

**COURSE SYLLABUS**  
**POL 368.01**  
**ASIAN POLITICS**  
**CREDIT HOURS: 3**  
**SPRING, 2008**

CLASS LOCATION: AB1 302  
CLASS MEETING TIME: 5M  
INSTRUCTOR: DR. WILIAM E. CARROLL  
OFFICE LOCATION: AB1 315D  
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OFFICE HOURS: 10-11 MWF

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to politics and government in Asia. “Asia” typically conjures up, at least the names if not visions, China, Japan, Vietnam, or Thailand – in other words, East Asia. This is fine, the course does cover these countries – and others in East Asia: Korea (both Koreas), Indonesia, the Philippines. But Asia also includes South Asia: India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Indeed, there is Central Asia as well: Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, etc. A one-semester course however doesn’t give enough time to cover all of Asia – in any case Central Asia comes into play in courses in Middle East Politics and the former Soviet Union. But this semester we will study at least the largest country in South Asia, India, with the second largest population in the world and whose historical-cultural influence extends into East and Southeast Asia (Buddhism, for example – and there is a reason the French referred to Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos as Indochina).

For all the countries we will cover however, much more time will be devoted to the largest Asian countries: China, Japan, and India. These are the three most important in terms of population, economic size/potential, and geo-strategic (military) importance. However the other North and Southeast Asian countries: the two Koreas, Taiwan (not technically a country, a matter to be discussed), and the countries of Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Cambodia, and Burma. As the world’s most populous Muslim country and the most populous member of ASEAN, Indonesia warrants whatever attention it gets, and of course Burma sticks out as a police-army state that gets in the news for killing monks.

For purposes of pedagogical convenience we will be adopting a country-by-country approach; this also allows us to capture the diversity – of cultures, histories, and politics – within Asia. This does not mean we will ignore obvious regional/comparative issues and themes. In fact two of these themes do allow broader comparison: economic growth and development (especially, but not just China and India) and democracy and democratization (as has occurred in South Korea, Taiwan, more problematically in Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines). India of course is the world’s largest democracy – but throughout its history since independence has had to cope with numerous serious issues that could have threatened its democracy.

Approach/Method of instruction: Lecture and discussion. Lectures will introduce, summarize, and amplify the assigned readings, where necessary providing background to each. While some lectures will be rather formal, usually my lecture style is more discursive. Questions and class discussion are always encouraged, and students should expect to hear diverse opinions and know they won't be punished in any way for expressing their own.

Course Prerequisite: POL 261

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Factual Knowledge: of Asian governmental systems, democratic or socialist or military-authoritarian; an appreciation of the unique political cultures and forces for change in Asia
- Critical Thinking: beyond stereotypes and "common knowledge" of Asia and Asian politics; enhanced by comparisons, within Asia, and to the US and the West
- Analytical Skills: applying concepts of political culture, economic development, power, and democracy to the study of Asia; evaluating these systems in the comparative terms

## TEXTS

Charlton Comparing Asian Politics: India, China, and Japan 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.

Samuels Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia

Larkin Finding George Orwell in Burma

Additional readings will be placed on e-reserve. A list of useful websites will be provided; for current events in Asia there are numerous publications online, including Far Eastern Economic Review (available also in the library), Japan Times, South China Morning Post, Straights Times, Times of India, and many others.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Class attendance is required, following general university guidelines. Repeated absences result in grade penalty (see grading below). Makeup exams are available only for verified and excused absences, and are given at the instructor's discretion.

## ASSIGNMENTS

Each student will have the opportunity to either 1) write a research paper, or 2) compile a journal on an Asian country. The details of these optional assignments will be provided in class.

## EXAMS

There will be three exams (NB: if it appears that four exams will be more convenient there will be four). These will have a combined format of objective questions and short identifications (any essay will be optional). Dates of exams will be announced in class.

## GRADING PLAN

Exams:	90%
Attendance and participation:	10%

If paper/journal option is chosen:

Exams:	60%
Paper/journal:	30%
Attendance and participation:	10%

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found cheating on an exam or plagiarism can expect a grade of 0 for that exam or assignment.

## CLASSROOM RULES OF CONDUCT

Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Students are to treat faculty and fellow students with respect. Students are to turn off cell phones and pagers while in the classroom. No cell phones or any electronic device is to be used or seen during exams. Students may tape record lectures provided they do not disturb other students in the process.

## VISITORS IN THE CLASSROOM

Only registered students may attend class. Exceptions can be made on a class-by-class basis by the professor. Of course, visitors may not present a disruption to the class. Students wishing to audit a class must apply to do so through the Registrar's Office.

## COURSE OUTLINE

### I. Introduction: Asia: Geography, History, Culture

Reading: Charlton, chapter 1; e-reserve; handouts

### II. China

- a. People and Politics (geography, history)
- b. Foundations of Politics (political culture)
- c. Government Structures (communist party-state)
- d. Individual and the State
- e. Policy Issues

Taiwan

Reading: Charlton, chapters 2, 5, 8, 11 (230-235), 12-13 (relevant sections)  
e-reserve; handouts

### **First Exam**

### III. Japan

- a. People and Politics
- b. Foundations of Politics
- c. Government Structures
- d. Individual and the State
- e. Policy Issues

North and South Korea

Reading: Charlton, chapters 4, 7, 10, 11 (235-240), 12-13 (relevant sections)  
e-reserve; handouts

### **Second Exam**

IV. Security Issues in East Asia

Reading: Samuels, all chapters

**Third Exam**

V. India

- a. People and Politics
- b. Foundations of Politics
- c. Government Structures
- d. Individual and the State
- e. Policy Issues

Reading: Charlton, chapters 3, 6, 9, 11 (224-230), 12-13 (relevant sections)

VI. Southeast Asia: Indonesia; Malaysia; Singapore; Vietnam; Philippines

Reading: Larkin, all chapters; E-reserve; videos; handouts

**Final Exam**

**NB:** Handouts will also be prepared and distributed. As mentioned above, if it is necessary to shift and divide some material to make room for a fourth exam this will be done.

**STUDY TIPS**

Students are strongly advised to take class notes, and review these and any handouts regularly. It also helps to keep up with the reading as we are addressing each topic rather than leave it until the night before the exam. Questions are always encouraged, either in or out of class. Another tip is to find classmates to study with, compare notes, etc.

**INSTRUCTOR EVALUATIONS**

Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation toward the end of the semester.

## STUDENT ABSENCES ON HOLY DAYS

Students are allowed to miss class, including exams, for the observance of a religious holy day. However, you must inform me by the third week of the semester, and students remain responsible for all work.

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Any and every accommodation will be made for any student with a disability, without discrimination. The student is encouraged to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best accommodate you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center.

Syllabus is subject to revision at my discretion; however, this would only be for mutual convenience – for example, dates of exams, shifting of material between exams, etc.