

INTL 4366H 64878 Southeast Asian Politics (Honors)

Fall 2025

T/Th 12:45 - 2:00 pm

Location: Psychology 304

Dr. Jangai Jap

Office: IA Building Rm. 329

Office Hours: T/Th 3:45 - 5 pm, or by appointment

Email: jangai.jap@uga.edu

Course Overview

Southeast Asia—located south of China and east of the Indian subcontinent—is home to over 675 million people, representing roughly 8.5% of the world's population. This course introduces honors undergraduate students to the politics of Southeast Asian countries and examines how regional political dynamics illuminate major themes in comparative politics, including regime transitions, democracy and electoral politics, political institutions, identity politics, and political violence.

The course begins with a brief overview of the region's geography, populations, and pre-independence history. We then survey the politics of individual countries, beginning with mainland Southeast Asia and then moving to the maritime region. For each country, we will focus on contemporary politics, regime types, and recent events and challenges shaping its political trajectory. In the second half of the course, we will engage more directly with theoretical and empirical studies of democratization, electoral competition, identity-based mobilization, genocide, and the intersection of religion and politics in the region.

Learning Objectives

The objective of this course is to improve critical thinking, analytical writing, and research skills through the study of Southeast Asia politics. At the conclusion of this course,

- Students will have a basic understanding of the politics of individual countries in the region as well as how they inform our understanding of major themes in comparative politics, including political economy
- Students will be able to professionally write and discuss Southeast Asia's region's geography, people, and history prior to independence.
- Students will understand state-of-the-art academic articles on contemporary politics, regime type, and recent major events and/or challenges shaping each country's trajectory.
- Students will be exposed to regional relations, including the ASEAN. Based on this understanding, students will be able to offer predictions of political and economic issues affecting the region in the future.

Course Requirements

Readings

Students are expected to read approximately 80 pages per week. Complete the readings prior to coming to class. Failure to do so will be noticeable during class discussions.

In the first half of the course, most readings will be drawn from the following books:

- Osborne, Milton. [*Southeast Asia: An Introductory History*](#), 2020.
- SarDesai, D.R. [*Southeast Asia, past and present*](#), 1981.

In the second half of the course, readings will primarily consist of journal articles.

Students are also encouraged to keep up with news on Southeast Asia. Check out the following English-language sources:

- The [New Mandala](#)
- The [Radio Free Asia](#)
- Singapore's [Straits Times](#)
- Malaysia's [Malaysiakini](#)
- Thailand's [The Nation](#)
- Indonesia's [Jakarta Post](#)
- Myanmar's [Irrawaddy](#)
- Philippines' [Daily Inquirer](#)

Your final course grade will be determined as follows.

1. **Map Quiz – 2.5% [M]**

This in-class quiz is scheduled for August 28, 2025. By then, students should be familiar with the region's basic geography. Detailed expectations will be provided on August 21, 2025.

2. **Country Update – 2.5%**

Once during the semester, students will give a short presentation (about 5 minutes) on what's happening in the country covered in class that day.

- Sign up for a slot by August 26, 2025.
- Submit your presentation slides by 10 pm ET the day before the class meeting you signed up for.
- If you need to change your slot, contact the student you'd like to exchange with and inform me once you've reached a mutual agreement. Missing class on the day of your presentation will result in a zero for this assignment.

3. **Reading Response – 5%**

To facilitate active reading, students are expected to submit a one-paragraph discussion post based on the reading before each class. These posts can be about the reading itself (e.g., a confusing concept) or inspired by the reading (e.g., a tension between two class readings, something the reading prompted you to think about). They can also be contextualized questions. This assignment cannot be made up, but you will have three passes. Use them wisely.

- Submit your questions on eLC by 10 pm ET the day before the class meeting. Late submissions are accepted with penalty, but submissions at/after class time (2:20 pm ET) will not be accepted.
- The first reading response, based on the readings for Aug. 26, is due on Aug. 25.

Your submission points will be earned on the following scale:

- Meaningful engagement and thoughtful reflection = 5/5
- Somewhat superficial engagement or mostly descriptive = 4/5
- Late submission with otherwise strong content = 3/5
- Late submission with weaker content = 2/5
- No submission, off-topic, or submitted at/after class time = 0

4. **Journal Article Review Presentation - 5%**

Reading and analyzing journal articles is a skill developed through practice. To help refine this skill, each student will deliver a brief (approximately 10-minute) presentation on one assigned journal article. The presentation should demonstrate critical engagement with the article and include the following components:

- A concise overview of the article's literature review
- A clear summary of the article's main argument
- An explanation of how the argument is evaluated (e.g., evidence, methodology, case selection)
- Points of critical engagement (e.g., strengths, limitations, unanswered questions)
- Any discussion questions the presenter would like to raise

Presentations are expected to be well-organized and thoughtful, showing familiarity with the article and its broader scholarly context.

- Sign up for a slot by September 4, 2025.
- Submit your presentation slides by 10 pm ET the day before presentation day.
- If you need to change your slot, contact the student you'd like to exchange with and inform me once you've reached a mutual agreement. Missing class on the day of your presentation will result in a zero for this assignment.
- I will demonstrate what this presentation should look like in class on Sept. 2.

5. **Participation – 15%**

There is no separate grade for attendance. However, students will be graded on the quality of their participation in each class meeting. Since meaningful participation requires being present, absence will affect your participation grade. That said, simply attending does not count as participation.

Students are expected to come prepared with comments on the readings and to actively contribute to discussion. Participation includes more than answering the instructor's questions—it also includes asking thoughtful questions and engaging with peers. Students should use their Reading Response submissions as a starting point for discussion.

Participation grades cannot be made up. However, each student will have three “passes” to cover absences or days when participation is not possible.

After each class meeting, students will assign themselves a participation score, which the instructor will review and adjust as needed. Participation points will be earned on the following scale:

- In class, but not engage (e.g., obsessed w/ laptop) = 2/5
- Engaged but no contribution = 3/5
- Make an okay contribution = 4/5
- Make quality contributions = 5/5

Participation evaluation will begin on August 21.

6. **Exam** – 25% [M]

This is a timed open-book in-class exam. It will consist of identifications and short response questions. Use of laptop is not permitted. You will write out your answer in bluebook(s). The exam is scheduled for October 7, 2025.

7. **Final Paper** – 45%

Students are expected to write a research paper that is 15 to 20 pages in length (excluding bibliography). The paper should include literature review, theoretical argument, and some evidence. We will read several research articles throughout the semester; students are highly encouraged to emulate their structure and/or style.

- 10/07 – Topic Proposal & Annotated Bibliography (5%)
Topic proposal: Describe your research question, what motivates this research question, and your main argument. This should be 200 to 300 words in length.
Annotated bibliography: This must include at least 5 academic sources with 2-3 sentences below each bibliographic citation explaining how/why it is relevant to your paper.
- 11/6, 11, 18 – First Draft of Paper (5%)
 Draft of approximately half of paper written with outline of remaining parts. The introduction and argument sections should be completed by then. This assignment is due a week before your peer-review day.
- 11/13, 18, 25 – Peer-review (5%)
 Each student will be assigned a classmate's draft to review. A 1–2 page peer review report is due in class on the day the draft is scheduled to be discussed. All students—not just the assigned reviewer—are expected to read the draft and actively participate in the peer review discussion.
- 12/08 – Final Paper (30%): due by noon

The following scale will be used to determine your overall grade in the course: A: >94%, A-: 90-93.9%, B+: 87-89.9%, B: 84-86.9%, B-: 80-83.9%, C+: 77-79.9%, C: 74-76.9%, C-: 70-73.9%, D+: 67-69.9%, D: 64-66.9%, D-: 60-63.9%, F: <60%.

There is **no** extra credit in this course. However, if your final grade is borderline (e.g., 89.6%), I will round it up if you have consistently demonstrated full effort—this includes active class participation and timely submission of all assignments. You do not need to email me to get a grade bump. If you've done all you can, it will be reflected in your final grade.

Course Policies & Statements

Attendance

Attendance is not taken. However, it should be clear from course requirements specified above that class attendance is expected and necessary to do well in this course.

Emails and office hours

For administrative questions and clarifications, the best way to contact me is via email. I aim to answer emails within 24 hours during the week. If you have not received a response in 24 hours, email me again. For substantive issues related to course materials, stop by during my office (drop-in) hours. If you are unable to stop by at the regular time, email me so that we can find a time that works for you.

Assignment Due Date Extension

Students are expected to submit assignments on time. However, I understand that unforeseen circumstances may arise. If you anticipate needing an extension, you must contact me at least 48 hours before the assignment deadline. Extensions will be granted on a case-by-case basis and are not guaranteed. Note that this policy applies only to assignments related to the Final Paper.

Last-minute requests (within 24 hours of the deadline) will only be considered in cases of serious emergencies and must be supported with documentation. Please note that poor time management or overlapping deadlines in other classes are not valid reasons for an extension.

Late Assignments

Late submissions will be accepted *only within 48 hours* of the deadline. However, your grade will be penalized by one-third of a letter grade for every 4 hours the assignment is late. For example:

- An A paper submitted 3 hours late will be graded as A-.
- A B paper submitted 8 hours late will be graded as C+.

After 48 hours, the assignment will receive a zero, unless prior arrangements have been made due to documented emergencies. This policy applies only to assignments related to the Final Paper.

Make-up procedures

Students may make up the course requirements indicated by [M] in the cases of sickness (requiring a doctor's note) or family emergency (requiring a Dean's note). If you cannot be in attendance for the map quiz, presentations, or exam due to religious observance, notify the instructor at least one week in advance to arrange an alternative. There are no exceptions.

Appeals

If you believe a grade you are given does not reflect your performance, you may dispute the grade in writing, explaining why you should receive a higher grade. This should be done within a week after the grade is announced and submitted after class or in office hours. I reserve the right to raise or lower your grade.

UGA Honor Code

You have agreed to the UGA Student Honor Code: “I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others.” A Culture of Honesty, the University's policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at www.uga.edu/ovpi.

Cheating, plagiarism, and all forms of academic dishonesty are expressly forbidden in this class, and by the university's Academic Honesty Policy. Plagiarism includes reprinting the words of others without both the use of quotation marks and citation.

Generative AI Tools

To ensure you develop and master the foundational knowledge and skills in this course, the use of generative AI (GAI) tools is prohibited when completing written assignments for this course. This includes all stages of your work process, even the preliminary ones. This prohibition extends to AI writing tools like Grammarly and Wordtune, as well as GAI tools like ChatGPT. If you are uncertain about using a particular tool to support your work, please consult with me before using it.

Prohibition on Recording Lectures

In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. For information on securing an accommodation to record lectures, see:

<https://accessibility.uga.edu/faculty-guidelines-for-record-lecture/>

Accommodation for Disabilities

If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center. They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting <http://drc.uga.edu>.

UGA Well-being Resources

UGA Well-being Resources promote student success by cultivating a culture that supports a more active, healthy, and engaged student community.

Anyone needing assistance is encouraged to contact Student Care & Outreach (SCO) in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-8479 or visit sco.uga.edu. Student Care & Outreach helps students navigate difficult circumstances by connecting them with the most appropriate resources or services. They also administer the Embark@UGA program which supports students experiencing, or who have experienced, homelessness, foster care, or housing insecurity.

UGA provides both clinical and non-clinical options to support student well-being and mental health, any time, any place. Whether on campus, or studying from home or abroad, UGA Well-being Resources are here to help.

- Well-being Resources: well-being.uga.edu
- Student Care and Outreach: sco.uga.edu
- University Health Center: healthcenter.uga.edu

- Counseling and Psychiatric Services: caps.uga.edu or CAPS 24/7 crisis support at 706-542-2273
- Health Promotion/ Fontaine Center: healthpromotion.uga.edu
- Disability Resource Center and Testing Services: drc.uga.edu

Additional information, including free digital well-being resources, can be accessed through the UGA app or by visiting <https://well-being.uga.edu>.

Disclaimer

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Class Schedule

Week 1	August 14	Welcome! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Souva, Mark. 2007. Fostering theoretical thinking in undergraduate classes. <i>PS: Political Science & Politics</i> 40(3): 557-561. <i>Optional</i>: Read a short article on New Mandala.
Week 2	August 19	What is Southeast Asia? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Osborne. Chapter 1: 17-30 [14 pages] Scott, James C. <i>The art of not being governed: An anarchist history of upland Southeast Asia</i>. Yale University Press, 2009. <u>Chapter 1: 1-26</u>. [26 pages]
	August 21	Cultural Heritage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Osborne. <u>Chapters 2 – 4: 31 – 71</u> [41 pages]
Week 3	August 26	Colonial Interlude <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Osborne. <u>Chapter 5 - 7: 72 - 118</u> [46 pages]
	August 28	Paths of Independence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Osborne. <u>Chapters 9 - 11: 140 - 183</u> [44 pages] Osborne. <u>Chapters 12 - 13: 184 - 213</u> [30 pages] <p>* Map quiz</p>
Week 4	September 2	Colonial Legacies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dulay, Dean. "The Search for Spices and Souls: Catholic Missions as Colonial State in the Philippines." <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> 55, no. 12 (2022): 2050-2065, skim the rest. [16 pages] Zaw, Htet Thiha. "The Pre-Colonial Roots of Colonial Coercion: Evidence from British Burma." <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> (2023): 1- 21, skim the rest. [22 pages]
	September 4	Myanmar 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SarDesai. Chapter 20. [22 pages] Watch: Inside a Military Dictatorship. 1 hr. 38 min.

Week 5	September 9	Myanmar 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhoads, Elizabeth L. "Citizenship denied, deferred and assumed: a legal history of racialized citizenship in Myanmar." <i>Citizenship Studies</i> 27, no. 1 (2023). [16 pages] • Watch: "Myanmar's Killing Fields," PBS Frontline 2018, 55 minutes.
	September 11	Thailand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SarDesai. Chapter 21. [20 pages] • Hewison, Kevin and Kengkij Kitirianglarp. "'Thai-Style Democracy': The Royalist Struggle for Thailand's Politics." In <i>Saying the Unsayable: Monarchy and Democracy in Thailand</i>, ed. Søren Ivarsson and Lotte Isager. Copenhagen: NIAS Press: 179 – 196. [18 pages]
Week 6	September 16	Vietnam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SarDesai. Chapter 25: 316 - 325 [9 pages] • Vu, Tuong and Thuy Nguyen. "Doi Moi" but Not "Doi Mau": Vietnam's Red Crony Capitalism in Historical Perspective. In Nhu Troung and Tuong Vu (Eds.), <i>The Dragon's Underbelly: Dynamics and Dilemmas in Vietnam's Economy and Politics</i>. ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, 2023. [28 pages]
	September 18	Cambodia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chandler, David Porter. <i>The tragedy of Cambodian history: Politics, war, and revolution since 1945</i>. Yale University Press, 1991: Introduction and Chapter 7.
Week 7	September 23	Philippines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SarDesai. Chapter 19. [28 pages]
	September 25	Indonesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SarDesai. Chapter 22. [22 pages] • Kuipers, Nicholas, Risa Toha, and Nathanael Gratias Sumaktoyo. "Third Time's the Charm: The Youth Vote and Prabowo's Victory in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential Election." <i>Pacific Affairs</i> 97, no. 3 (2024): 563-585. [23]

Week 8	September 30	Malaysia and Singapore
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SarDesai. Chapter 24: 285 - 310 [27 pages] • Weiss, Meredith L., and Ibrahim Suffian. "Decline and Fall of Malaysia's Dominant-Party System." <i>Pacific Affairs</i> 96, no. 2 (2023): 281-301. [20 pages]
	October 2	ASEAN
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ba, Alice D. <i>(Re) Negotiating East and Southeast Asia: Region, Regionalism, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations</i>. Stanford University Press, 2020: Introduction and Chapter 2.
Week 9	October 7	In-class Exam
	October 9	Democratization
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slater, Dan. 2012. "Strong-State Democratization in Malaysia and Singapore." <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 23(2).
Week 10	October 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morgenbesser, Lee, and Thomas B. Pepinsky. "Elections as causes of democratization: Southeast Asia in comparative perspective." <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> 52, no. 1 (2019): 3-35.
	October 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Samet, Oren. "When you come at the king: Opposition coalitions and nearly stunning elections." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> (2024).
Week 11	October 21	Electoral Politics
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ong, Elvin. "Electoral manipulation, opposition power, and institutional change: Contesting for electoral reform in Singapore, Malaysia, and Cambodia." <i>Electoral Studies</i> 54 (2018). [12 pages]
	October 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hicken, Allen, Edward Aspinall, Meredith L. Weiss, and Burhanuddin Muhtadi. "Buying brokers: Electoral handouts beyond clientelism in a weak-party state." <i>World Politics</i> 74, no. 1 (2022): 77-120.
Week 12	October 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ravanilla, Nico. "The Extraordinary Effect of Religious Sect Endorsements on Vote Choice: Evidence From Iglesia ni Cristo's "Vote as One" Teaching." <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> (2024).

	October 30	Institutions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Malesky, Edmund, Regina Abrami, and Yu Zheng. "Institutions and inequality in single-party regimes: A comparative analysis of Vietnam and China." <i>Comparative Politics</i> 43, no. 4 (2011): 409-427.
Week 13	November 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pepinsky, Thomas. "Capital Mobility and Coalitional Politics: Authoritarian Regimes and Economic Adjustment in Southeast Asia." <i>World Politics</i> 60, no. 3 (2008): 438-474.
	November 6	Identity Politics
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Selway, Joel. "Turning Malays into Thai-men: Nationalism, ethnicity and economic inequality in Thailand." <i>South East Asia Research</i> 15, no. 1 (2007): 53-87.
Week 14	November 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chew, Isabel, and Jangai Jap. "Repression, Interests and Outgroup Attitudes: A Survey Experiment in Post-Coup Myanmar." <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> 58, no. 1 (2025): 190-222.
	November 13	Peer-review Workshop
Week 15	November 18	Peer-review Workshop
	November 20	Conference travel - No class meeting
Week 16	November 25	Peer-review Workshop – Last class meeting

Final paper due by noon, Monday 12/08