

**POL 388H1F:**  
**Politics and Government of Southeast Asia**  
Department of Political Science  
University of Toronto

**Administrative Details:**

Term: Fall 2022  
Times: Thursdays, 6-8 PM  
Location: BL 313

Instructor: Cheng Xu  
Email: [cheng.xu@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:cheng.xu@mail.utoronto.ca)  
Office Hours: By Appointment

**Course Overview:**

This course provides comparative analysis of the politics and socio-economic issues of Southeast Asian states while recognizing both the patterns and diversity of the region. While many countries experienced centuries of colonial rule, others were also indirectly affected. From decolonization to the rise of nationalism and communism in the early twentieth century transformed the region's political systems in fundamental ways. The Cold War, during which the United States and the Soviet Union competed on a global scale, also divided the region along political lines which shaped the social and political development of the states in the region.

Furthermore, industrialization and rapid economic growth transformed many countries from peasant societies to modern, urban and industrial countries. Yet the vast political and economic changes occurred unevenly both across the region, as well as within the countries themselves resulting in various modes of contention from protest to civil war, some of which are still ongoing to this day. All of these forces of change have greatly influenced the political systems in the region, the ways in which groups and individuals participate in politics, and the degree to which political institutions are representative. The course offers an analysis of the political systems of the region with an emphasis on understanding political change and its relationship to socio-economic transformation. The broad questions to be explored in this course include How can we characterize the various political systems of the region? How can we explain why and how they have changed? How Are they developing political systems that reflect their unique historical and cultural experiences? How has the vast socio-economic transformation of the region influenced politics?

**Requirements:**

Grading criteria for the course will be in the following areas:

- 1. Participation and in class discussions (20%):** student-led discussion is critical to the success of a seminar course. To those ends, students will be assessed on their attendance, their level of participation, and their degree of preparation for class discussions.
- 2. Critical response papers based on assigned readings (15% x 2 = 30%):** two 1000-word, double-spaced papers that critically engage with the required readings. Note that these papers should not be summaries of the week's assigned readings; rather, they should develop theoretical, empirical, or methodological critiques of one or more articles and/or highlight new directions for future research on the week's topic. Students will be assigned sessions during the first class with the expectation that they will review one session in the conceptual

portion of the course, and one session in the case study portion of the course. Papers must be uploaded onto Quercus before midnight the day prior to class for each session that is reviewed.

3. **Major research paper (50%):** an 8,000-word, double-spaced paper that addresses a major question in the study of Southeast Asia. This paper can engage in a single-case study, or comparative analysis of two or more cases. The paper should be written in the form of a first draft of a paper intended for publication, meaning it should include a brief literature review, a theoretical argument, and an empirical test of the theory. Paper topics must be approved in advance. Students are to submit their proposed topics to the instructor **by email no later than 11:59PM, Thursday, October 13<sup>th</sup>**. The final paper will be **due one week after the final class on 11:59PM, December 8<sup>th</sup>**.

## **Policies:**

**Late or missed papers:** Late papers will be penalized 5% per calendar day, excepting only extraordinary personal emergencies. If you find yourself in such a situation, please email me as soon as possible to inform me. Substantiating documentation will be required and must be submitted within one week of the missed due date. Note that assignments or tests from other courses scheduled for the same day do not constitute acceptable reasons—please plan accordingly. In the absence of substantiating documentation, late or missed assignments will receive a mark of zero.

**Accessibility:** The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accessibility accommodations of any kind, please contact Accessibility Services at [accessibility.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@utoronto.ca) as soon as possible.

**Academic Honesty:** Plagiarism is a major academic offense and will be treated accordingly. Students are required to familiarize themselves with and conform to the University of Toronto's policies on Academic Honesty, available at <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/newstudents/transition/academic/plagiarism>. In addition, students should consult Margaret Proctor's guide on "How Not to Plagiarize," available at <http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>.

**Original:** Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

## **Mental Health:**

Students are highly encouraged to prioritize their own mental health over any individual assignments. If you find yourself becoming emotionally distressed or overwhelmed any time throughout the course, please do not hesitate to reach out to the instructor for help accessing mental health services. Additionally, a list of mental health resources will be posted for students on Quercus should they choose to access them confidentially.

## **Required Reading:**

Quercus will be used to manage the course and readings. Specific and additional readings will be noted on the semester-specific schedules posted to Quercus.

### **Week 1, Sept 8<sup>th</sup>: Course Overview and Introduction**

No Readings

### **Week 2, Sept 15<sup>th</sup>: Patterns of Politics and Transformation in Southeast Asia**

Bertrand, J. (2013). *Political Change in Southeast Asia*. Cambridge University Press.

Croissant, A., Lorenz, P. (2018). *Comparative Politics of Southeast Asia*. Springer, Cham. Introduction and Conclusion.

Rajah, A. (1999). Southeast Asia: Comparatist Errors and the Construction of a Region. *Asian Journal of Social Science*, 27(1), 41-53.

Caballero-Anthony, M. (2005). Political Transitions in Southeast Asia. *Southeast Asian Affairs*, 2005(1), 24-44.

### **Week 3, Sept 22<sup>nd</sup>: Colonialism and Nationalism**

Christie, C. (2000). *Ideology and Revolution in Southeast Asia 1900–1980*. Routledge, London. Ch 2.

Kim, W. (2009). Rethinking colonialism and the origins of the developmental state in East Asia. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 39(3), 382-399.

Reid, A. (2010). *Imperial Alchemy: Nationalism and Political Identity in Southeast Asia*. Cambridge University Press. Ch 1 and 2.

Sidel, J. (2012). The Fate of Nationalism in the New States: Southeast Asia in Comparative Historical Perspective. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 54(1), 114-144.

### **Week 4, Sept 29<sup>th</sup>: The Cold War and Communism**

Stubbs, R. (1999). War and economic development: Export-oriented industrialization in East and Southeast Asia. *Comparative Politics*, 337-355.

Hack, K., & Wade, G. (2009). The origins of the Southeast Asian Cold War. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 40(3), 441-448.

Christie, C. (2000). *Ideology and Revolution in Southeast Asia 1900–1980*. Routledge, London. Ch 9.

Nordholt, H. S. (2016). Shining Futures, Imminent Dangers: New Nation-States and Mass Violence in Southeast Asia. *Asian Journal of Social Science*, 44(6), 711-724.

### **Week 5, Oct 6<sup>th</sup>: Democratization and Regime Change**

Jayasuriya, K., & Rodan, G. (2007). Beyond hybrid regimes: More participation, less contestation in Southeast Asia. *Democratization*, 14(5), 773-794.

Case, W. (2013). *Politics in Southeast Asia: democracy or less*. Routledge. Ch 1 and Ch 7.

Morgenbesser, L., & Pepinsky, T. B. (2019). Elections as causes of democratization: Southeast Asia in comparative perspective. *Comparative Political Studies*, 52(1), 3-35.

Curato, N., & Fossati, D. (2020). Authoritarian Innovations: Crafting support for a less democratic Southeast Asia. *Democratization*, 27(6), 1006-1020.

### **Week 6, Oct 13<sup>th</sup>: Identity, Contention, and Political Violence**

Lande, C. H. (1999). Ethnic conflict, ethnic accommodation, and nation-building in Southeast Asia. *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 33(4), 89-117.

Clarke, G. (2001). From ethnocide to ethnodevelopment? Ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples in Southeast Asia. *Third World Quarterly*, 22(3), 413-436.

Slater, D. (2010). *Ordering power: Contentious politics and authoritarian leviathans in Southeast Asia*. Cambridge University Press. Ch 5.

Weiss, M. L. (2015). Winning and losing in the modern era: Identity, mobilisation, and empowerment in Southeast Asia. *TRaNS: Trans-Regional and-National Studies of Southeast Asia*, 3(1), 95-116.

### **Week 7, Oct 20<sup>th</sup>: Indonesia**

Aspinall, E. (2010). Indonesia: the irony of success. *Journal of Democracy*, 21(2), 20-34.

Mietzner, M. (2012). Indonesia's democratic stagnation: anti-reformist elites and resilient civil society. *Democratization*, 19(2), 209-229.

Fukuoka, Y. (2012). Politics, business and the state in post-Soeharto Indonesia. *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs*, 34(1), 80-100.

Viartasiwi, N. (2018). The politics of history in West Papua-Indonesia conflict. *Asian Journal of Political Science*, 26(1), 141-159.

### **Week 8, Oct 27<sup>th</sup>: Malaysia**

Brown, G. K. (2010). Legible pluralism: The politics of ethnic and religious identification in Malaysia. *Ethnopolitics*, 9(1), 31-52.

Gomez, E. T. (2016). Resisting the fall: The single dominant party, policies and elections in Malaysia. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 46(4), 570-590.

Segawa, N. (2017). Double-layered ethnic politics in Malaysia: national integration, ethnic unity and social stability. *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 55(1), 63-81.

Abdullah, W. J. (2019). The Mahathir effect in Malaysia's 2018 election: The role of credible personalities in regime transitions. *Democratization*, 26(3), 521-536.

### **Week 9, Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>: Philippines**

Putzel, J. (1999). Survival of an Imperfect Democracy in the Philippines. *Democratization*, 6(1), 198-223.

Rogers, S. (2004). Philippine politics and the rule of law. *Journal of Democracy*, 15(4), 111-125.

Dressel, B. (2011). The Philippines: how much real democracy?. *International Political Science Review*, 32(5), 529-545.

Thompson, M. R. (2018). The Philippine presidency in Southeast Asian perspective: imperiled and imperious presidents but not perilous presidentialism. *Contemporary Politics*, 24(3), 325-345.

\*\*\*Reading Week Break\*\*\*

### **Week 10, Nov 17<sup>th</sup>: Myanmar**

Chow, J. T., & Easley, L. E. (2016). Persuading pariahs: Myanmar's strategic decision to pursue reform and opening. *Pacific Affairs*, 89(3), 521-542.

Selth, A. (2018). All Going According to Plan? The Armed Forces and Government in Myanmar. *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 40(1), 1-26.

Stokke, K., & Aung, S. M. (2020). Transition to democracy or hybrid regime? The dynamics and outcomes of democratization in Myanmar. *The European Journal of Development Research*, 32(2), 274-293.

McConnachie, K., Ho, E., & Kyed, H. (2022). Border Governance: Reframing political transition in Myanmar. *Modern Asian Studies*, 56(2), 471-503.

### **Week 11, Nov 24<sup>th</sup>: Thailand**

McCargo, D. (2005). Network monarchy and legitimacy crises in Thailand. *The Pacific Review*, 18(4), 499-519.

Kuhonta, E. M., & Sinpeng, A. (2014). Democratic regression in Thailand: The ambivalent role of civil society and political institutions. *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 333-355.

Chambers, P., & Waitoolkiat, N. (2016). The resilience of monarchised military in Thailand. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 46(3), 425-444.

Pitidol, T. (2016). Redefining democratic discourse in Thailand's civil society. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 46(3), 520-537.

**Week 12, Dec 1<sup>st</sup>: Conclusion and Wrap-Up**

No Readings