### Part I  Course Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Title:</th>
<th>Authoritarian Resilience and Democratic Change in East Asia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Code:</td>
<td>AIS5032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Duration:</td>
<td>One semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Units:</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level:</td>
<td>P5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium of Instruction:</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium of Assessment:</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prerequisites:</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precursors:</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equivalent Courses:</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusive Courses:</td>
<td>Nil</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Part II Course Details

1. Abstract

This course offers a broad overview of the post-war evolution of Northeast and Southeast Asia’s varied political systems. It seeks to understand why, over the past decades, the region has seen the rise, demise and return of authoritarian modes of governance, in parallel with the emergence of multifaceted processes of political liberalisation. It examines the various challenges of democratic transition and consolidation in the region, but also growth and the developmental state, military intervention in politics, civil society, political contention, electoral populism, party systems, political clientelism and dynasticism, and their impact on authoritarian rule and democratic change. How can we make sense of East Asia’s highly diverse political institutions, regime formation and durability, historical legacies and cultural dynamics, and what can we learn from the region? The course will be structured thematically so that students will be able to study East Asia comparatively while making connections with the broader fields of comparative politics.

Course Aims

The course seeks to enable students to analyse the causes and consequences of the resilience and challenges of non-liberal political regimes in East Asia while relating historical developments and contemporary dynamics in the region to social science theories about comparative democratization, regime change and authoritarian rule. By exposing students to a variety of empirical studies on East Asia’s political contexts and institutional systems, as well as cutting-edge theoretical debates on key topics in the region, the course will help them construe why certain countries are democratic and others are not. By the end of the course, students will be ready to develop ideas and formulate their own research questions about democracy, dictatorship, and everything in-between in the region – and beyond.
2. **Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)**

(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>CILOs</th>
<th>Weighting (if applicable)</th>
<th>Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Understand and apply theoretical understandings of regime change and continuity in East Asia</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Reflect critically on state power, political elites, and social forces under different institutional settings</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Examine and evaluate processes of political transition, democratization and democratic regression</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Design and construct models of resilient political institutions</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Apply multi-disciplinary critical thinking skills to solve research problems, consider new approaches, and demonstrate the ability to accomplish innovation</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100%

**A1:** Attitude

*Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.*

**A2:** Ability

*Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.*

**A3:** Accomplishments

*Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.*
3. **Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)**  
*(TLAs designed to facilitate students’ achievement of the CILOs.)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TLA</th>
<th>Brief Description</th>
<th>CILO No.</th>
<th>Hours/week (if applicable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Lectures, readings and class discussions</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Presentations and simulation exercises of</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>political transitions and institutional design</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Book review (c. 1,000 words)</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>For Week 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Position paper (c. 4,000 words)</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>For Week 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. **Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)**  
*(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Tasks/Activities</th>
<th>CILO No.</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continuous Assessment: 100 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and participation</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position paper</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simulation exercises and assessment reports</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination: Nil % (duration: N/A, if applicable)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. **Assessment Rubrics**

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Excellent (A+, A, A-)</th>
<th>Good (B+, B, B-)</th>
<th>Fair (C+, C, C-)</th>
<th>Marginal (D)</th>
<th>Failure (F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Attendance and participation, including in simulation exercises</td>
<td>Quality of contribution to class discussions and simulation exercises</td>
<td>Continuous contributions to classroom discussions and simulation exercises that show a high level of analysis</td>
<td>Frequent contributions to classroom discussions and simulation exercises with a good level of analysis</td>
<td>Infrequent contributions to classroom discussions and simulation exercises but which reveal attempts at analysis</td>
<td>Few contributions to classroom discussions and simulation exercises contributions that show some little analytical insight</td>
<td>No contributions to classroom discussions and simulation exercises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Presentation</td>
<td>Quality of argument, structure of individual presentation</td>
<td>Excellently structured, supporting an analytical argument backed by excellent research and answering set topic or question, clear speech, good use of powerpoint or similar tools to support argument</td>
<td>A good structure at least partially supporting an analytical argument, backed by good research answering set topic or question, clear speech, good use of powerpoint or similar tools to support argument</td>
<td>Adequately structure, to some extent supporting an analytical argument backed by some research, providing some answers to a set topic or question, adequate speech and use of powerpoint or similar tools to support argument</td>
<td>Limited structure that provides little support to analytical argument backed by little research providing few answers to a set topic or question, adequate speech and use of powerpoint or similar tools to support argument</td>
<td>No recognizable structure without any analytical argument backed by no discernible research, providing no answers to a set topic or question, poor speech and use of powerpoint or similar tools to support argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. and 4. Position paper and book review</td>
<td>Quality and structure of evidence-based argument and clarity of position taken</td>
<td>Excellent analytical argument, Excellent use of contemporary events and theories/models, and a well-argued position with a clear structure, extensive and high quality research incorporated into text, few spelling or grammatical mistakes</td>
<td>Good analytical argument, good use of contemporary events and theories/models, clear structure, good range and quality of research materials incorporated into text, limited spelling or grammatical mistakes</td>
<td>Mostly descriptive argument, some use of contemporary events and theories/models, problematic structure, limited range and quality of research materials incorporated into text, spelling or grammatical mistakes do not hinder comprehension</td>
<td>Descriptive argument, minimal or no use of contemporary events and theories/models, unclear structure, limited range and low quality of research materials incorporated into text, spelling or grammatical mistakes, some evidence of plagiarised text</td>
<td>No argument, no use of contemporary events and theories/models, unclear structure, minimal range and quality of research materials incorporated into text, frequent spelling or grammatical mistakes, substantial evidence of plagiarised text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part III  Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

1.  Keyword Syllabus
   (An indication of the key topics of the course.)

Democracy; Democratization; Democratic Transition and Consolidation; Modernization Theory; Authoritarianism; Authoritarian Durability; Personal Rule; Military Intervention; Sultanistic Regime; Hybrid Regime; State Formation; Developmental State; Elites; Elections; Electoral Authoritarianism; Populism; Party Systems and Political Parties; Constitution; Patronage; Clientelism; Dynastic Politics; (Neo)Patrimonialism; Parliaments; Political Culture; Asian Values; Ethnicity and Identity; Religion; Civil Society; Social Movement; Middle Class; Contentious Politics; ASEAN Charter; Human Rights.

Weekly schedule

Week 1 – Overview. Political Regimes in East Asia
The first session introduces some of the main research questions to be discussed and clarifies the assignments and responsibilities of the students. Among the topics to be discussed: why is there such a diversity of political regimes in Northeast and Southeast Asia? How can we explain democratic change and authoritarian continuities in the region? Is there a distinctive process of democratization in East Asia?

Required readings

Further readings
**Week 2 – Historical and Cultural Legacies**

The session examines East Asia as a region with common themes such as “cultures”, historical legacies, class formation and state-building. How did colonial rule influence (or not) contemporary East Asian states? What are the historical sources of authoritarianism, democracy and regime legitimacy in the region? How much cultural features have affected political institutions and developments? What role does “culture” play in the formation and maintenance of authoritarian rule? Is the debate on “Asian Values” over?

**Required readings**


**Further readings**


**Week 3 – Authoritarianism and the Developmental State**

This lecture interrogates the relationship between state-led development and authoritarianism in post-war East Asia. What are the main features of the developmental state approach? Is capitalism possible without democracy? Was that developmental model buried with the Asian financial crisis of 1997?

**Required readings**


**Further readings**


**Week 4 – Military and Politics**

During this session we will discuss the role and influence of armed forces in East Asian politics. Why have military institutions proved key political actors in the post-war context? What role does the military play in the (un)making of authoritarian regimes? What forms does military intervention take in the region? How to define stable civil-military relations? Is democratic, civilian control of the armed forces possible in East Asia?

**Required readings**

Further readings


Week 5 – Economic Development and Democratization

This lecture questions whether East Asia fit into popular theories about democratic transition and the classic relationship between economic liberalisation and democratization. What types of challenges does the region present for modernization theory? Have middle classes in East Asia proved significant actors of democratization, or rather partisans of authoritarian stability?
Week 6 – Political Contention, Protests and Revolt against Authoritarianism

Students will engage with the diversity of citizens’ response to authoritarian rule in the region. How did violent revolutions and People’s Power movements emerge in East Asia? What role do social movements play in contesting authoritarian power? How did regimes respond to political, and sometimes lethal, contention? Have popular protests and contentious politics made democracy progress in the region?
**Required readings**


**Further readings**


**Week 7 – Civil Society and Democratization**

We will explore how the emergence of “civil society” has contributed (or not) to democratization processes in East Asia. What are the patterns of non-violent mobilization and activism among groups, organizations and civic associations in the region? What role can civil society play under authoritarian rule? Can it also mobilize to promote anti-democratic values and illiberal behaviours?

**Required readings**


**Further readings**


**Week 8 – Institutions, Elections, and Party Systems**

The session will discuss the role of (seemingly) democratic institutions in fostering democratization or sustaining authoritarian rule. What is the impact of the party systems over the nature of a political regime? Why do constitution-drafting processes matter? Can legislatures and regular elections undermine democracy? Why are single-party authoritarian regimes (often) so durable?

**Required readings**

Further readings

**Week 9 – Elites, Clientelism and Dynasticism**
Students will critically reflect on the persistence of various forms of (neo)patrimonialism, political clientelism and dynasticism in East Asia and discuss their impact on democracy, authoritarianism and the formation of hybrid regimes. What is electoral clientelism? Can the personalization of power become a central feature of democratic politics? Are dynastic politics and the dominance of political families anti-democratic?

**Required readings**
Further readings


**Week 10 – Democratization in Divided Societies**

The session investigates the multiple impacts of ethnic fragmentation and religious tensions on East Asia’s political systems. How do divided societies protect (or subdue) minorities under different political regimes? Can, and does, democratization prevent ethnic and religious conflict? What role does Islam and Buddhism play in the region’s politics? Can pluralism be managed solely through constitutionalism and the rule of law?
Required readings

Further readings

**Week 11 – Resilient Dictators**

Why do some dictatorships appear to be so durable in East Asia, especially communist North Korea and sultanistic Brunei? What are the economic factors that strengthen (and can potentially weaken) these regimes? What types of political institutions make them more or less resilient? How to understand democratic regression (Thailand)? How to interpret the maintenance of praetorianism (Myanmar) and enduring autocratic, non-competitive behaviours (China, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam)?

Required readings

Further readings

Week 12 – International and Regional Perspectives
The class will engage with the role of external factors in democratization processes and the maintenance of authoritarianism in the region. How influential are (Western-inspired) international norms and liberal-democratic principles? Why developing supranational norms and seemingly democratic institutions in East Asia? What are the prospects for an East Asian community and its impact on democratization and human rights protection? Is there a role for ASEAN in shaping the domestic politics of its ten member states?

Required readings
Further readings


Week 13 – Wrap-up: Towards Hybrid Regimes?

In conclusion, students will debate whether liberal democracy is the best answer to East Asia’s problems. Is the presence of hybrid regimes the future of political trends in the region? Can, and should, East Asian nascent democracies fend off emerging challenges of populism and so-called “post-truth” politics?

Required readings


Further readings


2. Additional readings list


Weiss, Meredith L. and Edward Aspinall, eds., 2012. Student Activism in Asia: Between Protest and Powerlessness, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.