

**City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus**

**offered by the Department of Asian and International Studies
with effect from Summer 2021**

Part I Course Overview

Course Title: Special Topics in Asian Studies I

Course Code: AIS 3060

Course Duration: One semester

Credit Units: 3

Level: B3

Arts and Humanities

Proposed Area: Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations

(for GE courses only)

Science and Technology

Medium of Instruction: English

Medium of Assessment: English

Prerequisites: Nil
(Course Code and Title)

Precursors: Nil
(Course Code and Title)

Equivalent Courses: AIS3025 Special Topics in East and Southeast Asian Studies
(Course Code and Title)

Exclusive Courses: Nil
(Course Code and Title)

Part II Course Details

1. Abstract

This course examines current issues in Asian and International Studies (the current upheaval in Burma, renewed provocations by North Korea, an increasingly assertive China, etc.) with an eye to highlighting the historical roots of recent developments. These developments will also be filtered through a handful of theories, meant to provide illuminating insights into these particular national situations, as well as equip students with theoretical tools that can be applied to a large variety of other cases.

For example, the current authoritarian backsliding in Burma will be analysed through the lens of the Resource Curse theory, which will allow us to make sense of the Tatmadaw's reluctance to loosen its iron grip on political power. Similarly, the rise of China and the resulting tensions between Beijing and Washington will be filtered through the analytical prism of Offensive Realism and Power Transition Theory, which will lead us to consider the likelihood of a major conflict erupting between the United States and China. Exploring the internal logic of North Korea's strident rhetoric and nuclear provocations, finally, will help demonstrate the rationale behind the reckless acts of a country that is often described as fundamentally irrational.

This class aims at providing students with the keys to understanding some of the most recent (and often puzzling) developments in the Indo-Pacific region by both underlining their historical roots, as well as some of their systemic underlying factors -- allowing students to extrapolate this class' findings to other regions of the world."

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.)

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

No.	CILOs [#]	Weighting* (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum-related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Gain an interest in following current events, and relate current developments in the Indo-Pacific region to the themes and theories explored in class	10%	√	√	√
2.	Be exposed to various important theories in social science	25%	√	√	
3.	Develop conceptual tools to think about the intersection between current developments in Asia, their historical roots and critical theoretical frameworks meant to explain them	20%	√	√	
4.	Understand and be critical of the main International Relations theoretical frameworks, and learn to relate them to current developments in the Indo-Pacific region	20%	√	√	
5.	Apply the above-mentioned theoretical perspectives to specific case studies	25%	√	√	√

* If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 100%.

[#] Please specify the alignment of CILOs to the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning outcomes (PILOs) in Section A of Annex.

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.)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.					Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	5	
Lectures & tutorials	Introduce and explain concepts, theories, histories, and debates; Provide students with opportunities to synthesize readings, raise questions and debate in a critical yet respectful manner	√	√	√	√	√	
Readings	Expose students to various approaches to the specific issues introduced in class	√	√	√	√	√	
News Commentaries	An exercise meant to encourage students to remain informed about current events, and reflect on their connections to the themes discussed in class	√		√		√	
Presentation/Debate	An exercise for students to explore in depth narrower issues that relate to the main themes presented in the lectures	√	√	√	√	√	
Final essay	An exercise for students to synthesize readings and apply ideas learned in the course	√	√	√	√		

4. Assessment Tasks/Activities

(designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs)

Indicative of likely activities and tasks students will undertake to learn in this course. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course.

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.					Weighting*	Remarks
	1	2	3	4	5		
Continuous Assessment: 100%							
Attendance and class participation	√	√	√	√	√	15%	
News Commentaries	√		√		√	10%	
Presentation/Debate	√	√	√	√	√	30%	
Final essay	√	√	√	√		45%	
Examination: ____% (duration: _____, if applicable)							
* The weightings should add up to 100%.						100%	

Assessment Rubrics

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

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Attendance and class participation	Demonstrate preparedness for class, articulate ideas and engage in discussion.	Good participation record, adequate familiarity with readings, excellent capacity to articulate ideas and debate.	Records of absence, good familiarity with readings, good capacity to articulate ideas and debate.	Records of absence, some familiarity with readings, adequate capacity to articulate ideas and debate	Records of substantial absence, limited familiarity with readings, limited capacity to articulate ideas and debate	Records of substantial absence, little or no familiarity with readings, little or no capacity to articulate ideas and debate
2. News Commentaries	Summarize and analyse newspaper articles	Excellent capacity to summarize and analyse newspaper articles	Good capacity to summarize and analyse newspaper articles	Adequate capacity to summarize and analyse newspaper articles	Limited capacity to summarize and analyse newspaper articles	Fail to summarize, summarize and analyse newspaper articles
3. Presentation/ Debate	Synthesize and reflect upon ideas learned in the course	Excellent capacity to synthesize and reflect upon ideas discussed in readings and in class discussion.	Good capacity to synthesize and reflect upon ideas discussed in readings and in class discussion.	Adequate capacity to synthesize and reflect upon ideas discussed in readings and in class discussion.	Limited capacity to synthesize and reflect upon ideas discussed in readings and in class discussion.	Fail to synthesize and reflect upon ideas discussed in readings and in class discussion.
4. Final Essay	Synthesize, reflect upon and apply ideas learned in the course	Excellent capacity to use concepts, theories and approaches to analyse specific cases and articulate arguments in a reflexive manner	Good capacity to use concepts, theories and approaches to analyse specific cases and articulate arguments in a reflexive manner	Adequate capacity to use concepts, theories and approaches to analyse specific cases and articulate arguments in a reflexive manner	Limited capacity to use concepts, theories and approaches to analyse specific cases and articulate arguments in a reflexive manner	Fail to use concepts, theories and approaches to analyse specific cases and articulate arguments in a reflexive manner

Part III

Keyword Syllabus:

Indo-Pacific region. Resource Curse theory. IR theories. Realism. Hegemony. Liberalism. Totalitarianism. Burma/Myanmar. India. China. Democratic Peace theory. Power transition theory. Economic sanctions. Crimea. Democracy. Caste. Sultanism. North Korea. Nuclear weapons. Brinkmanship diplomacy. Nuclear coercion. American democracy.

2. Reading List

2.1 Compulsory Readings

(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

1.	Clemens, Walter C. Jr. (2010) "North Korea's Quest for Nuclear Weapons: New Historical Evidence", <i>Journal of East Asian Studies</i> , pp. 127-154
2.	Perry, William J. (2006) "Proliferation on the Peninsula: Five North Korean Nuclear Crises", <i>The Annals of the American Academy of Social Science</i> , Vol. 607, pp. 78-86
3.	Sovacool, Benjamin K. (2010) "The Political Economy of Oil and Gas in Southeast Asia: Heading Towards the Natural Resource Curse?", <i>The Pacific Review</i> , Vol. 23, No. 2, pp. 225-259
4.	Mau, Vladimir (2009) <i>Lessons of the Spanish Empire, or the curse of resource abundance</i> , Working paper
5.	Turnell, Sean (2008) "Burma's Insatiable State", <i>Asian Survey</i> , Vol. 48, No. 6, Nov-Dec., pp. 958-976
6.	Schoppa, Keith R. (2002) "Chap. 17: Coming Unglued", in <i>Revolution and its past: identities and change in modern Chinese history</i> , Boston: Prentice Hall, pp. 326-345
7.	Mearsheimer, John J. (2006) "China's Unpeaceful Rise", <i>Current History</i> , Apr., 105, 690, pp. 160-162
8.	Zhu, Feng (2008) "China's rise will be peaceful: how unipolarity matters", in Ross, Robert (ed.) <i>China's Ascent: Power, Security, and the Future of International Politics</i> , Ithaca: Cornell University Press, pp. 34-54
9.	Burchill, Scott (2009) "Liberalism", in <i>Theories of International Relations: Fourth Edition</i> , Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 57-85
10.	Elliott, Kimberly Ann (1998) "The Sanctions Glass: Half Full or Completely Empty?", <i>International Security</i> , Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 50-65
11.	Pape, Robert A. (1997) "Why Economic Sanctions Do Not Work", <i>International Security</i> , Vol. 22, No. 2, pp. 90-136.

2.2 Additional Readings

(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

1.	Hovi, J., Huseby, R. and Sprinz, D. F. (2005) "When Do (Imposed) Economic Sanctions Work?", <i>World Politics</i> , Jul., Vol. 57, No. 4, pp. 479-499
2.	Pape, Robert A. (1998) "Why Economic Sanctions Still Do Not Work", <i>International Security</i> , Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 66-77.

3.	Drezner, Daniel W. (2033) “The Hidden Hand of Economic Coercion”, <i>International Organization</i> , 57, pp. 643-659
4.	Kaplan, Robert D. (2012) “Why John J. Mearsheimer Is Right (About Some Things)”, <i>The Atlantic</i> , Jan-Feb.
5.	Donnelly, Jack (2009) “Realism”, in <i>Theories of International Relations: Fourth Edition</i> , Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 31-56
6.	Schoppa, Keith R. (2002) “Chap. 18: Death Dance: The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution”, in <i>Revolution and its past: identities and change in modern Chinese history</i> , Boston: Prentice Hall, pp. 346-364
7.	Tan, E-W. and Govindasamy, G. (2012) “From Kim Jong Il to Kim Jong Un: nuclear impasse or diplomatic opportunity?”, <i>Asia Europe Journal</i> , 10, pp. 301-316
8.	Frank, Ruediger (2005) “Economic Reforms in North Korea (1998-2004): Systemic Restrictions, Quantitative Analysis, Ideological Background”, <i>Journal of the Asia Pacific Economy</i> , Vol. 10, No. 3, pp. 27-311
9.	Byman, D. and Lind, J. (2010) “Pyongyang’s Survival Strategy: Tools of Authoritarian Control in North Korea”, <i>International Security</i> , Vol. 35, No. 1, pp. 44-74
10.	Bayly, Susan (1999) “Chap. 1: Historical Origins of a ‘Caste Society’”, in <i>Caste, Society and Politics in India from the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age</i> , Cambridge University Press, pp. 25-39
11.	Rauch, Jonathan (2016) “How American Politics Went Insane”, <i>The Atlantic</i> , Jul.-Aug.