Politics and Security in Asia

GOVT 299 – Fall 2014
WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY
(T & TH 1:10-4:00 PM)

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Course Objectives:

This course examines a wide range of key Asian security issues, specifically East and Southeast Asia. Asia (comprising China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia for purposes of this course) is a distinctive region that is deeply divided. It is beset with internal ethno-religious pressures, exacerbated by cross border threats and challenges of a military and non-military nature. The conflicts between North and South Korea; between China and Taiwan have brought these countries to the brink of war in the past several decades on more than one occasion. With the rapid economic growing in this region, world interest is again focused on Asia. Understanding the nature of security threats, how serious they are, and how various political actors may interpret threats in different ways is the first step toward developing appropriate responses to them. If the twenty-first century really will be “The Asian Century”, as many have predicted, then it is more important than ever to understand the factors shaping regional peace and stability.

In this course, we will try to make sense of different potential threats to Asian security. We will begin by examining the regional strategic situation that existed in the aftermath of World War II. We will discuss the origins of the U.S.-Japan alliance, the Korean War and its modern legacies, and the evolution of Sino-U.S. normalization. Utilizing a variety of different theoretical lenses about what constitutes security and how actors can attain it. We will analyze more contemporary issues: how to manage the North Korean nuclear threat, the role of nationalist revivalism in East Asia and its effects on regional politics, the China-Taiwan impasse, and the problems of non-traditional threat - terrorism. We will also study mechanisms intended to mitigate conflict and security threats. By the end of this class, you should have a more nuanced understanding of security threats in Asia and be able to use international relations theory to explain why certain issues become threats and how political actors have sought to resolve them.

Required Textbooks:

Paperback ISBN-10: 0804782741

**Recommend Readings:**


Other materials assigned to the class will be found on course website. These include published articles, materials prepared by the instructor, research reports by political scientists, etc.

**Requirements (Grading):**

This is a seminar and students are expected to attend all classes and to actively participate. Students are expected to complete all the assigned readings on time and contribute to class discussions. In addition, each week one student will be assigned to give a short commentary related to the week’s topic and/or readings.

- **Attendance and Discussion Questions - 10%**
- **Reflection Memos - 10%**
- **Mid-Term exam - 25%**
- **Final Take Home exam – 25%**
- **Research Paper (12 - 15 pages) - 30%**

**Attendance/Class Participation**

You are required to attend all lectures and read the materials according to the schedule (see below). All absences require a written explanation in order to be considered to be an excused absence. Attendance is recorded and each unexcused absence will cost you a small fraction of your final grade. You may miss up to Three class sessions without penalty to your grade. You are responsible for all material discussed in class and all assigned readings missed.

**Note:**

10% of Total Grade, with deductions for more than three absences

- -2% for 4-5 absences
- -4% for 6-7 absences
- -6% for 8-9 absences
- -8% for 10-11 absences
- -10% for 12 or more absences

**Weekly Discussion Question**

Student will propose ONE integrative question and/or thought provoking question according to the assigned readings for class discussion. The question must email to me by 5 pm every Monday.
Reflection Memos

There will be Two reflection assignments given throughout this class. The memos will be a reflection to assigned readings, lectures, or each guest speech you attended. Your memo needs to answer the following three questions:
1. What was the main point of this reading, lecture, or speech?
2. What was surprising?
3. What was confusing?
This memo/reflection must be typed and a hard copy turned in at the beginning of each class on the announced due date. There is no minimum or maximum on the length of the document, however, a typical reflection is about 1 page, double-spaced.

Exams

You will have two exams in this semester. Both exams will cover lectures, readings, and current events. The First exam will be on November 4th. It will be a closed book, closed note, and in-class exam. The final exam will be a take home exam due at 12pm on December 10th. There will be no make-up exams unless you have a documented medical emergency. Each of the two exams counts 25% in your grade. The exam questions (multiple choice, definitions, and essay) will be drawn from the materials presented in the lectures, discussions, and readings. Lectures and readings overlap. Nonetheless, the lectures will often present at least some material from a different perspective than what you find in the required texts. You are responsible to know all the assigned readings AND the lecture material AND the topics discussed in class.

*Note: Makeups will not ordinarily be scheduled for any quiz or examination. If you must miss an exam due to illness, please notify me in advance and be prepared to provide corroborating medical documentation.

Research Paper

There will be one 12-15 page final research paper on a topic of the students’ choice. Students may write about any topic in Asian Politics, regardless of whether it has been discussed in the course. All students are strongly encouraged to meet with me about the topic. Your research topic needs to be decided and submitted to me by noon on October 15th. The final paper will be presented in class near the end of the semester. You may use PowerPoint for your presentation if you like. One copy of your paper and one electronic copy are due on December 2nd. Please consider double-sided printing to conserve paper, and include a title page and a firm staple (no paper clips) in the upper left corner. No other covers or bindings are encouraged. Late papers will suffer a 5-percentage point penalty for each day they are late, weekends included.

Grade Scale:

A+: 97-100; A: 93-96%; A-: 90-92; B+: 84-89%; B: 78-83%; B-: 72-77%; C+: 66-71%;
C: 64-66%; C-: 60-63%; D+: 57-59%; D: 54-56%; D-: 50-53%; F: Below 50%
POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY
I am committed to upholding the College Honor Code, including the Statement on Academic Responsibility. I have zero tolerance for plagiarism and other forms of dishonesty and will report students who engage in such activities to the Dean for Student Affairs. Students who are found to have violated the Honor Code can expect to fail the class.

Examples of plagiarism and dishonesty include (but are by no means limited to): neglecting to enclose direct quotes in quotation marks or use footnotes, verbatim or near-verbatim “paraphrasing”, getting someone else to write your paper under your name (this includes so-called “term paper mills”), using another student’s argument in your paper and attempting to pass it off as your own, switching exams with someone, looking at someone else’s exam or knowingly allowing someone to look at your exam or copy your paper, taking an exam for another student, illicitly obtaining paper topics or test materials before they have been distributed, etc. Know the standards for citation and use them. Carelessness and ignorance are NOT valid excuses for plagiarism! Ask me if you have any questions. For standards of citation, visit http://libguides.wesleyan.edu/citing

A bad grade lessens in importance over time. Even the best students do poorly on an exam or a paper every now and again. You can recover from a bad grade, but being marked as a cheater will haunt you for the rest of your career. If you are encountering difficulty in the class, do not despair! Come talk with me and I will be more than happy to help you out.

NOTE: In addition to the above, students are expected to:
(a) know that this syllabus, including the calendar, is subject to change at the discretion of the professor;
(b) access and read related policy material at http://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/standardsregulations/plagiarism.html
Course Schedule

Part I: Theoretical Perspective on Asian Security

Week 1
09/02 Tuesday: Introduction to the Course and Syllabus
Reading:
No reading

Week 2
09/09 Tuesday: East Asia: Historical and Theoretical Perspective (I)
Reading:
  • David Shambaugh. “International Relations in Asia: The Two-Level Game”, in Shambaugh and Yahuda, Ch.1
  • Samuel S. Kim. “The Evolving Asian System: Three Transformations”, in Shambaugh and Yahuda, Ch.2
Recommended:
  • Alagappa. “Rethinking Security” in Asian Security Practice: Material and Ideational Influences, Ch. 1
  • TBD

Week 3
09/16 Tuesday: East Asia: Historical and Theoretical Perspective (II)
Reading:
  • Amitav Acharya. “Theoretical Perspectives on International Relations in Asia”, in Shambaugh and Yahuda, Ch.3.
Recommended:
  • Steven M. Walt, 'International Relations: One World, Many Theories', Foreign Policy, Spring (1998), pp. 29-46.

** 9/15 (Monday) Guest Speech#1
Professor Wenfang Tang (University of Iowa)
Topic: "Chinese political culture and regime sustainability", 4:30pm – 6:00pm.

Part II: East Asia in the Cold War

We are now going to whiz through the entire Cold War in East Asia. Clearly, what we will study here is only the tip of the iceberg, but the point is to give you an overview of how the strategic situation in Asia got to be where it is today. Power relations will figure prominently in our discussions, but be sure to think about other factors that shape the strategic environment as well.
Week 4
9/23 Tuesday: Realism and the Legacies of World War II in East Asia
Reading:
Recommended:

**Reflection Memo # 1 Due at the beginning of today’s class

Week 5
9/30 Tuesday: Origins of the U.S.-Japan Alliance
Reading:
Recommended:

Week 6
10/07 Tuesday: From Cold War to Post –Cold War Era: Constructing Southeast Asia Security Communities
Reading:
- Amativ Acharya. “Constructing Security Communities”, in Amativ Acharya, Ch. 1
- Sheldon W. Simon. “ASEAN and the New Regional Multilateralism: The Long and Bumpy Road to Community”, in Shambaugh and Yahuda, Ch. 9
Recommended:
- The ASEAN Declaration (1967) http://www.aseansec.org/1212.htm
- The ZOPFAN Declaration (1972) http://www.aseansec.org/1215.htm
- The Declaration of ASEAN Concord (1976) http://www.aseansec.org/1216.htm

**PART III: Everything Changes (or Does It?) – Visions of Order and Anarchy in Post-Cold War East Asia
The collapse of the Soviet Union caught East Asia by surprise and raised serious questions about
how the new regional order would take shape. Would the United States continue to assert a dominant role? Would a rapidly growing China step in and claim the mantle of regional hegemon for itself? Or would East Asia deteriorate into a multipolar fracas? Over the next couple of weeks, we will examine several competing visions of how post-Cold War East Asia will develop and seek to understand the reasoning behind them. These visions of order will continue to pop up throughout the remainder of the course.

Week 7
10/14 Tuesday: Visions of Order – Anarchic and Otherwise
Reading:

Recommended:

**Research Topic Due by noon on Oct 15th.**

Week 8
10/21 Tuesday: Fall Break

Week 9
10/28 Tuesday: Visions of Order – Economic Interdependence & Asian Identity
Reading:
* Edward J. Lincoln. “The Asian Regional Economy”, in Shambaugh and Yahuda, Ch. 13

Recommended:
* Miles Kahler. “Regional Economic Institutions and East Asian Security” in Goldstein and Mansfield, Ch. 3
* Benjamin Cohen. “Finance and Security in East Asia” in Goldstein and Mansfield, Ch. 2

Week 10
11/04 Tuesday: Midterm Exam
PART IV: Threats and Security on the Ground – Enduring China-US Rivalry?

Here’s where the rubber meets the road. In Part II, we discussed how bipolarity shaped interactions among East Asian states during the Cold War. In Part III, we examined several visions of what the post-Cold War regional order might look like. In Part IV, we will examine how relations among states in East Asia have played out in recent years. Clearly, China and US are still the major actors in Asia. The China-US rivalry will be at the center of this part of discussion. As we go through these units, think about the theoretical frameworks we have looked at—realism, neoliberal institutionalism, and constructivism—and try to see how they fit the cases on the ground, if at all.

Week 11
11/11 Tuesday: Dealing with North Korea
Reading:
Recommended:

**11/12 (Wednesday) Guest Speech #2
Marcus Rodlauer (IMF)
Topic: "China at a Crossroads - Reform and Rebalance, or else…?", 4:15pm – 6:00pm.

Week 12
11/18 Tuesday: Can China and Japan Get Along?
Reading:
• Phillip C. Saunders. “China’s Role in Asia” in Shambaugh and Yahuda, Ch. 6
• Michael Green. “Japan in Asia” in Shambaugh and Yahuda, Ch. 8
Recommended:

**Reflection Memo # 2 Due at the beginning of today’s class

Week 13
11/25 Tuesday: Nontraditional Security Issues in Asia
Reading:


Recommended:

**Student Presentation #1**

Week 14
12/02 Tuesday: New Asian Order?
Reading:

**Student Presentation #2**
Research Paper due today.

Week 15
12/02 Tuesday: Take Home Exam

FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS WILL BE ANNOUNCED ON OR BEFORE DEC 5TH AND DUE DEC 10TH (WED) AT 12:00 PM. E-MAIL YOUR FINAL EXAM AS AN ATTACHMENT TO lweng@wesleyan.edu. PLEASE PUT “GOVT 299 FINAL EXAM & YOUR NAME” IN THE EMAIL SUBJECT LINE.