

PIA5312: COMPARATIVE DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA

Effective Term

Semester B 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Comparative Development in Asia

Subject Code

PIA - Public and International Affairs

Course Number

5312

Academic Unit

Public and International Affairs (PIA)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

AIS5312 Comparative Development in Asia, AIS5012 Political Economy of Development

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course explores processes of development in Asia, with a focus on the urban settings. We will examine urban development at different times and places by exploring a series of debates and case studies. Our approach is interdisciplinary: we draw on insights and perspectives offered by anthropology, sociology, geography, history and cultural studies, and our inquiries are informed by various social theories, analytical concepts, case studies and research methods. This course starts with some key concepts and analytical framework. We then examine urban transformations shaped by a different set of values and power networks that are usually related to globalization and neoliberalism. Throughout the course, we look at cases from different Asian cities. Meanwhile, we use your familiar places as laboratories - to integrate the analytical tools, critical perspectives and research methods into clear analytic presentations with possible implications for social activism, planning, and policy making.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	to become familiar with concepts and debates in the humanities and social sciences on urban development;	25	x	x	
2	to be exposed to critical analyses using concepts such as space, power, and class;	25	x	x	
3	to develop a comparative perspective in understanding development projects;	20	x	x	
4	to grasp basic qualitative research methods	20		x	x
5	Apply the above-mentioned critical perspectives to specific case studies	10		x	x

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 real-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.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1. Lectures & tutorials	Introduce and explain concepts, theories, histories, and debates through use of diverse pedagogical strategies; provide students with opportunities to synthesize readings, raise questions and debate in a critical yet respectful manner.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	

2	2. Readings	Expose students to various approaches to specific issues in political sociology	1, 2, 3, 4	
3	3. Presentation & Discussion	An exercise for students to summary readings, synthesize arguments and reflect upon readings and lecture discussions	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	
4	4. Book Reviews	An exercise for students to synthesize and reflect upon arguments	1, 2, 3, 4	
5	5. Group Projects	An exercise for students to summary readings, synthesize arguments and reflect upon readings and lecture discussions	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Class and tutorial participation	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	15	-	No
2	Presentation & discussion	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	15	-	No
3	Book Reviews	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	30	-	No
4	Group projects	1, 2, 3, 4	40	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Class and tutorial participation (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Demonstrate preparedness for class, articulate ideas and engage in discussion.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Good participation record, adequate familiarity with readings, excellent capacity to articulate ideas and debate.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Records of absence, good familiarity with readings, good capacity to articulate ideas and debate.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Records of absence, some familiarity with readings, adequate capacity to articulate ideas and debate

Marginal

(D) Records of substantial absence, limited familiarity with readings, limited capacity to articulate ideas and debate

Failure

(F) Records of substantial absence, little or no familiarity with readings, little or no capacity to articulate ideas and debate

Assessment Task

Presentation and Discussion (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent capacity to summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments, to ask questions and lead discussions in assigned works

Good

(B+, B, B-) Good capacity to summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments, to ask questions and lead discussions in assigned works

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Adequate capacity summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments, to ask questions and lead discussions in assigned works

Marginal

(D) Limited capacity to summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments, to ask questions and lead discussions in assigned works

Failure

(F) Fail to summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments, to ask questions and lead discussions in assigned works

Assessment Task

Book Review (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent capacity to summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments in assigned works

Good

(B+, B, B-) Good capacity to summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments in assigned works

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Adequate capacity to summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments in assigned works

Marginal

(D) Limited capacity to summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments in assigned works

Failure

(F) Fail to summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments in assigned works

Assessment Task

Group Projects (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Synthesize and reflect upon ideas learned in the course

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent capacity to synthesize and reflect upon ideas discussed in readings and in class discussion.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Good capacity to synthesize and reflect upon ideas discussed in readings and in class discussion.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Adequate capacity to synthesize and reflect upon ideas discussed in readings and in class discussion.

Marginal

(D) Limited capacity to synthesize and reflect upon ideas discussed in readings and in class discussion.

Failure

(F) Fail to synthesize and reflect upon ideas discussed in readings and in class discussion.

Assessment Task

Class and tutorial participation (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Demonstrate preparedness for class, articulate ideas and engage in discussion.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Good participation record, adequate familiarity with readings, excellent capacity to articulate ideas and debate.

Good

(B+, B) Records of absence, good familiarity with readings, good capacity to articulate ideas and debate.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Records of substantial absence, limited familiarity with readings, limited capacity to articulate ideas and debate

Failure

(F) Records of substantial absence, little or no familiarity with readings, little or no capacity to articulate ideas and debate

Assessment Task

Presentation and Discussion (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent capacity to summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments, to ask questions and lead discussions in assigned works

Good

(B+, B) Good capacity to summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments, to ask questions and lead discussions in assigned works

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Limited capacity to summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments, to ask questions and lead discussions in assigned works

Failure

(F) Fail to summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments, to ask questions and lead discussions in assigned works

Assessment Task

Book Review (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent capacity to summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments in assigned works

Good

(B+, B) Good capacity to summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments in assigned works

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Limited capacity to summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments in assigned works

Failure

(F) Fail to summarize, analyse and evaluate arguments in assigned works

Assessment Task

Group Projects (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Describe a social phenomenon, collect empirical data, apply concepts and theories to analysis, and make an argument

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent capacity to describe a social phenomenon, collect empirical data, apply concepts and theories to analysis, and make an argument

Good

(B+, B) Good capacity to Describe a social phenomenon, collect empirical data, apply concepts and theories to analysis, and make an argument.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Limited capacity to Describe a social phenomenon, collect empirical data, apply concepts and theories to analysis, and make an argument.

Failure

(F) Fail to Describe a social phenomenon, collect empirical data, apply concepts and theories to analysis, and make an argument.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

modernity; family changes; fertility; aging; care; STS; housing inequality; water & sanitation; waste management; platform economy; morality

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

	Title
1	Mitchell, Timothy. 1999. "Society, Economy and the State Effect." In <i>State/Culture: State-formation after the Cultural Turn</i> , edited by George Steinmetz, 76-97. Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press.
2	Bauman, Zygmunt. 1990. "Modernity and Ambivalence." <i>Theory, Culture & Society</i> 7 (2-3): 143-169
3	Mitchell, Timothy. 2000. "The Stage of Modernity." In <i>Questions of Modernity</i> , edited by Timothy Mitchell, 1-34. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press
4	Shi, Lihong. 2017. "From Care Providers to Financial burdens: The Changing Role of Sons and Reproductive Choice in Rural Northeast China." In <i>Transforming Patriarchy: Chinese Families in the Twenty-First Century</i> , edited by Gonçalo Santos and Stevan Harrell, 59-73. University of Washington Press
5	Horiguchi, Sachiko. 2011. "Coping with hikikomori: Socially Withdrawn Youth." In <i>Home and Family in Japan: Continuity and Transformation</i> , edited by Richard Ronald and Allison Alexy, 216-235. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge
6	Platz, Anemone. 2011. "Living apart together: Anticipated Home, Family and Social Networks in Old Age." In <i>Home and Family in Japan: Continuity and Transformation</i> , edited by Richard Ronald and Allison Alexy, 310-328. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge
7	Lee, Hyun Ji, and Kyong Hee Chee. 2020. " "Without Feeling Guilty" : Filial Piety and Eldercare in Twenty-first-Century Korea." In <i>Beyond Filial Piety: Rethinking Aging and Caregiving in Contemporary East Asian Societies</i> , edited by Jeanne Shea, Katrina Moore and Hong Zhang, 279-305. New York: Berghahn Books
8	Tang, Beibei. 2018. "Neighborhood Aged Care and Local Governance in Urban China." <i>China Journal</i> 79 (1): 84-99, Emiko. 2009. "Care Diamonds and Welfare Regimes in East and South-East Asian Societies: Bridging Family and Welfare Sociology." <i>International Journal of Japanese Sociology</i> 18 (1): 60-78
9	Anand, Nikhil, and Anne Rademacher. 2013. "Housing in the Urban Age: Inequality and Aspiration in Mumbai." In <i>Ecologies of Urbanism in India: Metropolitan Civility and Sustainability</i> , edited by Anne Rademacher, 201-223. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press
10	Zhan, Yang. 2015. " "My Life Is Elsewhere" : Social Exclusion and Rural Migrants' Consumption of Homeownership in Contemporary China." <i>Dialect Anthropology</i> 39 (4): 405-422
11	Coelho, Karen, and Nithya V. Raman. 2013. "From the Frying Pan to the Floodplain: Negotiating Land, Water, and Fire in Chennai' s Development." In <i>Ecologies of Urbanism in India: Metropolitan Civility and Sustainability</i> , edited by Anne Rademacher, 145-168. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press
12	Gandy, Matthew. 2014. "Water, Poverty, and urban Fragmentation in Mumbai" (chapter 4), <i>The Fabric of Space: Water, Modernity, and the Urban Imagination</i> . Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press
13	Gidwani, Vinay. 2013. "Value Struggles: Waste Work and Urban Ecology in Delhi." In <i>Ecologies of Urbanism in India: Metropolitan Civility and Sustainability</i> , edited by Anne Rademacher, 169-200. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press
14	Zhang, Amy. 2025. "A labor of disassembly: Waste labor and embodied knowledge in China's circular economy." <i>Environment and Planning D: Society and Space</i> 0 (0)
15	Yang, Chamee. 2025. "The Techno-Optics of Safety: Surveillance and Women's Ambivalent Experiences in South Korea's "Smart Safe City" ." <i>Science, Technology, & Human Values</i> 50 (6): 1140-1169
16	Mason, Katherine A. 2019. "Divergent Trust and Dissonant Truths in Public Health Science." In <i>Can Science and Technology Save China?</i> , edited by Susan Greenhalgh and Li Zhang, 95-114. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press
17	Mukherjee, Rahul. 2025. "Aspirational Politics of Talent Acquisition: Entrepreneurial Limits and Indian Short Video Platforms." <i>Social Media + Society</i> 11 (2): 20563051251340579
18	Giustini, Deborah. 2025. "Digital work across the divide: Japan' s platform economy and labour market dualisation." <i>Contemporary Japan</i> 37 (1): 3-29
19	Yan, Yunxiang. 2009. "The Good Samaritan's New Trouble: A study of the Changing Moral Landscape in Contemporary China." <i>Social Anthropology</i> 17 (1): 9-24

20	Xu, Bin. 2016. "Moral Performance and Cultural Governance in China: The Compassionate Politics of Disasters." <i>The China Quarterly</i> 226: 407-430
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Additional Readings

Title	
1	See updated recommended readings on the Canvas course website or contact the instructor for more information