16 | The Southeast Asian Diaspora | Excerpt from Anthony Christian Ocampo, <i>The Latinos of Asia: How Filipino Americans Break the Rules of Race</i> Optional: Excerpt from Viet Than Nguyen "The Refugees" | |
| | Categorizing Regimes | Ruth McVey, "Continuity and Change in Southeast Asian Studies" | Research Piece Due 12/13 Sunday: "Does your state have a diaspora?" See additional file for instructions Extra Credit Research Piece Due by 12/13 Sunday: "[Topic of your choice]" See additional file for instructions |

Appendix:
COVID-19

We are living in unprecedented and unpredictable times. I understand that there are a lot of things each of you are juggling along with schoolwork. Please be sure to take care of your mental health using campus services. Should your coursework be affected by COVID-19, please let me know as soon as you are able to do so. We will figure something out.

Late Work? Makeup Exams?

Assignments submitted late will lose 1/3 of a letter grade for each day that it is late. Assignments that are found to be plagiarized will be given a 0 and the appropriate University guidelines for student records will be followed. Make-up exams can be scheduled, but the instructor reserves the right to request proper documentation, if needed. Arrangements other than an emergency or illness must be discussed with the instructor *prior* to the date of the exam.

Incompletes

Students will not be allowed to take an incomplete in this course unless a specific agreement regarding assignments and deadlines is discussed with the instructor before the beginning of finals week.

If you miss several assignments, I will send an email to follow-up. Academic advising may also reach out to you. This does not mean you are in trouble. We just want to make sure you have the resources you need. If I do not hear back from you after missing several assignments, I will assign an Incomplete grade for the course. This is not an F but it will need to be addressed within the year by reaching out to me.

Additional Accommodations

I will do my best to make sure to provide necessary accommodations. This includes working with on-campus resources. I recognize that some students will inherently perform better on some assessments than others & that my selection of forms of assessment that contribute to your grade may not reflect that. Please send me an email or come talk to me if you would like to discuss other options for assessment.

Should you have any questions about becoming politically involved or applying to graduate school, please do not hesitate to ask me.

**** Disclaimer: Course schedule, deadlines, and grading may change during the semester. Students will be notified in the event of changes. ****